

# Why Walk?

Walking is one of the easiest ways to be physically active. You can do it almost anywhere and at any time. Walking is also inexpensive. All you need is a comfortable pair of shoes and a little time to add a few steps to your day! Can you name at least five reasons why you should get walking by joining Walk Across Tennessee? Read this list. Thinking about your health status, check off those reasons you should get moving by walking.

## Health Benefits of Regular Physical Exercise

- ◆ Helps you control or reduce body weight by burning calories.
- ◆ Reduces your body fat by toning and strengthening muscles.
- ◆ Boosts your brain power by increasing blood flow and oxygen to the brain.
- ◆ Provides weight-bearing exercise which reduces your risk of osteoporosis, a major bone health problem in postmenopausal women.
- ◆ Improves your heart fitness by improving your circulation and by making your heart stronger. This reduces your chances of a heart attack and stroke and even dying from heart disease.
- ◆ Helps your body use insulin, thus reducing your risk of developing Type II Diabetes. If you have diabetes, it helps you manage your disease.
- ◆ Helps you sleep better.
- ◆ Helps strengthen your muscles in the back and stomach, thus reducing the risk for chronic back pain.
- ◆ Improves your coordination, thus lowering your chances of falling. This becomes more important as you get older.
- ◆ Promotes intestinal regularity which reduces your risk for developing colon cancer.
- ◆ Helps you deal with stress by boosting the hormones that provide a calming and soothing effect. This helps you relax and lifts your spirits.
- ◆ Strengthens your immune system so your body can fight infections, thus you will be sick less often.
- ◆ Helps control your appetite.
- ◆ Increases your good cholesterol (HDL - High Density Lipoprotein) and reduces your bad cholesterol (LDL - Low Density Lipoprotein) which prevents plaque build-up in your arteries.
- ◆ Helps lower your blood pressure. This is important if you have high blood pressure.
- ◆ Strengthens your muscles and tissues around the joints, which protects the joints. This is very important if you have osteoarthritis.
- ◆ Keeps your joints flexible, which is very important if you have osteoarthritis.
- ◆ Strengthens the ability for your lungs to carry oxygen into your body.
- ◆ Helps you keep your independence in your senior years by keeping your muscles and joints strong and flexible.

*Information provided by co-authors Barbara (Bobbi) P. Clarke, PhD, RD, Professor & Extension Health Specialist and Linda S. Hyder, UT Extension Agent - Sevier County.*

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