



King of Exercises: Walking

VERY few people today are getting enough exercise. Sitting all day in front of a computer or any of the many jobs that confine people to an office does not give the body enough of a work out. The only answer to this is to take up some form of extra activity to give your body this important workout. It has been found that walking is one of the best

forms of exercise because it contributes so many benefits to the human body without risking injury or stressing it.

- Walking helps control weight, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels. A brisk walk can burn up to 100 calories per mile or 300 calories per hour. Walking is the perfect complement to a sensible diet to

Mistake #1: Overstriding

When walkers try to walk faster, a natural inclination is to lengthen your stride in front, reaching out further with your forward foot. This leads to a clumsy, ungainly gait, striking hard with the feet. Your shins hurt and you really don't get any faster.

The cure: All of the power of your walk comes from pushing with the back leg and foot. If you are trying to walk fast, concentrate on taking shorter, quicker steps. Then think of really rolling through your step with your back foot and leg, getting a good push off. The result will be faster feet and lengthening your stride where it does you some good -- in back.

#2 The Wrong Shoes

Heavy, stiff -- soles won't bend, can't twist them, over 1 year old, too small when foot swells while walking...

If this describes your shoes, you are setting yourself up for plantar fasciitis, muscle pulls and knee problems.

The cure: Wear proper walking shoes such as sneakers or trainers.

#3 Flapping, Slapping Feet

Your feet hit the ground with a slap. You land flat footed with each step and get no roll.

You may develop shin pain.

The cure: Get flexible shoes that bend at the ball of the foot. A pair of running shoes with a low heel is best.

Strengthen your shins, ankle, and lower leg:

- Toe raises: Stand on a stair facing upstairs with your heels hanging over the edge. Dip the heels down, then raise them high. Repeat 10-20 times.

• Step Stretch Toe Raises

- Foot fun: While sitting around, several times a day, tap your toes quickly for several seconds. Then write the alphabet in the air with your foot. Repeat with the other foot.

- Heel walking: As part of your warm-up, walk on your heels for 30 seconds.

#4 No Arms

You keep your arms still at your sides while walking, or swing them without bending them. You notice that your hands swell quite a bit while walking.

The cure: Bend your arms 90 degrees and swing them naturally back and forth opposite the leg motion.

#5 Chicken Winging

Okay, you know to bend your arms when you walk. But you swing them from side to side, crossing the centre of your body and extending out to endanger passers-by. Or your fists come up on each swing past your breast, up even to your chin or threatening your nose.

The cure: Keep your elbows close to your body and swing your arms mostly back and forward, as if reaching for your wallet from a back pocket on the backstroke. As they come forward, your hands should not cross the centre line and should come up no further than your chest.

This arm motion will give power to your walk. Your feet generally move only as fast as your arms. This motion lets you concentrate on power from your rear leg without wasting motion in front of your body. It also looks far less silly.

#6 Head Down

You are always looking down, hanging your head and staring at your feet.

The cure: Look up!

Good posture for walking allows you to breathe well and provides a long body line to prevent problems with your back, neck, and shoulders.

Chin up when walking -- it should be parallel to the ground. Your eyes should focus on the street or track 10-