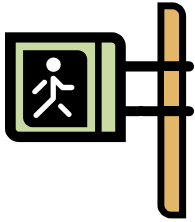


Eat Smart, Move More



Walking Your Way to 10,000 Steps a Day

Health experts recommend walking 10,000 steps per day. The potential health benefits of increasing the number of steps you take in a day include improved weight control, blood pressure, and cholesterol, as well as a lower risk of cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. A step counter can help motivate you to walk more, by helping you keep track of how many steps you take during the course of a day. These simple, palm-sized gadgets can be purchased cheaply for about \$10-25 and are clipped onto your waistband.



How Active Should You Be?

You may have to make an effort to achieve 10,000 steps per day, especially if you have a job that requires you to sit at work. To determine the average number of steps you take each day, wear a step counter for about a week without making any changes to your normal routine, and record the number of steps you take each day before you go to bed.

Then, try to increase your daily number of steps by 500. For example, if you take an average of 2,000 steps per day, your first goal should be to achieve 2,500 steps per day the following week. Though not an exact science, the number of steps you take each day can indicate your activity level:

<i>Number of steps per day</i>	<i>Level of activity</i>
Less than 5,000	Sedentary
5,000-7,499	Low active
7,500-9,999	Somewhat active
10,000 or more	Active

Based on the average person's stride, taking around 2,100 steps is equal to walking 1 mile, and taking around 10,000 steps is equal to walking 5 miles.

Adding More Steps to Your Day

You can increase your daily steps through a variety of activities. Here are a few suggestions:

- ✓ Take a walk with your spouse, child, or neighbor.
- ✓ Park in the farthest spot from your destination and walk.
- ✓ Get up to change the TV channel.
- ✓ Work in the yard.
- ✓ Walk down the hall to speak with a co-worker.
- ✓ Walk while you wait at a meeting or appointment instead of sitting.
- ✓ Take the stairs instead of the elevator.



Strategies for Weight Management



If you are using activity as part of your strategy to lose weight, you may need to increase your number of steps to 15,000-18,000 per day. For every 2,000 steps you take, you burn 75-100 calories. The actual number of calories you burn depends on your activity level. If you jog 2,100 steps, you will burn more calories than if you walk.

Making Healthy Food Choices

Remember, you have to take extra steps to offset some food choices. If you choose a large order of fries instead of a small, you will need to add 6,520 extra steps to your day. If you choose a Biggie cola instead of a medium, you will need to add 4,000 extra steps to your day. If you choose a Quarter Pounder rather than a regular-sized hamburger, you will need to add 2,900 steps to your day.



Final Thoughts

The main reason you should count your steps and work toward achieving 10,000 a day is that you will become more active than you were before you counted steps. Any increase in activity helps your health and weight.