**A busy mum’s guide to incidental exercise**

We all know that being a mum is busy. It’s relentless – especially if you do it well!! Mums often put themselves last and rarely find time or energy to exercise and look after their health. So I thought I’d collate a few ideas for “incidental” exercise or activity. Sometimes it is simple things you can do that can help you maintain your health….. besides, doesn’t it make you feel better knowing you are burning calories and making your muscles work without actually participating in typical “exercise”!!????

I have broken the activities into the categories of:

* Chores
* Activities with Children
* Caring for a baby
* Other general activity

I am sure there are many more examples, but these will hopefully get your creative juices flowing!

**CHORES**

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| Gardening | * Squatting to weed
* Using the mower
* Pruning the plants and carrying waste to the bin
* Watering the grass & garden
* Using edger, whipper snipper, etc
* Aerating the grass with spiked shoes or tools
* Planting new seedlings, shrubs, plants
* Creating a new garden or entire backyard!
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| Cleaning | * Vacuuming
* Cleaning bathrooms and toilets
* Mopping
* Cleaning windows (wax on – wax off!!)
* Washing your car
* Cleaning kitchen, oven, microwave , fridge, pantry etc
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| Ironing | * Carrying ironing board
* Ironing clothes – get that shoulder working!
* Why not throw some squats or toe raises in while ironing?
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| Shopping | * Pushing and pulling the shopping trolley through the supermarket and to the car! NO parcel pick up required!!
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| Hanging washing | * Carry the basket of wet clothes
* Hang clothes ( above shoulder height when you are my size!)
* Retrieve clothes
* Fold clothes and put away
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**ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN**

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| Ice skate / roller skate / roller blade | It requires strength, coordination and balance. No sitting on the sidelines watching! Don a pair of skates and get out there! |
| Bike riding | Jump on your bikes and go for a family bike ride |
| Basketball | Grab a basketball and “man” up against your child. You’d be amazed how many calories you’ll burn chasing them around your driveway / basketball court! |
| Soccer | Head to the backyard or park with a soccer ball. Kick to one another, try and steal the ball from one another. Get moving! |
| Totem tennis | Who doesn’t like a game of totem tennis? $10 from K-Mart! |
| Let’s Dance (Wii) | Yep, welcome to modern technology! If you haven’t tried it, don’t knock it. It is hard work!!! |
| Table tennis | From one generation to another!! If you are lucky enough to have the good old table tennis, then have a hit now and then.  |
| Handball | A few dollars from Big W / K-Mart / Rebel Sport. Eye-hand coordination, upper arm strength, and some stepping/running required! |
| Kids Sports | Do laps walking around the venue when your child is playing sports! |

**CARING FOR A BABY**

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| Push the pram | Whether you are out and about for a reason, or just walking the block to get your little one asleep, get walking!! |
| Picking up / putting down your baby | My arms were never so ripped as when I had a baby!! Seriously, who needs a gym when you have a baby!!?? |
| Retrieve dropped toys and food etc | Babies and toddlers have a tendency to drop things – often on purpose. Every time you collect it, make it a squat!! |
| Learn to swim classes | It gives them a skill for life and provides you with exercise! |

**OTHER GENERAL ACTIVITIES**

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| Brushing your teeth | * Do some squats
* Toe raises ( that is, raise up on your toes)
* Lunges
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| Pelvic floor exercises | * Do them when driving your car
* Before you go to bed
* Before you get out of bed
* While watching TV
* While cheering for your kids at their Saturday sports activities!

Noone is going to know when you are doing them, just factor them into your day! |
| Watching TV | * Bridges (ly on your back with knees bent. Then lift your pelvis up towards the ceiling)
* Light upper limb weights
* Lunges
* Squats
* Stretches
* Sit ups and core work (eg. Using gym ball)
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| Re-arrange furniture  | * Pushing / pulling furniture uses energy!
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| Punching bag | * Yep – you can relieve frustration and burn calories! Seriously, what more do you want????
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| Skipping rope | * Just make sure you wear shoes so not to damage your feet!!
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| Technology | * DVDs, Wii etc – there are so many options with yoga, zumba, pilates, Wii Fit, Wii sports, Just Dance etc etc etc
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| Walk you dog ( or cat!) | * Exercise your pet and yourself at the same time!
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