

What Are the Good Effects of Walking?

健康のために何か運動を始めたいと思っても、「続けられるかな」とか「ちょっと大変そう」と感じることも、ありますよね。そんな中で、歩くことは特別な準備がいらず、毎日の生活に取り入れやすい方法のひとつです。この記事では、歩くことを無理なく続けるための考え方や、日常との向き合い方が紹介されています。もしウォーキングを毎週の習慣にするとしたら、歩数を意識するのがよさそうですか？それとも時間を決めて歩くほうが合っていそうですか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Many medical experts say that walking is an easy way to improve **physical** and mental health, support fitness and **prevent** disease. They advise that walking is a great first step toward a healthy life although other forms of exercise are also important.

Good effects of walking

Dr. Sarah Eby is a sports medicine physician with Mass General Brigham in the state of Massachusetts. Eby said walking has many good effects and people do not need extra things. “You don’t need equipment and you don’t need a gym membership,” Eby noted “And the benefits are so vast.”

The U.S. surgeon general, a federal health officer, recommends that adults get at least two and a half hours of **moderate**-intensity physical activity every week.

Walking helps meet that goal. Exercise lowers the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, dementia, depression and many kinds of cancer.

Walking also helps blood sugar levels, is good for bone health, and can help people lose weight and sleep better. That is what Julie Schmied said. She is a health care worker with Norton Healthcare in Kentucky, which runs the free Get Healthy Walking Club.

Walking is also a relatively low-impact exercise that puts less pressure on joints than other exercises while strengthening the heart and lungs.

James Blankenship is 68 years old. He said joining a walking club at the Louisville Zoo last year helped him recover after a heart attack and a [complex](#) triple-bypass heart operation in 2022.

“My cardiologist says I’m doing great,” he said.

Some say walking is not enough. Anita Gust teaches exercise science at the University of Minnesota Crookston. Gust said walking “is not enough for overall health and well-being” because it does not provide resistance training that builds muscle strength and endurance.

Some health experts say that is especially important for healthy bone development in women as they age.

Experts recommend adding other activities at least twice weekly. These could include using weights, gym equipment or one’s own body for resistance exercises. Training that improves flexibility, like yoga or stretching, can also be helpful.

How much should you walk?

Many people have heard about the walking goal of 10,000 steps a day. This advice dates back to a 1960s marketing campaign in Japan. But, experts note that this is only a [guideline](#).

Shmied said the average American walks about 3,000 to 4,000 steps a day, and it is fine to increase that number to 10,000.

Setting a time goal can also be useful. Shmied suggests dividing the recommended 150 minutes per week into 30 minutes a day, or 10 minutes three times a day, for five days. During rainy or snowy weather, people can walk in malls or on treadmills.

As they become seasoned walkers, they can speed up or walk up hills while still keeping the activity level moderate.

“If you can talk but not sing,” Eby said, “that’s what we consider moderate-intensity exercise.”

Staying with your walking program

Walking with friends, including dogs, is one way to keep walking.

Walking clubs have appeared across the nation. In 2022, 31-year-old personal trainer Brianna Joye Kohn started City Girls Who Walk with a TikTok post inviting others to walk with her in New York.

“We had 250 girls show up,” she said.

Since then, the group has walked every Sunday for around 40 minutes, with some meeting afterward for a meal or coffee.

The Louisville Zoo launched its walking club in 1987. It joined with Norton Healthcare in 2004 to expand it and now has more than 15,000 registered members. Every day from March 1 through October 31, people walk around and around the zoo before it officially opens.

Recently, Janet Rapp walked down a path through the city zoo, waving at friends and stopping briefly to greet big flightless birds called emus that she knows by name.

The 71-year-old retiree starts each morning this way with a walking club.

“I’m obsessed,” she said. Not only does it ease her joint pain, “it just gives me energy...And then it calms me, too.”

I'm Mario Ritter, Jr.

Laura Ungar reported this story for the Associated Press. Mario Ritter, Jr. adapted it for VOA Learning English.

Source: What Are the Good Effects of Walking?

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2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. physical (adj.) related to the body

He needs a physical checkup before joining the team.

2. moderate (adj.) not too strong; medium

I prefer a moderate amount of sugar in my coffee.

3. prevent (v.) to stop something bad from happening

Wearing gloves can prevent small cuts.

4. complex (adj.) having many parts; not simple

The instructions looked complex, so I read them twice.

5. guideline (n.) a general rule or advice to follow

Our office has a guideline for answering customer emails.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. How many hours of moderate-intensity physical activity per week does the U.S. surgeon general recommend for adults?
2. About how many steps a day does Julie Schmied say the average American walks?
3. Where does Schmied suggest people can walk during rainy or snowy weather?
4. Do you prefer walking alone or walking with other people? Why?
5. Do you think walking is enough exercise for good health, or should people add other activities? Explain.