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Trivia Question - Maybe I have a Dirty House?

Saturday, November 12, 2016

I play Spark trivia every day. I've learned a lot. Today I missed the question about how many calories are burned yearly through house cleaning.

"A 2005 study published in the British Journal of Nutrition showed that Brits burn more than 50,000 calories a year - nearly 15 pounds of fat--just by cleaning their homes"

While my house will never be featured in "Better Homes and Gardens" I don't expect to be condemned by the Board of Health either. The same is true of everyone I know. So why would any of us even have a weight problem?

15 pounds represents 52,000 calories.

Did we eat that many extra calories to negate the cleaning calories burned?

My data driven mind continued:

15 pounds a year is 1.25 pounds per month (4375 calories per month, 146 calories per day)

So yeah, I can easily get an extra 150 per day.

Then I wondered what is meant by "heavy" cleaning.

I remember the washboard my grandmother used to get the heavy dirt out of clothes before dragging out the wringer washer and hanging clothes on the line (where they promptly froze in the winter).

I don't do that. (Just hang up my delicate stuff to dry)

She scrubbed floors on her hands and knees. I did that as a kid. It's hard on the knees (housemaids knee) I don't do it now.

She had a coal stove which required getting pails of coal and chopped wood.
Not me

I have modern conveniences.

I walk around with a Swiffer duster, walk behind a vacuum etc.

Where do I fit into the British study?

Then I did a SP search and found several discussions on message boards

Back in 2012 Coach Nancy said:

"While there is a listing for heavy cleaning in the cardio fitness tracker, I would only recommend that you use this only when you are going well above the normal stuff. The reason, SparkPeople already factors in an active daily living multiplier, therefore if you begin tracking every activity that you do, you may be

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overestimating your calories burned which over time can slow your progress down"

So come on over and visit. I may fail in the direction of clutter (my dumbbells are scattered in front of the TV, my choral music is spread out all over the table and unsorted laundry is heaped in front of the washer)

but the place is clean.

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DONNALEE-53



This is really a great blog. **THANK YOU!** for sharing that info. I have never really thought of it that way.



1664 days ago



OSHEONA



The British like to be clean, I guess! Good for them! I've been too sick to get much done for quite a while now. Another thing that you shouldn't track here on SparkPeople is gardening. The calories estimated for that are way off, way too high for most gardening activities. If you follow their estimate, you will most likely overeat, so beware of that! I mean, if you also get calorie recommendations from them. Great blog, thank you!

1665 days ago



INCH_BY_INCH



Around here I'm always trying to get ahead of the cleaning. DH and son keep things interesting. They see a clean spot and next thing I know the real estate has been filled with something. I know some progress is being made the garbage can gets pretty full.

1665 days ago



MARYJEANSL



You are way ahead of me, for sure! If I get the bed made, and empty and refill the dishwasher, I think I am doing pretty well. :-)

1669 days ago



CD17264479



Ha! I was wondering what heavy cleaning was, too. My mom would go into cleaning 'frenzies' as I call them--windows, floors, pull out the furniture type of stuff--now that was heavy cleaning ;-).

1670 days ago



CD3409143



yeah I was digging through my work room trying to find my random orbital sander - no luck, but I have to go up and down 2 flights of stairs to get to it from the second floor. Ah...more steps!!

1670 days ago

Comment edited on: 11/12/2016 11:27:03 PM



LIVEDAILY



I wonder how many calories you'd burn taking a large rug outside, hanging it over a clothesline, and beating it clean?? I love my large old zinc sink in the basement. It has a washboard built into the front of it. Yes, I am thankful I have a washer and dryer in the apartment, but I have to go up and down 2 flights of stairs to get to it from the second floor. Ah...more steps!!

1670 days ago



PEGGYO



1670 days ago



**PHEBESS**

LOL - I love your scientific mind!

My definition of "cardio" is anything that makes me sweat consistently. So lifting classroom desks up onto the countertops for half an hour or so qualified. Sweeping the bits of stuff off the floor for ten minutes, no. Vacuuming the entire apartment (and hour or so), yes. Straightening up clutter or dusting or washing dishes, no.

I always try to keep it simple!
1670 days ago



**DOVESEYES**

Great thoughts :)
1670 days ago

**PRNCSCUP1-2FULL**

Thank you for the data driven research! Good to know! I'm THE anti-housewife and work so I can pay someone to clean my house! That is how much I hate cleaning! Your research was very interesting.
1670 days ago

**JEANKNEE**

I think you deserve the Calc-N-Stein distinction as well.  Oh yeah, another data driven mind. I recognize the path your mind just tred. 

And, I'd love to visit your house. As WATERMELEN shared, no domestic gene apparent in this woman's body either.

Thanks for sharing the post by Coach Nancy. I've made that recommendation to many a Sparker that feels they're doing everything right and cannot lose weight; but, are tracking every little bit of activity. This does tend to lead to a false sense of calories burned.

Since my injury I am burning so little that I'm not even burning enough to meet the multiplying factor used for a sedentary activity level.

1670 days ago

**DR1939**

My mom always scrubbed her floors on her hands and knees, put all frequently used pots, pans, and dishes up very high (she was 5'2"), and parked her car as far as possible from the store entrance. She was always slim.
1670 days ago

**PHOENIX1949**

I have an embroidery sampler that I did many years ago that I should display again -- 'My home is messy enough to be happy and clean enough to not be a health hazard.'
1670 days ago

**WATERMELLEN**

I have NO domestic gene whatsoever . . . sob sob.

Thank goodness my DD has taken over in that department.
1670 days ago

**ONEKIDSMOM**

I confess to being a cluttered slob in my housekeeping. My dining room table in tri season is my transition area, and the bike sits in a position of honor near it, my swim backpack laps off the table... I clear it out for the holidays but winter running season brings drying sweat-soaked outerwear onto the chair backs.

I have NEVER tracked housecleaning! Even when I do it! I know I'd be overestimating calories if I did!
1670 days ago

**CD4114015**

I actually do hang ever load of wash outside...I love doing it and do old fashioned cleaning of floors and baseboards on my knees because I'm blessed to no have bad knees yet. My aunt (a true clean freak) I guess kinda a won mem over. I love doing all this and farm chores for "our" animals (we live on 20 acres in the country and feed EVERY animal imaginable so my chores take me much time but I don't mind it (I actually LOVE it) and I don't run like a lot of you guys do. In general I actually seek out the most assertive things and ways to do things because that is what I would rather do than running or "regular exercise". I LOVE being thin now and will always pick he "hard road" to keep it.

I love this blog!
1670 days ago



SMILINGEYES2



When we first moved to current house with wood floors, I tried doing floors on knees. Definitely not as easy as when I was younger. Since lots of floorspace would do one or two rooms a day and then start over. Obviously had to adjust this. For me the spring and fall cleaning where you are up and down ladders carrying heavier loads and doing major activities.
1670 days ago



HOLLYM48



I agree that we shouldn't track the normal every day cleaning stuff since that doesn't require a whole lot of effort!
What drives me crazy right now is that I get 5 or 6 miles of steps in each day at work and even though it counts my calories for me, it doesn't give me any credit for minutes of exercise. I know that I am still burning calories but I would like to see more minutes given credit for! I know, it is all in my head!
Interesting thoughts on your blog and boy what a good reminder of how easy we have it today compared to our grandparents and great grandparents etc... generation!
Have a great weekend.
1671 days ago



KRISZTA11



I agree, today's house cleaning and chores are far less intense than what our grandparents used to do.
I love what Spark Coach Nancy said, this note should be displayed everywhere on SP where people calculate calories burned.
1671 days ago



BBEGAN



Yeah, I think I won't count on housecleaning as a weight loss strategy!
1671 days ago



CIDPGIRL



I need to do some serious de-cluttering!
1671 days ago



GINIEMIE



I climb my cupboards and a ladder to clean the tops of the kitchen cupboards twice a year. I pull things out of my closet and clean that once a year....should get rid of more it wouldn't be so

much work 😊 Only problem it's taking me longer to do these things lately and my eldest son

has fits when I climb the 6 foot ladder 🍊 but he doesn't do it for me. 🧘🏻‍♀️



1671 days ago



PICKIE98



I just took my sheets off the clothesline,, I am not able to put everything out there like I used to while using a cane, but it felt good to smell those sheets!
I always scrub on hands and knees, until now because I will need replacements soon.
There is a big difference between dirt and some clutter. Clutter is living.
1671 days ago



50YEARSAWIFE



I still scrub my bathroom on my hands and knees. I push and pull my vacuum. Does that

count? 😊 LOL Thanks for sharing your research.

1671 days ago



EVILCECIL



Congrats on the clean home - I need some help in that department.



1671 days ago

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