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said. "The differences between best and worst are too big to ignore. Most hospitals make a huge effort to raise their accreditation scores. If they put that energy in a smarter direction, we'd all be better off."

Part of the problem, the researchers said, is lack of public knowledge. JCAHO scores are translated to a "failure count" of the 48 areas studied, and hospitals get a list of "Type I Recommendations" to correct. About one hospital in 12 gets a nearly perfect score, with no recommendations, and only three of 100 get "conditional" accreditation.

For details, visit <http://www.jcaho.org/qualitycheck/directry/directry.asp>.

With so many hospitals receiving similar scores, the system doesn't encourage competition, they said.

Similarly, the Solucient performance scores are used in a "Top 100 Hospitals" program that recognizes only the 100 hospitals that achieve the highest benchmarks but fail to provide rank-

ing information on the more than 5,000 other hospitals studied and ranked annually. (<http://www.100tophospitals.com/default.asp>). Another problem is understanding exactly what does contribute to high performance. JCAHO criteria are a consensus of what seems to work, rather than practices tested against real performance, they said.

"JCAHO scores four dozen separate activities in hospitals, calculates a weighted overall score and makes a final decision to accredit," Griffith said.

"We expected to see 'good' JCAHO hospitals get 'good' performance scores - be safe, well financed, efficient and progressive. The data show the hospitals with the worst JCAHO scores have as good performance as the group with the best."

The disconnect suggests either something left out or something wrong.

"I believe it's something left out," Griffith said. "It could be problems with the way JCAHO's inspectors assign the scores, but

it's more likely the things JCAHO does not measure, particularly employee and doctor learning and enthusiasm." Evanston, Ill.-based Solucient, which doesn't compete with JCAHO, provided \$10,000 in funding for a detailed analysis of the stability of its "100 Top" criteria and recommendations on changes.

For more information on Griffith, author of the textbook, *The Well-Managed Healthcare Organization*, visit <http://www.sph.umich.edu/hmp/faculty/jgr.html>.

For more information on Alexander, who recently finished a term as acting dean of the School of Public Health, visit <http://www.sph.umich.edu/hmp/faculty/alexander.html>.

For more information on *Structural versus Outcomes Measures in Hospitals*, the article by Griffith et al., call Aspen Publishers Inc. at (800) 638-8437 or visit www.aspenpublishers.com.

Work on fitness, 10 minutes at a time

Doctors recommend staying moderately active for 30 minutes a day, five days a week or more to help prevent cancer and maintain a healthy weight.

But finding time to exercise can be difficult for many people. The good news is that the 30 minutes don't have to be in one session, and you don't have to go to the gym.

Weeding the garden, taking the stairs, and other everyday activities count in burning calories and boosting your health.

How do your own activities measure up for fitness and weight control? Check the following table. These measures are estimated for a 160-pound person, and will be slightly different for each person depending on their weight, body composition and level of intensity.

Calories Burned Per Hour
Strolling, 208; Walking (brisk), 297; Playing with children (Frisbee), 216; Gardening, 324; Vacuuming or mopping, 160; Heavy cleaning, 432; Moving (carrying boxes), 504; Mowing lawn (non-riding mower), 324; Biking (flat surface), 441; Jogging, 676; Tennis (singles), 549; Basketball (half-

court), 405; Soccer, 468; Swimming, 603; Yoga, 360; Sitting, 81; Watching TV, 72; Sleeping, 45.

Sources: *Calorie Control Council*, *American Heart Association*

Ten- to 15-minute bursts of exercise can work for many people who feel trapped by a busy schedule.

Consider: In the morning, get up 10 minutes early and take a walk around the neighborhood. When you get home from work, play a game of tag with the children for at least 10 minutes. And, while you watch TV, do arm curls, squats, lunges and sit-ups for another 10 minutes.

By the time you're ready to go to bed, you've added exercise to your

day while barely changing your routine.

Here are more tips to incorporate physical activity into your workday:

- Walk to lunch.
- Park your car in the parking space that's farthest from the building.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Get off the bus several stops early and walk the rest of the way to your building.
- Make appointments for yourself in your planner for 10-minute walk breaks.
- Form a walking club of co-workers to help you stay motivated to walk during the day.

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