



Walking brings benefits to your mind and body

“Let’s go for a walk.”

It’s a phrase we hear hundreds of times over the course of our lives. It can evoke memories of time spent with babies in strollers, walking the family pet, stretching our legs after a big meal and jaunts through local parks and green areas.

However, walking lowers our risk of depression and heart disease, improves our overall health and stimulates our brains.

Simply taking a 20-minute walk every day—adding up to 2.5 hours a week—will bring those benefits and more.

People

**who walk
2.5 hours weekly¹**



**reduce their
risk of depression by**

25%

Take your first step

Walking is something almost everyone can do. It doesn't require special clothes or gear other than comfortable, sturdy shoes. The investment is simply your time and your effort. But the physical return on investment is off the charts. Regular walking helps:²

- Maintain a healthy weight and lose body fat
- Prevent or help manage various conditions, including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, cancer and type 2 diabetes
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Increase energy levels
- Improve your mood, cognition, memory and sleep
- Improve your balance and coordination
- Strengthen your immune system
- Reduce stress and tension

Mental rewards

Generally, what's good for the body is good for the brain.³

What's more, walking in green spaces—parks, nature trails, forests or even suburban wooded areas—bumps up the benefits. Time spent walking in nature can reduce stress and negative thoughts and may help prevent burnout.⁴

Another surprising benefit is a boost to your creativity and focus. It's been shown that creative thinking and concentration improve while you are walking outdoors and continue thereafter. There really is truth to the idea of taking a walk to clear your mind and find inspiration.⁵ It's no wonder that walking meetings are on the rise.



Now grab a friend, colleague or your pet and get walking!

*It's always a good idea to talk with your healthcare provider before you start any new physical activity.

Learn how Livongo can help support you on your wellness journey. To sign up or learn more, go to Go.Livongo.com/STATEOFIOWA/New.

¹<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/11/defeating-depression-naturally>

²<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/walking/art-20046261>

³<https://news.northeastern.edu/2024/05/09/racquet-sports-longevity/>

⁴<https://magazine.hms.harvard.edu/articles/walk-woods-may-boost-mental-health>

⁵<https://health.ucdavis.edu/blog/cultivating-health/3-ways-getting-outside-into-nature-helps-improve-your-health/2023/05>

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