

Walking-A Natural Way to Prevent Chronic Disease



In recent surveys conducted by Statistics Canada, it was found that approximately 30% of the population reported walking regularly (four or more times per week) and that 70% walked at least once in the past three months.

Naturally, walking is a simple activity for enhancing health and well-being. In fact, in a recent study by the Pennington Biomedical Research Center on the relationship between steps/day and metabolic health, it was found that approximately 56% of people in the lowest category of steps/day had metabolic syndrome (defined by having the presence of three or more cardiovascular disease risk factors) compared to only 13% of people in the highest steps/day group.

Furthermore, the odds of having metabolic syndrome was 10% lower for every additional 1000 steps/day people took. So, even though moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity is important to one's health, the total amount of physical activity as measured by steps/day is also a significant factor.

Action Tip: If you have a pedometer, track your daily steps over the next three days to determine your baseline average steps per day, and then see if you can increase that number by 1000 steps/day. If you don't have a pedometer, create a personal route that you routinely walk on your activity tracker and count the steps total. At the end of three days, extend your route by an extra 1,000 steps!

Source: Taking Steps to Improve Health by Walking Peter T. Katzmarzyk, PhD, Associate Executive Director for Population Science and Louisiana Public Facilities Authority Endowed Chair in Nutrition, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Baton Rouge, LA. Research UPDATE published by the Alberta Centre for Active Living March 2011.