

Walking Towards Your Goal of Better Health

Easy tips to make exercise a part of your daily lifestyle.

By: Dr. Jean Harvey-Berino, Ph.D., R.D., Joyce Hendley and EatingWell Editors

You probably know why you should exercise more—

weight management and stress relief are two advantages of being active. But finding time and motivation can seem tough. Here's the good news: you don't need to buy a gym membership to reap the benefits of daily exercise. Try lacing up your walking shoes instead. These five tips will help you get out the door and moving:

Always be ready. Keep a pair of walking shoes by the door at home and at work, ready for an impromptu stroll. Bonus: If your shoes are in sight, you'll be reminded to get out the door.

Dress the part. Wear loose, comfortable clothing that gives you plenty of room to move your arms and legs. A good pair of walking or running shoes, with socks, is also a must. They don't have to be expensive—but don't skimp on comfort to save a few pennies either. Replace your shoes when they become worn down.

Find something fun to do while you're walking. Listen to your favorite music while you work out. Or try talk radio, podcasts or audiobooks.

Switch it up. Find inspiration in a new location. Try a loop around your local park or nature trail instead of your usual spin around the block.

Find a walking buddy. Walking is more fun when you have someone to talk to. Think of your daily walk as a chance to catch up with a friend. You may be less likely to skip a walk if you know someone's waiting for you (even if that someone is Fido). If you feel unsafe or self-conscious walking alone, a partner can make all the difference. Need help finding a walking buddy? Check your local mall or neighborhood recreation center for walking-club information.

Beat the bad-weather excuse. Bad weather is one of the most common reasons to skip exercise. Get around this excuse by meeting a friend at the mall, where you can socialize as you move. To avoid temptations to shop, leave your credit cards at home and just bring enough cash for an emergency snack.

Make sure you talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise program.



Photo Credit: Blaine Moats

Photo is of a model not an actual patient.