

20 Benefits Of Walking



1
20 min Improves Heart Health
 20 min walking is the best exercise for sedentary individuals, especially adults, to reduce the risk of heart and cardiovascular diseases.

2
30 min Aids Weight Loss
 30 min regular walking can help you lose weight, improve metabolism, and build lean muscle mass.

3
30 min Regulates Blood Pressure
 30 min interval walking can help reduce blood pressure and prevent shortness of breath.

4
25 min Fights Cancer
 25 min interval walking help reduce cancer risk and also is helpful for those undergoing chemotherapy.

5
35 min Improves Circulation
 35 min interval walking improves circulation, which in turn helps boost brain function, reduces LDL cholesterol, and prevents cell degeneration.

6
30 min Reduces Risk Of Diabetes
 30 min regular walking can help reduce blood sugar, prevent insulin resistance and diabetes.

7
20 min Strengthens Bones
 20 min walking help strengthen the bones thereby reducing the risk of osteoporosis and fracture, improves posture, and increases stamina.

8
45 min Strengthens Muscles
 45 min walking can help build and tone your leg and back muscles and prevent muscle loss.

9
5 min Improves Digestion
 5 min walking after dinner can help improve digestion and prevent bloating, diarrhea, constipation, and colon cancer.

10
30 min Boosts Immune Function
 30 min walk per day can help bolster the activities of the immune cells, namely, the B-cells, T-cells, and the natural killer cells and improve your resistance power.

11
20 min Prevents Dementia
 20 min walk can prevent loss of memory and cognitive functions and also helps to build confidence.

12
60 min Increases Lung Capacity
 60 min medium-paced interval walk can improve exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide at a larger volume which helps increase your lung capacity, stamina and exercise performance.

13
20 min Delays Aging
 30 min regular walking can stall aging symptoms and diseases, which in turn will keep you young and happy.

14
10-15 min Helps Produce Vitamin D
 10-15 min morning walk helps the body produce vitamin D and prevent cancer, multiple sclerosis, and diabetes type 1.

15
40 min Reduces Stress
 40 minutes intermittent walking can help reduce stress by reducing the production of stress hormone, cortisol.

16
15 min Uplifts Mood
 15 min walking when you are feeling low can uplift your mood magically and prevent depression and anxiety disorders.

17
30 min Improves Memory
 30 min interval walking can prevent the shrinking of hippocampus and thereby help improve memory.

18
50 min Increases Productivity
 50 min walking helps improve agility, reflex, energy levels, and increases productivity.

19
60 min Increases Your Creativity
 60 min walk can help you think strategically and sort your thoughts by relaxing your nerves and brain.

20
Builds Social Support

Walk for a social cause and in turn build a strong social support, people who will help you stay motivated to walk every day and lead a disease-free life.

Improves Heart Health

Walking helps to improve your heart health. Irish scientists have reported that walking is the best exercise for sedentary individuals, especially adults, to reduce the risk of heart and cardiovascular diseases (2). In another study published in the Journal of American Geriatrics Society, scientists confirmed that men and women of 65 years of age or older, who walked for at least 4 hours every week, were at less risk of cardiovascular disease (3). So, make sure to walk for 4 hours or more a week to keep heart disease, cardiovascular disease, and stroke at bay.

2. Aids Weight Loss

Walking is a great exercise and helps you lose weight. American scientists designed an experiment where obese patients walked together (a concept known as the 'walking bus') to their destinations in and around the city. After 8 weeks, their weight was checked, and more than 50% of the participants lost an average of 5 pounds (4). Therefore, it might be a good idea to start walking to and from your nearby destinations, instead of driving your car.

3. Regulates Blood Pressure



Walking can also help lower blood pressure. Researchers from Wakayama Medical College, Japan conducted an experiment on individuals with mild hypertension, where 83 participants walked 10,000 steps per day for 12 weeks. At the end of 12 weeks, they showed a significant drop in blood pressure and increased stamina (5). Even if you are unable to complete 10,000 steps per day, you should walk for at least 60 minutes every day to keep your blood pressure levels in check.

4. Fights Cancer

Cancer has claimed over a million lives. A sedentary lifestyle is one of the causes of cancer, and this is where walking every day can help you. Scientists have found that walking can help in weight loss, thereby reducing the risk of cancer. Walking has been found to be helpful for those undergoing cancer treatment by reducing the side effects of chemotherapy (6). It can also lower the risk of breast cancer.

5. Improves Circulation



Believe it or not, walking can actually increase your intelligence. Walking helps to supply the brain with the required amounts of oxygen and glucose, which helps it function better. It also decreases the levels of LDL cholesterol, which clogs arteries, and hence reduces the risk of stroke (7). So, walking can help improve blood circulation, which helps the brain and cellular functions.

6. Reduces Risk Of Diabetes

A sedentary lifestyle has led to an exponential growth of one of the most common diseases – diabetes. Scientists recommend no less than 5,000 steps a day with more than 3,000 of those steps being a brisk walk – to help manage type 2 diabetes (8). Walking every day can help control the blood sugar levels, which, in turn, can help you prevent type 2 diabetes.

7. Strengthens Bones



Your bones tend to become weaker as you age. But the good news is you can strengthen your bones by walking regularly. This low-impact exercise prevents loss of bone density, thereby reducing the risk of osteoporosis, fracture, and injury. Since bones determine our framework, stronger and healthier bones help to improve posture, stamina, and balance (9). Walking can also prevent arthritis and reduce the accompanying pain.

8. Strengthens Muscles

Like bones, you can also experience loss of muscles as you age. Here too, walking can help you by strengthening and toning your muscles and preventing muscle loss. Regular walking can strengthen your leg and back muscles (10).

9. Improves Digestion



Improper digestion can lead to gastrointestinal discomfort, bloating, constipation, diarrhea, and even colon cancer. Therefore, it is very important that you keep your digestive system healthy. Apart from maintaining good food habits and drinking water, you should also walk to improve digestion. Walking after meals is great. It helps you reduce weight and also supports your digestive system

10. Boosts Immune Function

Your body's immune system should function properly at all times to prevent infections, diseases, and death. Walking is a great way to boost your immunity. Walking at least 30 minutes a day can help bolster the activities of the immune cells, namely, the B-cells, T-cells, and the natural killer cells. It helps release the WBCs at a faster rate, thereby allowing your body to heal quickly

11. Prevents Dementia



Dementia is a neurological condition characterized by gradual loss of memory and cognitive functions. It can eventually make you unable to perform day-to-day functions and totally dependent on others. Walking regularly at a moderate pace can help prevent dementia, improve memory, and build confidence in older individuals

12. Increases Lung Capacity

Walking can also increase your lung capacity. When you walk, you breathe in more oxygen as compared to when you are stationary. This exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide at a larger volume can help increase your lung capacity, thereby increasing your stamina and exercise performance (16). The best part is, you don't even have to run. A medium-paced 60-minute walk (with breaks, if you need them!) can do the trick.

13. Delays Aging



A study conducted with 17,000 Harvard graduates showed that students who walked for at least 30 minutes every day lived longer than those who were sedentary . Walking may or may not activate the telomerase enzyme, which is responsible for maintaining DNA integrity, an important factor in aging, but it helps prevent many age-related problems

14. Helps Produce Vitamin D

Walking in the morning is a great opportunity for your body to produce vitamin D. Vitamin D is essential for bone strength and it prevents cancer, multiple sclerosis, and diabetes type 1. So, it is very important that you get at least 10-15 minutes of morning sun exposure, and walking is a great way to do so.

15. Reduces Stress



Walking can help reduce the stress levels by improving circulation, which, in turn, provides nutrients and oxygen to the cells. It also stimulates the nervous system receptors and decreases the production of the stress hormones. Breathing in and out while walking also helps to breathe out the tension.

16. Uplifts Mood

Several scientific studies have proven that physical activity can help prevent depression. Walking is highly recommended by physicians and psychiatrists to help uplift mood. So, if you are feeling depressed or sad, you should just take a walk and get some fresh air to feel better

17. Improves Memory



Japanese scientists have found that walking can help improve the memory of older patients (21). Physical exercise helps to increase the size of hippocampus while a sedentary lifestyle shrinks the hippocampus, leading to memory loss (22). So, walk every day to give your memory power a serious boost.

18. Increases Productivity

Walking regularly can also make you more active and energetic. This, in turn, can increase your productivity. Be it at school or work, your memory, agility, and your reaction to different stimuli will significantly change for the better.

19. Increases Your Creativity



Walking also helps to increase your creativity. It helps calm your nerves and relaxes your brain. When you walk, you don't have the pressure of a deadline or meeting a certain expectation. This helps your brain to think strategically and in a more sorted way. So, if you are stuck with a problem, take a walk!

20. Builds Social Support

Walking can help you build social support and make new friends who will encourage you to walk every day. You will look forward to meeting them. Also, you can walk to support a social cause. At the end of the day, you will be filled with positive energy and peace.

It is clear from this list that walking can improve your health in many ways, but what preparations do you need to make if you want to start walking?

What Do You Need To Start Walking?



You need few basic things to walk. Here's the list:

- Walking shoes
- Comfortable clothes
- A bottle of water and an energy bar for long walks
- If you walk to your office, wear your office clothes and a pair of comfortable shoes. You can change your footwear later at the office.
- Waterproof jacket
- Motivation – Absolutely necessary for at least the first 5 days. Let me explain more about it in the next section.

How To Stay Motivated For Walking?



- Ask a friend to join you in your new exercise routine.
- Walk your dog in the morning or evening.
- Go for a stroll with your friends or family in the evening or after dinner.
- Walk to your nearest grocery store or a nearby place.
- Think about the money you can save by walking.
- Use a walking planner to find out the best walking route, measure heart rate, calories burned, count steps, etc.
- Explore different paths every day.
- Join a walking group.
- Go on hiking trips.
- Walk for a social cause.

Useful Tips

If you are new to walking, you cannot walk for long distances immediately. So, break up your walking routine. Start by walking 10 minutes every day. Gradually increase this duration to 30 minutes a day. Then, you can walk 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the evening. You should also gradually increase the pace of your walking. When you are comfortable enough, you can try to walk 10,000 steps a day. Take necessary breaks in between. And, of course, keep yourself hydrated.

Now that we have made your job easier by telling you about all the health benefits of walking, what you need to go on a walk, and how to stay motivated, wear your walking shoes and go for a walk that will do you more good than watching TV at home. Good luck!