## Elderly Chew Up Calories Playing on the Wii

BY KERRI WACHTER

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BALTIMORE — The Wii video-game system helped seniors burn calories and become more active in a pilot study of 24 adults aged 66-78 years.

Group members burned 17-176 kcal during 30-minute games of Wii baseball, tennis, or team or individual bowling, Elizabeth Orsega-Smith, Ph.D., reported in a poster at the meeting.

The participants were enrolled at senior centers in Delaware. They were mostly women (87%) with an average age of 72 years. Participants were independent, community dwelling, and healthy but overweight—their mean body mass index was 32.67 kg/m².

The participants wore accelerometers on their wrists during the games, and the

researchers calculated caloric expenditure from the readings. Caloric expenditure ranged from 22 kcal to 114 kcal for baseball, 17 kcal to 72 kcal for tennis, 18 kcal to 89 kcal for team bowling, and 20 kcal to 176 kcal for individual bowling.

Wii games may be an easy option for senior centers and care facilities trying to get older adults to become more active. "The seniors were able to pick up the game pretty rapidly. They didn't really have much difficulty in grasping the concept of using the controller," she said. The researchers are analyzing other measures of physical activity and general well-being that were collected during a Wii bowling tournament, said Dr. Orsega-Smith, an associate professor in the department of health, nutrition, and exercise sciences at the University of Delaware, Newark.

Dr. Orsega-Smith said she had no relevant financial conflicts of interest.

