

## Factors Affecting the Kilojoule Burn of Fitness Activities

People often ask what kind of physical activity will burn the most kilojoules/calories and therefore contribute to the most efficient or greatest weight loss. There is no single answer to this question because there are a number of factors involved. However, knowing what the factors are can help you to work out what kind of physical activity is more likely to lead to increased kilojoule/calorie expenditure.

- More kilojoules/calories are burnt during activity if the activity is performed for a longer period of time.
- Activity performed at a faster pace and/or with a higher degree of effort or intensity will result in more kilojoules/calories being burnt.
- More kilojoules/calories are burnt if the activity requires a high degree of skill or technical ability.
- Activity that involves more muscle mass will burn more kilojoules/calories.
- Performed at the same level of intensity most people will expend more kilojoules/calories performing a weight bearing activity than they will if performing a non-weight bearing activity (eg, running vs swimming).
- A heavier person will burn more kilojoules/calories during activity than a lighter person.
- A lean person with more muscle than fat will burn more kilojoules/calories during activity than someone who has more fat than muscle.
- The fitter someone is the more kilojoules/calories they will burn during activity.

Choosing an activity based only on its kilojoule/calorie burning capacity however is not necessarily a wise thing to do. Reducing weight and then sustaining it at a reduced level depends on regular physical activity and good nutrition being incorporated into everyday life on a long-term basis. If an activity is not enjoyable or if it involves too much impact on your bones and joints (as some of the higher kilojoule/calorie burning activities can) then it is unlikely that the activity and the weight reduction that comes with the activity will be maintained in the long term. It is just as important to choose an activity or activities that are enjoyable, not too hard on your body, and which you can realistically see yourself doing well into the future.