



Save Time: Take the Stairs—Not the Elevator

by Sandi Gauvin

People often cite lack of time when it comes to [maintaining fitness](#). Though we're often advised to take the stairs instead of the elevator as an easy way to sneak fitness into our day, many people believe it takes too much time. They just might be out of an excuse.



Some researchers at the Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon decided to test the theory that using the stairs to get from one floor to another adds too much time to your day compared to taking the elevator.

They recruited some busy doctors and measured the time it took each of them to make 14 different trips using the hospital stairs (walking—not running). The longest trip was from the ground floor to the sixth floor. They were then asked to make the same trips in the elevator.

When the researchers tallied the results, they found the doctors were much quicker walking up the stairs than taking the elevator. According to their study, published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* December 13, the mean time taken to travel by stairs between each floor was 13.1. The time it took by elevator was 37.5 and 35.6 seconds depending upon which of two elevators was taken.

All 14 trips took a total of 10 minutes by climbing the stairs, while the total time for the elevator was 20 to 25 minutes. This worked out to about 15 minutes of extra time each day for the time-starved docs.

Add the extra fitness benefits to the time savings, and you have a prescription for efficiency with excellent side effects.