

Move over books, library loans pedometers

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How many steps do you take a day? We need to put one foot in front of the other at least 10,000 times a day in order to lose weight and remain healthy.

However, the average North American actually takes between 3,500 and 5,500 steps per day, according to Pam Lalani, public health nurse for York Region.

In order to help people reach the 10,000 steps a day goal, the region and Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library have teamed up to launch a pedometer loan program.

Pedometers track the number of steps you take while wearing it.

"Using the pedometer gives them a little more incentive to work harder," said Carolyn Nordheimer James, CEO of the library.

The region donated 30 pedometers to the library, which will be available for one-week loans starting June 5.

"If people borrowed them and got used to them, they could go out and buy their own," Ms Nordheimer James said of one of the program's goals.

"Libraries are a great way to reach our

diverse population here in York Region," Ms Lalani said.

"It's a good way to decrease sedentary behaviour. ... Stouffville has some wonderful parks and trails," Ms Lalani said.

As part of the June 5 launch in Whitchurch-Stouffville, the leisure services department will host a free urban poling/walking class from 10 to 11 a.m. at their shared facility, 30 Burkholder St.

"(Leisure services has) the activity, we have the information, so it's a good fit and we're both in the same location, so it makes it easier," Ms Nordheimer James said.

This is the first year York Region and the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library have partnered on this type of project. Other York Region libraries taking part include Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

The program has been running in Toronto since 2007.

It started with 12 library branches participating.

This year, the pedometer loan program is expected to be available at all Toronto bookmobiles and library branches.



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How many steps have you taken today? According to ParticipACTION, less than 5,000 is considered sedentary; 5,000 to 7,499 is low active; 7,500 to 9,999 somewhat active; 10,000 is active and 12,500 is highly active.

So, how do you increase the number of steps you take daily to reach 10,000? Consider taking a

walk-and-talk meeting instead of speaking over the phone, according to EatRight Ontario. Take a fitness class or go for a walk at lunch.

Walk to work or park your vehicle at the far end of the parking lot.

Get off the bus a few stops early and take the stairs instead of the elevator.

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