

## **Walking/Exercise Facts**

If everyone in the United States were to walk briskly 30 minutes a day, we could cut the incidence of many chronic diseases by 30% - 40%. (Harvard University, Brigham & Women's Hospital)

Walking briskly for 3 hours a week, or exercising vigorously for 1.5 hours, will reduce a woman's risk of coronary heart disease by 30% – 40%. (New England Journal of Medicine)

A brisk two-mile walk each day can reduce a man's risk of impotence (Boston University School of Medicine)

Taking a long, brisk walk 3 times a week can reduce a young woman's risk of developing breast cancer by 33%. After menopause, the risk of breast cancer can be reduced by 26% (Department of Defense Breast Cancer Research Project).

Getting the U.S. population physically active could reduce overall spending on health care by more than \$77 billion. Including indirect costs, such as work productivity, could increase these savings to over \$150 billion (The Physician and Sports Medicine).

In a study of 124 sedentary men and women on “executive control” functions, walkers showed a 25% improvement while non-walkers made little mental progress. \*Executive control functions include: ability to plan, establish schedules, make and remember choices, and adapt to changing circumstances. (University of Illinois)

Every minute of walking extends your life by 1.5 – 2 minutes (Cambridge, MA Public Health Department).

Physically fit men are 53% less at risk of premature death, and physically fit women are 98% less at risk of premature death than sedentary men and women.

Physically fit men die 4 times less often from cancer, and physically fit women die 16 times less often from cancer than unfit men and women.

Men and women who are physically fit are 8 times less likely to die from cardiovascular disease than unfit men and women.

Regular exercise creates a 40-year offset in oxygen carrying capacity – in other words, a fit person at 70 years of age has the same oxygen carrying capacity as an unfit person of 30 years.

Regular exercise helps raise the percentage of beneficial HDL cholesterol

Regular exercise is as effective as medication in reducing blood pressure.

Physically fit women have diabetes 66% less often than unfit women.

Regular exercise helps keep joints flexible, helps build and preserve muscle strength, and helps protect joints from further stress.

Regular exercise delays bone loss and promotes bone formation in women most at risk of osteoporosis.

Exercisers are:

- 50% more likely to quit smoking
- 40% more likely to eat less red meat
- 30% more likely to cut down on caffeine
- 250% more likely to eat low-calorie food and drinks
- 200% more likely to lose weight
- 25% more likely to cut down on salt and sugar than non-exercisers

Exercise alone is as effective as anti-depressants in treating mild and moderate depression

Exercise alone is as effective as psychotherapy for moderate depression

Regular exercise typically causes more continuous and restful sleep

## **Weight Loss Facts**

Modest weight loss in women reduces the risk for uterine, cervical, ovarian, breast, gallbladder and colon cancer. Modest weight loss in men reduces the risk for colorectal and prostate cancer.

Modest weight loss of 10 pounds has been associated with a:

- 16% decrease in total cholesterol
- 12% decrease in LDL cholesterol
- 18% increase in HDL cholesterol

Modest weight loss of just 10 pounds has been associated with a 34% drop in triglyceride level.

Every 2 pounds of weight loss results in a 2 mmHg drop in blood pressure. High blood pressure medications can be reduced or discontinued after an average of only 5-10% weight loss.

In diabetics, a 5-10% weight loss can reduce or negate the need for insulin or oral hypoglycemic agents.