



Walk this way for health and wellbeing

Walking is a great way to improve health and wellbeing. It's easy, completely free and you can set the pace. So, grab your shoes, get going and head for the great outdoors!



1. Almost everyone can do it

Walking is an activity that almost everyone can do (only 4% of people need help with walking outside or can't walk at all) so it is perfect for people who have poor health, or don't want to exercise intensively. It's just a question of heading outdoors and getting started.

2. It is good for your heart

Walking gets your blood pumping without putting excessive strain on your heart. Regular walking has been shown to reduce the likelihood of cardiovascular events including angina, heart attack, and stroke by more than 30 per cent. Walking for 30 minutes a day has been shown to

help reduce high blood pressure, making it great exercise for sedentary individuals, especially adults, to reduce the risk of heart and cardiovascular diseases.

3. It significantly reduces the risk of serious disease

Just 20 minutes of walking each day cuts the risk of early death by almost a third. Walking also reduces the risk of serious diseases including type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancer and Alzheimer's disease by 20–50%.

4. It boosts mood...

Walking is highly recommended to improve mood and boost energy.



5. ...and vitamin D levels

Walking in the morning sun for 10–15 minutes is a great opportunity for your body to produce vitamin D, which is essential for bone strength and is thought to have a role in preventing cancer, multiple sclerosis and Type 1 diabetes.

6. It is low impact on joints

Walking is low impact, which means it puts less stress on the joints than high impact activities, e.g. running or jumping. This makes it a good way to exercise for those who do not want to put their joints under strain.

7. It reduces stress

As walking raises your heart-rate without sending it thudding through your chest, it relieves stress rather than causes it: unlike other more intense exercise which can result in the release of the stress hormone cortisol.

8. Walking improves balance and reduces the risk of fall

Walking helps to increase lower body strength, which is an important factor in maintaining balance.

9. Improves blood flow from the legs to the heart


Walking improves the return of blood from the legs to the heart in people with venous disorder and leg ulcers. This effect is enhanced when wearing compression while walking as it provides resistance to the ankle and foot muscles, making them squeeze blood in the leg veins, aiding its return to the heart.

Ready to go?

It is recommended that adults do at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activ-

ity, like walking, each week, while children should aim for an hour of activity each day. The NHS campaign 'Active 10' promotes walking briskly (quick enough to get your heart pumping) for 10 minutes every day to make a difference to your health.

If you are new to walking, it is recommended that you start with a 10 minute brisk walk a day and then gradually build up to more. You can then increase this duration further to 30 minutes a day. Then, walk for 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, and from there, the sky is the limit! 

Walk this way...

Active 10

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/active10/home>

App and guidance on being active for 10 mins every day

Walking for health

<https://www.walkingforhealth.org>.

for information on all things walking, including advice on walking with a long-term condition

Ramblers

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/about-group-walks.aspx>

All things walking for all abilities.

