

Do It For Yourself

The easiest exercise:

One foot in front of the other

You can't say it's a new health breakthrough, as mankind has been doing it since we left the trees. The truth is, walking, is one of the finest and most basic exercises we can do. So why, in this age of couch potatoes and record levels of obesity, aren't we doing more of it? C'mon, get up, put on a pair of comfortable shoes and go for a walk...it's really that simple.

Maybe some of us think that walking is just well...too wimpy an exercise. We're waiting for the day when we get motivated to start training for a marathon, or for the rates at the health club to go down. Quit dreaming. Those calories will continue to pile up while you wait, and your flexibility and respiration will decrease in the meantime. There's miles of sidewalk, malls and parks ready for exploration and the tread of your cushioned insoles.

According to the University of Indiana Health Center, research proves that even moderate activity is greatly beneficial to normally sedentary people. Hmm...if spending eight hours per day at a desk, followed by an evening in front of the tube counts as sedentary... count a whole lot of us in that class. Its Web site www.indiana.edu/~health says that 30 minutes of walking five days per week is enough to reap major health advantages. Thirty minutes...that's a half-hour sitcom, which is probably a rerun at that.

Walking is natural, takes the bare minimum of physical ability, but will strengthen our hearts, help control weight, reduce stress and improve bone strength. It's also the least likely exercise to



cause injury. You don't need special equipment or a location to do it, just the right footwear and comfortable clothes. Unless you are over 40 or have a chronic disease, high blood pressure or history of heart disease, you don't need a physical exam to get started.

As with all exercises, warm up before you start walking. Some light calf and hamstring stretches are good, followed by five or 10 minutes of slow, leisurely walking. The University of Indiana site recommends that if your main goal is to be healthy and reduce risk for disease, 30 minutes of low-to-moderate intensity walking at least five days per week should be enough. After walking, be sure to engage in a cool-down period where you slow down the pace considerably before stopping altogether.

If you'd like to burn up calories and lose weight, however, you'll need to walk for 40 to 60 minutes, and pick up the pace to moderate intensity. In fact, that style of walking may actually reduce the appetite for some people.

Some tips to keep up the pace of your routine:

- Walk with a friend, as long as that person has same commitment to walking as you.
- Listen to music while you walk, but keep an eye on the traffic and your surroundings!
- Change the course occasionally. A walking track can quickly become boring. Go to different parks and parts of the city with pleasant views.
- If you need another excuse, then take the dog for a walk.

—By Daniel Aspell, Multi-Ad Services



Kub Kar winners

The annual North Halton District Kub Kar Rally was held at St. Andrew's United Church with trophies presented by District Commissioner Darlene Johnston and Assistant District Commissioner Kevin O'Brien. Winners were Fastest Kar, Mark Wilson, 1st Hornby; second, Mitchell Davison, 1st Limehouse; third, Tris Hannah and driver Austin Agnew, 1st Limehouse; Mat race winner, Patrick Dobson, 1st Glen Williams; Most Interesting Design, Kyle Pearson, 1st Limehouse; Judges' Choice, Kyle Plastino, 3rd Georgetown and Cubs' Choice, David Taylor, 1st Hornby.

Photo by Jean Layman



Scout Truck winners

The North Halton District Scout Truck race was held at St. Andrew's United Church with Troop Scouter Barb Rothwell and Troop Counsellors John Rothwell and Mike Farrugia presenting trophies. Winners (from left) were Scouts' Choice, Kieran McLoughlin, 2nd Georgetown; Mat Race third, Scott Beedham, 2nd Georgetown; Fast Track second, Simon Treviranus, 1st Hornby; Fast Track first, Brendan McLoughlin, 2nd Georgetown; Judges' Choice, Brad Haynes, 2nd Georgetown; first overall, Patrick Hanley, 2nd Georgetown; Mat Race first, Steven Treviranus, 1st Hornby; Mat Race second, Trevor Kenny, 4th Georgetown and Most Interesting Truck, Bryan Danord, 2nd Georgetown.

Photo by Jean Layman

cheryl (top right) lost 61 pounds, 75 inches; her mom becky (middle) lost 92 pounds, 103 inches; allison (bottom left) lost 120 pounds, 162 inches; linda (bottom right) lost 30 pounds, 40 inches.

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