

WALKING PRESCRIPTIONS

Based on an AARP article by Sara Altshul



A walk is a proven way to treat a host of ailments, but not everyone needs to take the same path. Here's what the experts recommend.

High Blood Pressure: 25-35 minutes: moderate pace

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Walking can lower blood pressure, as well as cholesterol and reduce your risk for coronary artery disease.

Walking Rx: Shoot for at least 1.75 miles at 3 to 4.5 mph most days of the week.

Arthritis: 5-30 minutes: leisurely pace

Walking strengthens the muscles that support joints, helps you shed pounds and reduces joint stiffness. Researchers concluded that walking, like other exercise, was as effective as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for pain relief.

Walking Rx: Start with five minutes of walking and building up to 30 total minutes per day — in one or more separate walks — five days per week. If the pain is worse two hours after the walk than it was before the walk started, take a less intense walk the next time.

Osteoporosis: 30 Minutes: leisurely pace

Walking helps preserve bone.

Walking Rx: Try to walk 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Three 10-minute walks a day are as bone-strengthening as one 30-minute walk.

Depression: 20-30 minutes: varied pace

Walking increases the production of serotonin, dopamine and other brain chemicals that lift your mood,

Walking Rx: Start with 10 minutes of strolling, then walk briskly for 2 minutes at a pace that makes talking difficult. Keep that up for two or three minutes, then resume a strolling pace. Repeat these intervals two or three times.

Insomnia 15-30 minutes: relaxed pace

Walking outside exposes your body to essential daylight. You promote creation of serotonin by walking outside. As the sun goes down the body builds melatonin from serotonin helping to promote sleep. Late-afternoon walks can also help, as we sleep best when our bodies are in cool-down mode.

Walking Rx: In the morning or the late afternoon, aim for a 15- to 30-minute walk. It's best if you can walk daily. Walk at a comfortable pace, and finish your walk at least three hours before bedtime. It can take a couple of weeks to get the full sleep benefit of exercise, so don't be disappointed if you are not experiencing an immediate effect

Type 2 Diabetes: 45 minutes: relaxed pace

Walking provides better blood sugar control. The benefits are immediate, Walking after eating sweets can prevent a blood sugar spike.

Walking Rx: Walk for 15 minutes at an easy pace (about 3 mph or so) about a half-hour after breakfast, lunch and dinner. If you've been sedentary and haven't walked for a while, start out with a five- or 10-minute walk after each meal. People with diabetes can develop foot infections due to reduced blood flow to the feet, so be sure to get properly fitted for walking shoes. Your podiatrist can help.

Start a walking group in your congregation, neighborhood or at work.

Check the web for more information

Provided by Community of Christ Health Ministries Association

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