



SPINAL COLUMN

Newsletter

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Doctor of Chiropractic

WALKING FOR FITNESS

WALKING WORKS FOR EVERYONE

With the growing concern for fitness, many of us have become aware of the benefits of exercise. You may have tried jogging, bicycling, or health club workouts, but many got injured or found them time-consuming or expensive. Now there is any easy convenient, inexpensive way to get fit and stay fit. The popular and growing sport of **walking** has all the benefits of other sports. It'll help you keep fit, and lose weight and keep it off. All you need to know is how to walk safely and how to plan your walking program. So put your best foot forward and walk for fitness.

WILL WALKING KEEP ME FIT?

YES. Even if you're fit, regular walking at the right pace gives you all the benefits of other aerobic sports. It's a safe alternative activity for sidelined athletes, too. Because walking is aerobic, your lungs use oxygen more efficiently, you strengthen your heart and you condition your muscles.

CAN I LOSE WEIGHT AND KEEP IT OFF?

YES. Brisk walking is aerobic, so your body has the oxygen it needs to burn fat. Aerobic exercise is the best way to burn fat and keeps it off. If you tried losing weight you know diets alone don't work. At about 100 calories each mile, walking can burn as much fat as jogging.

IS WALKING SAFE FOR MY HEALTH?

YES. Walking is one of the safest forms of aerobic exercise, even if you are under medical care for heart disease, diabetes, or osteoporosis. Because it is a gradual, controlled exertion, walking is safe.

BEFORE YOU START WALKING, have a medical evaluation if you are new to exercise, over 40, overweight, or a smoker; or if you have heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis or any health problem that concerns you.

HOW TO WALK FOR FITNESS

Stretch before you walk. Stretching prepare your muscles and joints for exercise. Stretch each side 3 times slowly. Never bounce. Stretch the calf, the thigh and other muscles for about 3-5 minutes.

Walk Briskly. Warm up by walking normally for 5-7 minutes to increase your heart rate slowly. Then for 20-45 minutes walk briskly, remain erect, taking full strides and swinging your arms easily. Cool down with a 3-5 minutes of slow walk to lower your pulse safely.

Stretch after you walk. Stretching while your muscles are warm prevents stiffness and increases flexibility, Repeat the warm up stretching exercises for 5-10 minutes.

ANATOMY OF GOOD WALKING SHOES.

Good walking shoes protect your legs and feet as you walk. Choose leather to let your feet breathe, look for padded soles and a good arch support.

SAFETY TIPS.

- Drink 8-10 glasses of water each day to replace water lost through perspiration.
- At night, walk with a buddy and wear reflectors.
- Walking facing traffic and on smooth surfaces
- If you wear headphones, keep the volume down to listen to traffic
- Never use ankle weights. The added weight can injure your back and joints.
- Always carry an I.D.
- Protect yourself from the sun-wear a hat and use sunscreen

Walking works for every one, anytime, anywhere. That is because it's safe, convenient exercise. Once you start walking you'll feel how much better you look, your energy is up and your stress is down. Make walking FUN for your self. Then you'll be sure to stay on the fitness track.

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