

Short Workout, Big Caloric Payoff! - River Journal Online

Written by Anne Marie Constanzo
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Time is a precious commodity. When you have a million different things that you want to get done and not a lot of time to get them done, you need to learn to be efficient; especially when time is money. As soon as that babysitter shows up, it's go-time!

Freedom only lasts a few hours, which seems to me to be a mere blink of the eye. So as to not get too carried away in frolicking/daydreaming/meandering without a stroller, I prepare myself for the tasks ahead when I am alone, and working out for me is a must if for only one reason... it's my therapy. It helps bring mommy back to neutral. It recharges the battery and makes me feel happy. And I can't, as I have learned, keep taking 'working out' off my to-do list because I need it. I *really neeeeeed* it!

So how do you make sure you get in a good workout while being as efficient as possible? I did the math on this one and here is what I came up with. It's a cardio workout that was only 40 minutes long but... BUT... I only exerted myself for 20 of those minutes! The other 20 I still kept burning calories by avoiding just one thing... sitting.

Here's the burn breakdown for you:

I ran for 20 minutes and burned 180 cal (I did interval running which is my favorite. It's a fast pace followed by a slower 'recovery' pace.) This wasn't an easy run mind you, I pushed myself, getting my heart rate up to its max so I could get the most out of the least amount of time. I ran hard, almost in a sprint, for 30 seconds, and slowed it down for one minute and repeated that for the 20 minutes.

After that, I walked/stood/avoided sitting for the next 20 minutes and burned an additional 120 cal. (I came home, put laundry away, tidied up the house, ran after the baby... whatever I could so as to not sit.)

Total burn was 300 cal for 20 minutes of hard work followed by 20 minutes of not sitting... and I'm sure I was still burning more than usual for another 15 to 20 minutes after the last 20 minutes and I felt great, mentally and physically.

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Later in the day I put my heart rate monitor back on just to get an idea of how much I burn when I haven't just exercised and that was 44 cal for 20 minutes. So you see, there is truth to thinking that even *after* you're done working out, your body is still working and burning calories at a higher rate than if you skipped the workout altogether.

Remember this the next time you're about to cross out "working out" off your to-do list. All it takes is 20 minutes of hard work, and your body does the rest!