



## Where There's a Wii, There's a Way

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It is hard to believe but the Nintendo *Wii* hit the market almost five years ago. Its popularity and success seemed to take off overnight, but not just because it was the hottest new gaming system. Soon after its debut we started to hear stories about local hospitals and senior centers using the *Wii* to speed up recovery times for children and adults suffering from acute illnesses and chronic conditions.

Now, across the country doctors are treating their patients with a unique form of rehab they are calling "Wii-Hab". At Mercy General Hospital in California doctors are using *Wii* games in the acute rehabilitation center for stroke patients. For these patients traditional physical therapy seems like work, but because of the repetition in games like *Wii Bowl* patients are able to achieve similar results by gaining strength and increasing mobility. It also gives patients the opportunity to interact socially, which makes the rehabilitation and the recovery process a little more fun.

With stories still swirling around the positive health benefits linked to some of the original games, Nintendo launched *Wii Fit* and a line of accessories. According to USA Today, since the introduction in 2008 Nintendo's *Wii Fit* has sold over 21 million copies. The original *Wii Fit* was only on the market for a little over a year when Nintendo introduced a new enhanced version called *Wii Fit Plus*. Both games offer yoga, strength training, aerobics and balance games.

Although nothing beats a session in your local gym, the *Wii Fit* and *Wii Fit Plus* help children and adults of all ages get some much needed physical activity. The original *Wii Fit* introduced the Balance Board controller. When you stand on the Balance Board it tracks your weight and shifts in your balance. These shifts in your weight and balance are then incorporated into the game to control the scoring for your character.

With the new *Wii Fit Plus*, you get everything from the original game plus new features and more

content. For example, players are able to create a personalized workout, track calories burned and select from pre-set workouts to target specific areas of their body. The *Wii Fit Plus* also adds 15 balance games, three new strength training exercises and three new yoga poses. With the addition of the 15 new games, the *Wii Fit Plus* offers players over 60 games to choose from.

Again, the *Wii Fit* and *Wii Fit Plus* are great for children and adults of all ages. With games like virtual snowball fighting and ski jump your kids will be getting a good dose of exercise and will not even know it! Bottom line is if you are looking for a great way for your family to reconnect and get some exercise, consider a Nintendo *Wii* console and *Wii Fit* or *Wii Fit Plus*. Organize a family game night or develop your own exercise plan and encourage your kids to participate with you.

If you have not gotten around to purchasing a *Wii Fit* and you are debating between the original or the *Wii Fit Plus*, most reviews indicate that the *Wii Fit Plus* is an improvement over the original. At most retailers you can purchase the *Wii Fit Plus* with the Balance Board for right around \$100. If you already own a *Wii Fit*, you can purchase the upgraded *Wii Fit Plus* discs for around \$19.99.

Resources:

- [Nintendo Wii Fit website](#)

[www.essehealth.com](http://www.essehealth.com)