

It's better than a fast and furious gym session...

Playing a round of golf could be better for you than a quick, intense workout, according to new research from Maastricht University. Scientists looking into the healthiest ratios of activity and inactivity found that doing moderate activity for longer periods of time leads to more significant improvements in blood fats and insulin than an hour of intense exercise. Scientific proof that walking around the golf course for a few hours is healthier than a fast and furious session at the gym...

Golf burns more calories than you'd think: playing an 18-hole game of golf burns at least 900 calories. Golf also combines all the known weight-loss benefits of walking combined with the toning and muscle strengthening benefits of swinging the clubs and carrying or pulling your golf bag. During the average game of golf you can walk around five to six miles.

Treading the grassy terrain of the golf course carrying or pulling your clubs and hitting the golf ball burns more calories than a straightforward walk on concrete pavements. The soft surface makes your feet sink slightly as you walk, forcing your legs to work harder to push you upwards and forwards – using more calories and working your leg muscles more.

Walking is so good for you that it's a no brainer, according to Dr William Bird, a GP and director of intelligenthealth.co.uk which promotes walking and health.

'Walking regularly is all you need to stay physically active and healthy,' says Dr Bird. 'Just getting up and walking can have a huge benefit for your health – especially if you've been sedentary. If you're more active, regular walking is still the perfect form of exercise,' he adds.

A game of golf will see you walk around five miles and playing regularly will help you easily achieve the recommended 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week.

Doctors recommend that we do at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week and the average game of nine-holes will take you almost up to that quota.

To find an activity near you go to getintogolf.org/map or call 0800 118 2766

You'll receive a basic introduction to golf from PGA professionals, together with information about club membership and follow-on coaching opportunities. Equipment will be provided so all you have to do is turn up on the day in comfortable clothing.

The Get into golf campaign, supported by Sport England and funded by the National Lottery, is now making the game more affordable and welcoming than ever before.

For more information contact info@getintogolf.org

