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## Walk Your Way to Better Health

Looking for a way to have more energy and maybe even live longer? Then lace up your tennis shoes and take a walk.

The payoffs of walking – Walking can make you feel better, physically and mentally, and the long-term health benefits are even more impressive.

- Manage your weight.
- Strengthen your heart and lungs.
- Reduce your heart attack risk.
- Control your blood pressure.
- Decrease your risk for diabetes.
- Boost your spirits.
- Improve your sleep.
- Enhance your mental functioning

Sources: Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration; Mayo Clinic

# Mission in Motion

Health & Wellness Newsletter  
January 2014 – Physical Fitness



## Fitness with Fido

A dog isn't man's best friend; he can also be a man's (or woman's) best workout buddy.

In one study, researchers found that people who walked with dogs had lower risk of high blood pressure, trimmer waistline, and fewer chronic conditions, including depression.

### When working out with animals:

- **Don't exercise puppies too strenuously** or for too long to avoid damaging their developing bones and joints.
- **Take it little easier on older** pets or those recovering from an injury or illness. You can reduce the time or distance of workouts or turn to activities with less impact, such as swimming.
- **Avoid exercising during the hottest part of the day.** Dawn, dusk, and after dark are often the best times to run or walk.
- **Take fresh water** for you and your dog to drink.
- **After each exercise session** your dog will need hydration and a bit of rest.

Source: Hope Health

## 20 Exercise Tips

Try these ideas for fitting more activity into your day—and for getting more out of your daily activities.

**1. Choose activities you like.** A lot of different things count as exercise: dancing, walking, gardening, yoga, cycling, playing basketball. To make it easier to get moving, choose whatever gets you moving. Also, choose an activity that fits your self-identity. Do you see yourself wearing attractive clothes and bicycling comfortably to work, or wearing workout gear at the gym?

**2. Piece your workout together.** You don't need to get all your exercise at one time. Ten minutes morning, noon, and night can give much of the same benefit as 30 minutes all at once.

**3. Exercise with a friend.** Finding a workout partner can help keep you on track and motivate you to get out the door.

**4. Keep it brisk.** When you walk, make it brisk, since this may help control weight better than walking at a leisurely pace. What is brisk enough? Walk as though you are meeting someone for lunch and you are a little late. You can also time your steps for one minute: 120 to 135 steps per minute corresponds to a walking pace of 3 to 4 miles per hour, a good goal for many people. If your steps are not quite that quick, try picking up the pace for short bursts during your usual walk, on different days of the week. Over time, you'll stride your way to a faster walking pace.

**5. Take lunch on the move.** Don't spend all of your lunch time sitting. Hit the gym or go for a 20-minute walk with coworkers, and then have a meal when you are done.

**6. Try a pedometer.** Step-counters (pedometers) are cheap and easy to use. Best of all, they help you keep track of how active you are. Build up to 7,000 steps a day—or more.

**7. Take the stairs.** Use the stairs instead of elevators and escalators whenever possible.

**8. Turn off the TV, computer, and smart phone.** Cutting back on screen time is a great way to curb your "sit time." Trade screen time for active time—visit the gym, or even just straighten up around the house.

**9. Walk an extra stop.** During your bus or subway commute, get off a stop or two earlier and walk the rest of the way.

**10. Hunt for the farthest parking space.** If you drive to work or to run errands, purposefully park your car a little farther from your office or the store. It may not seem like much, but over weeks and months, these minutes of exercise add up.

**11. Make it your own.** Consider buying a piece of cardiovascular equipment for your home, such as a treadmill, stationary bicycle, or elliptical machine. Home models can be more reasonable than you think, and you can't beat the convenience. Keep in mind, though, that cheaper models tend to be less sturdy.

**12. Make it fun.** Try a new sport like tennis or rollerblading. The more that you enjoy exercise, the more likely you are to stick to it.

**13. Make it social.** Walk with a friend, your spouse, or your family in the morning or evening.

**14. Sign up for a class.** Check out the fitness course schedule at your local gym or community center, or the dance or yoga class schedule at a nearby studio. You may find that having the structure of a class helps you learn a new activity and keeps you on track.

**15. Turn sit time into fit time.** When you get busy, try to combine your cardiovascular exercise with a sedentary activity that you do already. Hop on that piece of home equipment while watching TV, reading, or returning phone calls.

**16. Keep an exercise log.** Monitoring the amount of activity you get each day will help to make you more accountable.

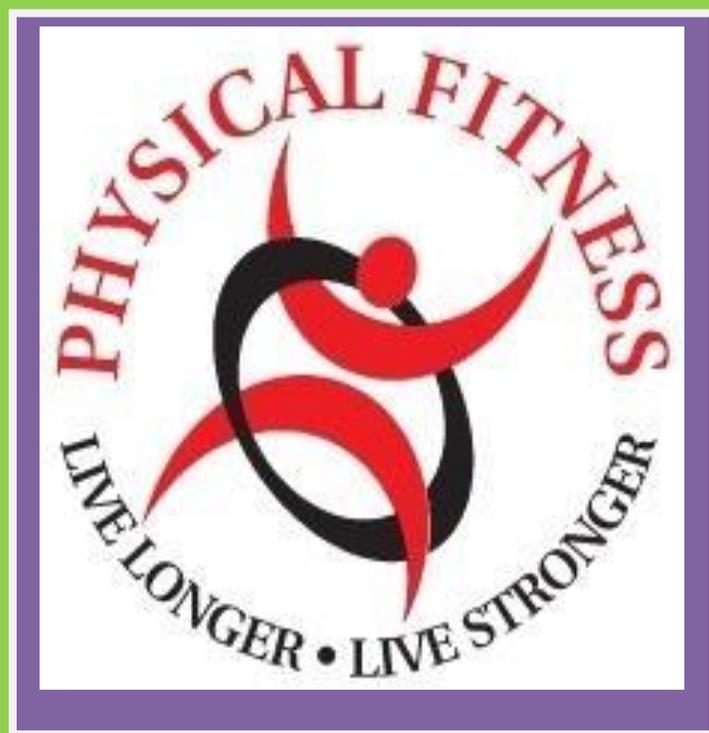
**17. Walk or bike for errands around town.** Leave the car at home for trips that are less than a mile or two. Cross something off your to-do list while getting in your physical activity.

**18. Ask the experts.** Hire a personal trainer for a session or two to help you with your weight training and flexibility training. Then you'll have the confidence to branch out on your own.

**19. Plan exercise into your day.** Set aside a specific time in your schedule to exercise and put it in your planner.

**20. Reward yourself.** Set short-term goals—and reward yourself for achieving them. Try targeting a specific event, such as a road race or a walk-for-charity, to participate in—this can help keep you motivated. Choose fitness-focused rewards for reaching your goals, such as new workout gear or a heart rate monitor.

*Source: Harvard School of Public Health*





# Face Up to Your Health!

Helping you make the right choices.



## Walking FUNdamentals .....Make walking work for you

A daily routine — 30 minutes or more — of moderately-paced or brisk walking can help you control your weight, lower cholesterol, strengthen your heart, and reduce the likelihood of serious health problems down the road. And since America is spending more than ever on preventable health problems such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes, every step you take can help build a healthier nation.

### Simple steps

It's easy. There are ways you can increase your physical activity to maintain a basic level of fitness — without setting aside a big part of your busy day.

- Walk up the stairs instead of riding the escalator at the mall
- Take an after-dinner walk with your family
- Choose the farthest parking spot in the lot at work
- Enjoy your lunch outdoors instead of at your desk

By walking 30 to 60 minutes a day at a brisk pace, you're on your way to better health!

### Stick With It

Give yourself a pat on the back for starting your walking program — it's a big step! Now it's time to focus. Staying on course and committed to walking will be well worth the effort as your energy level rises and you begin to reap other health benefits. Try these tips to stay motivated:

- 1. Set walking goals.** It takes about 12 weeks to form a habit, and having realistic goals in place will help reinforce your commitment. Use the **Walking FUNdamentals Walking log** to track your progress.
- 2. Recruit a walking buddy.** Invite a co-worker, friend, family member or neighbor to join you on your walks. As you get into a walking routine, you can motivate each other to keep your walking goals on track.
- 3. Take another route.** Scope out several routes to add variety to your walking program. Walk through the park one day and around the neighborhood the next time out.
- 4. Stay flexible.** Pencil in your walks on your calendar as you would other appointments. When things pop up that pull you away from your plans, be flexible. Don't let missing one or two walks sabotage your walking program. Shrug it off as a temporary setback, lace up your shoes and hit the pavement once again — even if it's only for 10 minutes during one of your work breaks.
- 5. Keep your chin up.** A positive attitude can be your best motivator. Try not to let negative feelings distract you from walking. Keep in mind that regular physical activity can boost your spirits and lower feelings of anxiety and depression.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Mayo Clinic



## January Health & Wellness Seminar: **Physical Fitness**

Date: 01/23/2014 - Thursday

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Location: Council Chambers

Speaker: To be Announced

## Health & Wellness Seminars

\*If you have a subject or topic that you would like more information on, feel free to make your request at 956-580-8630

### Chocolate Chai

Instead of wine and champagne, show you loved one you really care with nonalcoholic dessert drink. Chocolate is always a favorite on Valentine's Day, but this recipe combines cinnamon, ginger and cloves with rich cocoa for a warm spiced en to a delicious meal. Research shows that the antioxidants in tea and chocolate may improve blood vessel function and lower blood pressure. Remember though, that chocolate is a high calorie food, so moderate consumption is important for overall health.

#### Ingredients:

- 4 cardamom pods, cracked
- 1 (4-inch) piece cinnamon stick
- 4 whole cloves
- ¼ tsp. anise seed
- 2 - 4 (1/4 inch) slices fresh ginger, peeled (see note\*)
- 2 cups water
- 2 black tea bags
- 2 Tbsp. unsweetened natural cocoa powder
- ¼ tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 cups unsweetened almond or soymilk
- 3 Tbsp. agave syrup, honey or stevia, or to taste

#### Directions:

Place cardamom, cloves, anise seed and ginger in medium saucepan, add 2 cups of water, and place over medium-high heat. When water simmers, cover, and simmer over medium-low for 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Add tea bags, cover, and steep for 4 minutes. Remove tea bags, cover, and steep brewed tea with spices for 20 minutes. Strain to remove spices, and return spiced tea to saucepan. In small bowl, whisk cocoa with ¼ cup of hot tea until dissolved, then add to tea. Mix in vanilla, and almond or soymilk, Heat chai over medium-high heat until steaming. Sweeten to taste then our into mugs, or dice chai among 4 mugs and sweeten it to taste individually. \*Note: Ginger root varies in thickness. If you have fat piece, 2 slices may be enough.

Makes 4 servings,

Per serving: 120 calories, 3.5 g total fat (0 g saturated fat), 21 g carbohydrate, 4 g protein, 1 g dietary fiber, 65 mg sodium.

### HEALTHY SWAPS LEVO

Craving this?	Try this.
Citrus	Grapes
French Fries	Carrot sticks
Coffee	Herbal tea
Pasta	Spaghetti squash

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*Mission In Motion*  
*Our mission is to*  
*promote health*  
*awareness and to*  
*encourage healthy*  
*lifestyles*