

Benefits of Walking

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When walking for exercise, distance is more important than speed. Walking for 3.5 miles at a moderate pace is more effective than walking a shorter distance at a fast pace. At a moderate pace, you'll do more walking with less soreness and fewer injuries. If you push yourself too hard and become excessively sore you are less apt to consistently exercise and may cause unneeded injury to yourself. Begin gradually by walking every two days, then every other day, until you can walk daily. A pedometer purchase may aid in the process of walking daily. Statistically individuals who wear pedometers walk more. The previous may be due to the ability to view a number and set daily goals.

Walking for weight loss is different from the above. For weight loss, walking is most effective 7 days a week for 45 minutes a day. Each pound of stored fat contains 3500 calories. Thus, if your goal is weight loss more rapidly, a reduction in calories is strongly suggested. Reduce daily caloric intake in a manageable fashion by approximately 200-300 calories per day. The previous can be done by reducing or eliminating carbonated or highly sweetened beverages, or examining serving size information listed on the back of potato chip and cookie packages.

To maintain current weight, walking 30-45 minutes 3 or 4 days a week is acceptable. However, daily exercise is more effective. Especially if no dietary modifications are a consideration. If you can't get in a solid 45 minutes a day, three 15 -minute walks burn roughly the same amount of calories.

In addition to cardiovascular strengthening and weight loss, walking has benefits for osteoporosis prevention. Osteoporosis begins long before visible signs. In a well-nourished body, those under 35 can replace any bone loss, but that ability decreases over time. Preventive measures like weight-bearing exercises should actually begin before the age of 30. Calcium supplementation is also important. [Note: Good supplementation should contain calcium, vitamin D, manganese, magnesium, zinc or copper. Zinc and copper should not be taken together because zinc interferes with copper absorption, and vice versa.] However, even with out supplementation, weight bearing exercises increase bone density. A research study at Tufts University divided 36 women 50-60 year of age into two groups. One group participated in 45 minute walks four times a week, while the other group did not. Additionally, half of each group received 800mg of calcium supplementation daily. At the end of a year, all walkers had increased bone density by 0.5 percent. This may seem uneventfully, but when compared to the 7 percent loss in bone density of the non-walking group it illustrates that exercise was more important than the supplementation in the preservation and increased density of bone.

Lastly, walking has been shown in research to help with a myriad of other illness. Moderate exercise helps control blood glucose in both Type I and Type II diabetes. Since walking can be a group activity it can provide a social activity that aid with fighting depression associated with loneliness. Exercise also helps relieve stress. Walking can promote weight loss which can help lower blood pressure. And it can

strengthen muscles around arthritic joints. At the Cornell Multipurpose Arthritic Center in New York City, research showed walkers decreased pain, medication, and increased 75 yards in pain free walking compared to non-walkers 20 yard decrease in pain free walking and no change in medication.

Now the benefits have been explained. Given the epidemic of certain disease walking doesn't seem so unreasonable. If you elect to improve your health, walking is a simple and effective way to benefit your body. If you elect not to improve your health, that is of course your prerogative. But for those who would like assistance in transitioning from inactivity to movement, an outline is provided in Patient Resources titled Getting Started.

Qi Acupuncture and Wellness is dedicated to providing Natural Relief for Human Suffering. Hopefully, this information will provide Phoenix and West Valley Resident with the natural relief walking has to offer.

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