



APRIL 2019

Wellness Matters

Brought to you by INTEGRITY CONSULTING GROUP

Your Healthy Body

Fitness First: Walking

If you are looking for an easy and inexpensive way to stay healthy or lose weight, try your own two feet.

Walking is an ideal form of exercise—it's free, and you can do it almost anytime and anywhere. Walking is a great way to maintain a healthy weight or to shed those unwanted extra pounds.



The First Step: Good Shoes

Whether you walk outdoors, on a treadmill, or at the local mall, you will want to invest in a good pair of walking shoes. They are designed to give you the flexibility, support, and proper push off needed for walking.

Everyone's feet are different, but look for shoes that are light, flexible, and immediately feel comfortable. Your walking shoes should not require a "breaking in" period.

Setting the Pace

You can walk to maintain your health or as part of a weight-

loss program. To start, experts advise beginners to start walking 15- or 30-minutes daily, then

adding five to ten minutes to each session per week. Here are more specifics:

- To maintain your health, walk 30 minutes a day at a "talking" pace, which means you can carry on a conversation comfortably while walking.
- If walking for weight loss, walk a medium to fast pace 45 to 60 minutes a day; do not skip more than two days weekly.
- For cardiovascular and aerobic fitness, walk 20 minutes at a fast pace (you should be breathing hard), three to four days a week.

After walking, gentle stretching can help keep your muscles from being sore. It is also wise to warm up before walking.

Stay Safe

Make sure to be safe while walking outside:

- Always walk on sidewalks (or on the left side of the street facing traffic if there are no sidewalks).
- Be aware of traffic.
- Carry identification and your cellphone in case of emergencies.
- At night, wear reflective gear and/or carry a flashlight in front of you.

The start of spring is a great time to get moving!

Join A Team!

Join a local adult sports team or club to stay both physically and socially active. How to find one? Search social media sites, call your local recreation center, ask co-workers, or start your own! Try a walking or running club, or a team sport like softball or basketball, for both fun and fitness!

Be A Volunteer

In addition to boosting your social well-being, volunteering can make you feel physically stronger, increase mental sharpness, aid in reducing stress, and even help you live longer. Despite these proven positive effects, only 1 in 4 Americans regularly volunteer, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. If you're curious about the specific benefits of volunteering or how to get started, read on.

- **Increased mental and physical activity:** Participating in volunteer activities gives you the opportunity to move and think in different ways than you do at home or at work. And, there's a good chance that you'll be on the move while volunteering, which increases your overall physical activity level, too.
- **Reduced stress levels:** Giving back to those in need is said to enhance one's sense of belonging, meaning, and appreciation, which are all elements that can help reduce stress.
- **Increased social well-being:** By volunteering in your community, you're broadening your social circle, forging new relationships, and giving back to those who are in need. All of these activities can increase your social well-being, which plays a large role in overall health.

Many organizations can benefit from your volunteer time. A good place to start looking is within your community; find a group that complements your talents, interests, schedule, and physical abilities. Think about what motivates you and choose an organization that fits:

- Helping others
- Learning about the community
- Meeting new and interesting people
- Working in a team environment
- Feeling like they made a difference
- Gaining valuable life experiences
- Acquiring new skills



Healthy & Delicious Fill Up On Fiber!

A study conducted at the University of Texas at Austin revealed that consuming fiber can have major positive effects on your waistline. Researchers analyzed the food intake of 100 adults; 50 were within the normal weight range and 50 were considered obese. Both diets were similar, but the normal-weight group consumed 33 percent more dietary fiber and 43 percent more complex carbohydrates daily than the obese group participants.

Eating 25 to 30 grams of fiber per day also promotes healthy bowel functions and may lower your risk for heart disease and cancer. Here's how to add fiber into your diet:

- Eat fiber-rich fruits. Pears have 4 grams of fiber, apples have 3, strawberries have 3 per cup and bananas have 2 grams of fiber.
- Select cereals that contain at least 2 grams of fiber per serving.
- Eat short-grain brown rice that has 4 grams of fiber per cup.
- Breakfast eaters consume less fat and cholesterol than non-breakfast eaters.
- Add veggies to soup, on top of pizza, in a sandwich, in pasta, or raw with low-fat dip.

Overall, try to eat 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of veggies daily as part of a 2,000 calorie diet.