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*"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"*

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## Walking Your Way to Health

Did you know that even twenty to thirty minutes of brisk walking per day could make you a healthier person in many different ways? Hundreds of research studies have shown the many different benefits regular exercise, including walking.



I know you have been told before but walking twenty to thirty minutes per day will increase the number of calories you burn. If total calories you burn in one day are less than the number you consume or eat, your body will take some of your body fat, convert it to energy and use it. Do this every day and you will lose weight.

When you first begin exercising consistently, you may feel tired afterward. However, after your body becomes accustomed to it, you will feel more energized. You will even find it easier to accomplish many physical tasks that you found difficult before.

I can speak personally to this one. When I exercise regularly, I fall asleep faster, sleep more soundly, and wake up feeling fully rested. Getting adequate and good quality sleep is very important for your overall health.

Have you heard of the saying “use it or lose it”? This applies to many different things, including your muscles. Your muscles are designed to adapt to whatever demands you put on them. The more you exercise, the stronger and healthier your muscles will become. By contracting your muscles repetitively in a controlled manner, as in walking, the blood flow through them is increased. This will help flush out accumulated waste products from the muscle tissue and prevent chronic muscle stiffness due to inactivity. As well, exercise and stretching will help prevent those painful muscle cramps that seem to “attack” some people during the night.

Going for a good walk applies forces or pressure on you bones and joints in a non-traumatic manner. Like your muscles, your bones respond to the demand you put on them. Therefore, the more you exercise, the more your body will respond by packing more calcium into the bones that are experiencing the increased forces. In conjunction with supplementing your diet with calcium and vitamin C, this will decrease your risk of osteoporosis.

This one is the most dear to my heart. All of your joints have a relatively poor internal blood supply. They depend on the internal “circulation” or “mechanical pumping” of a clear slippery fluid within the joint itself as it moves. Therefore, the more your joints move or pump, the healthier they will be. As a chiropractor, I encourage all of my patients to be as active as possible. The healthier their joints are, the less likely they will experience any serious back or neck pain in the future.

It has been proven over and over again that regular exercise helps reduce your level of stress. High levels of stress can contribute to high blood pressure, weakening of your immune system, digestive problems, and many other unhealthy states. Going for a walk helps you to not dwell on the negative things in life.

I always try to stress to all of the people who see me in my office that they should try to be “proactive” rather than “reactive” with their health. Get out and exercise before your muscles are wasted away, before you have osteoporosis, before you have arthritis, and before your back gets sore. Make regular exercise part of your lifestyle, not just to react the problem you have at that particular time.