

- lose weight and keep it off.
- Walking gets the heart beating faster to transport oxygen-rich blood from the lungs to the muscles. The heart and lungs grow more efficient with a regular walking regimen, reducing blood pressure and the resting heart rate. Walking is even a central element of medical rehabilitation. Recovery from many ailments, including heart attack, is facilitated by a regular walking regimen.
- For people with poor circulation to the arms and legs, walking can increase the size and improve the efficiency of the tiny vessels that supply blood for cellular respiration.
- Psychologically, walking generates an overall feeling of

well being and can relieve depression, anxiety and stress by producing endorphins, the body's natural tranquilliser. A brisk walk will relax you and stimulate your thinking.

Don't fall prey to the assumption that if a little walking is good, a lot is better. If you undertake walking four or five miles a day, you'll quickly grow tired of the demands it makes on you and quit. Stick with a brisk walk around the neighbourhood -- 10 to 15 minutes out, and then retrace your steps. Also, see your doctor for a check-up before undertaking any new exercise programme.

Ten Walking Mistakes to Avoid

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20 feet ahead.

#7 Leaning

You lean forward more than 5 degrees. You lean back. You have a sway back with or without a forward lean.

The cure: Stand up straight but with relaxed shoulders, chin up and parallel to the ground. Think about walking tall. Think "suck in your gut, tuck in your butt."

Your back should have a natural curve, do not force it into an unnatural sway with behind out back stomach out forward.

Strengthen your abdominal muscles through sit-ups and other exercises so you are able to hold yourself straighter.

#8 The Wrong Clothes

You walk at night wearing dark coloured clothing with no reflective stripes or a safety vest. You are always wearing too much or not enough, end up sweaty and clammy in any weather. No hat.

The cure: To prevent becoming a hood ornament, wear a mesh reflective safety vest or put reflective strips on your night-time walking outfit. Many running shoes have reflective elements, but studies show it is best to have several reflective elements on to be seen from all directions.

For walking comfort, dress in layers. The inner layer should be of a fabric such as polypropylene that will wick sweat away from your body to evaporate -- not cotton, which holds it in next to the skin. The next layer should be insulating -- a shirt or sweater easily removed if you warm up. The outer layer should be a jacket that is windproof, and waterproof or water-resistant in wet climates.

Hats are essential equipment. They insulate you so you warm up faster. They shield the top of your head

from the sun -- an area where it is hard to apply sunscreen unless you are bald, but still burns. Hats with visors also shield your face from sun exposure.

#9 Not Drinking Enough

You don't drink enough water before, during, and after walking.

The cure: Drink a glass of water every hour throughout the day to stay hydrated. Ten minutes before your walk, drink a glass of water. During your walk drink a cup or more of water every 20 minutes. After you finish, drink a glass or two of water.

Avoid caffeinated beverages before your walk, they cause you to lose fluid, making you thirstier as well as making you take inconvenient stops along the way.

On walks over two hours, use an electrolyte-replacement sports drink and drink when thirsty. On long distance walks, drink when thirsty and be sure to replenish salt with a sports drink rather than drinking only water.

#10 Overtraining

You walk and walk and walk. But you have lost your enthusiasm. You feel tired, irritable. You always have aches and pains. You may be overdoing it.

The cure: Even the Creator rested on the seventh day. Take a day off now and then to let your body repair, build up muscle, and store up some energy to get you back on the road again.

Source:

<http://www.aboutwalking.50megs.com/>

<http://www.medhelp.org/general/walking.HTM>

<http://walking.about.com/cs/beginners/a/10mistakes10.htm>