



Saline County Employee Newsletter

5 REASONS WALKING IS THE BEST WORKOUT

by Ashley Lauretta

There is a simple activity that you do every day — one you don't even think about — that is actually one of the easiest forms of exercise. Though it may not register when you think about a cardio workout, walking for fitness is a great way to get your heart pumping and improve your overall health and well-being.

If you don't have any interest in becoming a runner, the good news is you don't have to run to get a sufficient workout. More than a way to get from point A to point B, walking just 30 minutes a day is enough to meet current exercise guidelines — and take a minute to slow down in our fast-paced world.

Here are five simple reasons walking is one of the best workouts you can do:

① IT'S THE MOST ACCESSIBLE FORMS OF EXERCISE

There is no exact date when a baby will take its first steps, though most are doing so by their first birthday. Because it is an activity that is such an integral part of our everyday lives, it is under-

standable to forget that it is, in fact, exercise. When it comes to cardio, our first thought often goes straight to running, even though walking is its foundation.

(continue on page #2...)



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5 REASONS WALKING IS THE BEST WORKOUT—CONT. FROM PG #1

“For many of my clients, because of age or ability, running is not even an option,” explains Barry Bouthilette, The Walking Coach and author of “Feel the Zest: 89 Ways to Be Fully Energized.” “The beautiful thing is that walking doesn’t require any special skill, is wonderfully accessible to most people and can be done just about anywhere, anytime.”

Walking is one of the most uncomplicated workouts there is — no equipment or fee required — and it is all you need to meet the physical activity guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

② IT CAN BE JUST AS EFFECTIVE AS RUNNING

As stated above, walking is often thought of as a lesser workout than running. However, it can be just as effective if done right.

“Walking is our default gait; we are born to walk,” reminds Judy Heller, personal trainer, walking coach and owner of Wonders of Walking. “The definition of ‘pedestrian’ is dull and ordinary. If everyone can do it, it seems to minimize the benefits of the act of walking.”

Bouthilette points out that while walking demands less from our cardiovascular system, “it can be as effective as running when it comes to promoting cardiovascular health and burning calories.” To achieve these benefits, you must walk at a fairly high intensity, which will vary from person-to-person. Bouthilette advises clients focus less on time, mileage and heart rate and simply walk for exercise by feel.

“If you are more aware of your lungs and heart and leg muscles during a walk, that’s a good sign,” he adds. “It means you’re digging deep enough to derive some health benefits from the activity. If we feel better after a walk

than before started, we’re onto something healthy. No rocket science here.”

③ IT CARRIES A LOW INJURY-RISK

There is a risk of injury when walking as no activity is immune, however, many injury statistics note distracted walking — such as looking down at a smartphone — and, according to the National Safety Council, pedestrian fatalities involving a motor vehicle, as the main concerns.

Just as with any type of workout, you need to be mindful of not doing too much, too soon and gradually incorporate walking for fitness into your daily routine. If you are balancing your routine with other forms of exercise, such as yoga, spin or weight lifting, keep that in mind when setting your goals and mileage for the week.

“Dramatic increases in distance or speed can lead to injury or illness,” notes Heller. “Remember doing too much too soon can lead to an unnecessary injury ... If you tend to push yourself and discover you do not feel up to a workout, that is OK; take the day off. Rest is just as important as training and it may do you some good.”

According to Harvard Medical School, walking 5–6 miles over the course of a week can even ease joint pain and arthritis flare ups. Keeping your body moving with such a low-impact activity is a great way to keep joints loose and prevent stiffness throughout the body.

④ IT IS A VERSATILE WORKOUT

Walking may seem like a pretty static workout, however, you can increase the difficulty quite easily. For example, Bouthilette mentions the mantra, “the more hills, the better, baby!” (Continue on page #6...)

ONLINE LEGAL RESOURCES

Continuum EAP's online resources includes a library of 100+ free fillable legal forms, including:

- **Wills/Living Trusts**
- **Bill of Sale**
- **Rental Agreements**
- **Promissory Note**

To get started, visit 4continuum.com and click **"MEMBER LOGIN"** at the top of the page. Use "Saline" as your username and "7636" as the password? Contact HR or give Continuum a call if experiencing difficulty.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

"What would be the assumed number of U.S. adults, originally having at least one major depressive episode each year, if reduced in equal percentage to those increasing their white blood cell count due to hiking twice a day for three days?"

- A. 4,600,000
- B. 6,400,000
- C. 6,900,000
- D. 9,600,000

BONUS: 25 WELLNESS POINTS for correct answer

**Answer to the May Question: "B. .88 oz and 1.32 oz"*

Email your name and correct answer to: salinewellness@gmail.com

**Answers must be received prior to the subsequent month's newsletter distribution.*

EIGHT WAYS TO BE HAPPIER ON THE JOB

CONTINUUM EAP

Is there a secret to enjoying your work more? The key may be to find more meaning and upsides in what you do every day. That may help you stay positive — and productive.

Here are 8 helpful habits to add to your resume. Not every idea will work for everyone — but there may be tips that inspire better days ahead for you.

1. Focus on how work fulfills you. Think about what makes your job valuable and meaningful. Are you in customer service? Then it might be helping make someone's day a little bit easier. Are you part of a team? Then it may be working together to get good things done. You get the idea.

2. Give your workmates shout-outs. Look for opportunities to praise your co-workers. Maybe someone made a tough deadline or came up with a creative solution to a problem. When you give kudos, you could make someone's day. And that may brighten yours as well.

3. Show yourself some respect too. OK, so you don't want to humblebrag to your co-workers about all your success. But sometimes, it's good to remember what you contribute. If you're feeling stressed and pressed, remind yourself of the times you were winning at work.

4. Follow your work bliss. Few things are more motivating than doing what you like to do.

So be aware of the parts of your job that you truly enjoy. If possible, look for opportunities to do those activities — and tasks like them — more often.

5. Add your own happy twist. Have something you don't particularly like doing? Try to think of ways to make it more fun — or to change your attitude about it. Picture yourself slaying a dragon, racing to the finish or reaching a mountaintop, if that helps!

6. Be choosy about the company you keep. No one can be expected to be upbeat all the time. But as much as possible, avoid people who are chronically negative. Instead, reach out to co-workers who offer support — especially when you feel stressed and need a lift.

7. Take moments to recharge. You might think that working nonstop will help you get ahead. But that's not always true. Taking short breaks may help refresh your focus and creativity. If you can, get outdoors — a few stress- and screen-free minutes may be the shot of energy you need.

8. Roll the highlights. Before calling it a day, single out at least 1 good thing that happened on the job. What went well? Did you make progress on a difficult task? Did a co-worker help you out? Don't let those bright spots slip by without some gratitude. — end

THE POWERFUL HEALTH BENEFIT OF SPENDING TIME OUTSIDE—

—BY ROBYN WHALEN

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the average American spends 93% of their life indoors. 87% of that time is spent inside, while the other 6% is spent in automobiles. This means that only 7% of the average American's life is spent outdoors. This is unfortunate considering that spending time outdoors is one of the easiest ways to improve your overall health and wellbeing.



Research suggests that spending time outside can function as a natural medicine. It can help improve your physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. Spending more time outdoors is also linked to a lower risk of early death. Besides helping you live a longer, healthier life, spending time in nature can help you live a happier life, too.

We know that being a full-time employee can make it difficult to spend time outdoors. But even a few five-minute outdoor breaks a day can have a positive impact on your health. Keep reading to learn about some of the amazing health benefits of spending time outdoors. Plus, we include a few tips to help you get outside more often!

- **Happiness.** Science backs it: spending time outside makes you happy! While researchers still aren't exactly sure what causes this link between outdoors and happiness, many studies have shown that our moods take a positive shift when we spend time outside. Research also suggests that spending in nature can also help reduce the risk of developing depression and anxiety – and even help improve symptoms.
- **Improved memory.** Studies have found that spending time in nature can help improve memory functions – especially short-term memory. Research from the University of Michigan found that walking in a park or even viewing pictures of nature helped improve both memory and attention span.
- **Stress relief.** Spending time outside has been shown to lower stress levels and has similar effects on your brain and body as that of meditating. Although the exact science behind it is unclear, being in a natural setting shows evidence of lower stress levels through a lower heart rate and lower blood pressure. *(Continue on page #5...)*

SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS—*CONT. FROM PG #4*

- **Reduced inflammation.** Spending more time outside could help naturally reduce pain! A 2012 study found that students who were asked to spend time forest bathing had lower levels of inflammation than their counterparts who spent time in the city.
- **Energy boost.** According to research from the University of Rochester, 90% of people experience increased energy just by participating in outdoor activities. This boost of sudden energy can help inspire you to be more active, too!
- **Better brain function.** Research has shown that spending more time outdoors is linked to higher levels of concentration, creativity, and improved mental clarity. All of these perks lead to better work performance!
- **Vitamin D boost.** It's no secret that spending more time outside will help you soak up the sun. Vitamin D is essential for bone growth and helps regulate your immune system. Those who spend very little time outdoors can be at a higher risk of developing vitamin D deficiency.
- **Stronger immune system.** Becoming one with nature might have some amazing effects on your immune system. One study showed that adults who hiked twice a day for three days increased their white blood cell count by 40%.

You don't have to completely change your lifestyle to achieve some of the awesome health benefits of spending time outdoors. The following are a few simple tips to help you spend less time inside and more time enjoying nature:

- Work outside while working from home
- Read on your porch or deck
- Do daily activities outside (cutting coupons, checking your email, making phone calls)
- Start a garden in your backyard (extra health points for the fresh produce!)
- Go for a daily morning walk
- Eat dinner outside when weather permits
- Pick-up an outdoor hobby (photography, hiking, biking, outdoor yoga)
- Take your kids to the park after dinner
- Become a dog walker (you'll even make some extra cash!)
- Take your lunch break outside
- Start a walking club at work
- Plan at least one outdoor activity each weekend

Spending more time outside is arguably one of the easiest ways to improve your health and wellness. Now that it's finally warm outside, we challenge you to spend at least 15 minutes every weekday and one hour each day of the weekend outside. Start tracking the amount of time you spend outside each day and see if you feel healthier and happier! —*end*

Communicating with millennials

Did you know that 70% of millennials prefer digital communication to any other type?

Workplace tips: When giving assignments, include "the why." Millennials are less motivated by simply being told, "do it." Team skills, challenges, less fear of change, applying tech to problems, high energy, finding the answer, and pushing the limits of discovery — these are strengths and values of millennials. Consider these attributes when needing to boost productivity. Don't pit older workers against millennials, and avoid an "us and them" work climate.

5 REASONS WALKING IS THE BEST WORKOUT—CONT. FROM PG #2

Just as with running, switching up the terrain can do a world of wonders for your fitness level and also help make each workout feel fresh and new.

“You can increase the intensity of your walking by using your arms to walk faster, walk hills for endurance or even take stairs to increase resistance and improve muscle toning,” explains Heller. “A key benefit is that it can be done for leisure, health, fitness or competition — fast walking and Olympic-style racewalking. Do not train the same distance, same pace or the same course every day.”

Even though walking is a mainstay of your day, remember even stepping on the treadmill and increasing the incline can boost the cardiovascular difficulty and build up a strong base.

⑤ IT BENEFITS YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Studies have found that spending time in nature can have marked positive effects on your mental health. Physical activity is known to reduce anxiety and depression, and walking for exercise is a simple way to get moving and take advantage of those benefits.

“Walking — physical activity in general — is a true ‘keystone’ activity,” shares Bouthilette. “It can have a great ripple effect because we usually feel more energetic after walking, as well as motivated to take on other challenges in life. I can’t think of two more important reasons to keep on walking.”

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) notes that 16 million adults in the U.S. have at least one major depressive episode in a year’s time. Taking 30 minutes out of your day — especially on your lunch break to step away from your desk and the stressors of work — to go for a walk can help boost your mood and decrease daily anxieties. *-end*



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USERNAME: **SALINE** PASSWORD: **7636**

APRIL—JUNE, 2018
- NIRMA ONLINE
UNIVERSITY CLASS

This quarter offers the following NIRMA Online University course in which to earn 75 Wellness incentive points by successfully completing the following offering:

- ◆ “Smoking Cessa-
tion”

*Next Wellness Committee Meeting: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 in the Assembly Room, 8:30 a.m.

*Next Safety Committee Meeting: Wednesday, August 22, 2018 in the Courthouse Assembly Room, 8:30 a.m.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

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[co.saline.ne.us/webpages/
committees/wellness.html](http://co.saline.ne.us/webpages/committees/wellness.html)

Log onto the Wellness webpage online to review meeting minutes, Wellness newsletters, annual Program document and Fitness Center information.



“100 MILES IN 100 DAYS” SUMMER CHALLENGE



If you haven't stepped outside since winter, now might be a good time in preparing to start!

Beginning June 8th, Walk, Jog, Run, Bike or Row “100 Miles in 100 Days” as you begin your journey through the summer enabling you to earn 100 or more Wellness Points!

This annual summer challenge will begin this year on June 8, 2018 and

end on September 15, 2018.

Rules/Guidelines:

- 1) You MUST complete a minimum of 100 Miles to earn 100 or more Wellness Points.
- 2) *Daily work related miles walked are not to be included in your mileage tally.*
- 3) If you are biking or rowing, 2 Miles on bike/boat is equal to 1 recorded Mile.
- 4) Did more than 100 Miles? AWESOME! Earn ONE extra point for EACH additional mile completed over 100!
- 5) Record Double-Miles on holidays occurring during the Challenge.
- 6) Make sure to record your exercise for the challenge in your Wellness Booklet as well; as counting for exercise completed for those days.
- 7) Questions regarding the challenge can be directed to any wellness committee member.
- 8) Remember: You do NOT have to walk one mile each day, you just need to complete a total of 100 miles by September 15th to qualify for points earned.
- 9) Return completed challenge sheets before the end of the day on Friday, September 28, 2018. *-end*

Congratulations to Tad Eickman for having his name drawn for the 2017 Grand Prize Wellness Incentive Award!

NOTE: Articles found in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and are not intended as medical advice. For further information, please consult a medical or legal professional.