

## How should I feel?

Be aware of how you feel when you walk. If you feel dizzy or sick or develop pain, slow down or stop. If these feelings continue when you are walking at a slower pace, speak to your doctor.

## Enjoy!

Being more active will only become a habit if it's fun. The phrase "no pain, no gain" simply isn't true! If it hurts, you're hardly going to rush out and do it again! Walk at your own pace. Start slowly and develop your walking habit. Talk while you walk - step out with a friend or workmate, or join a Health Walk group in your area.

I go out more where I live and have got to know people in the neighbourhood. I have started taking care of the garden again now that I feel fitter. I walk to the shop to get my messages instead of taking the car.



## How much, how often?

All adults should aim to be active every day, carrying out at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate physical activity, such as brisk walking, per week in bouts of 10 minutes or more. One way to approach this is to do 30 minutes a day of brisk walking, on at least 5 days a week. This might sound a lot in one go, but you can split it into smaller chunks, for example:

- **Walk for 10 minutes, 3 times a day**
- **Walk for 15 minutes twice a day**
- **Think of ways of getting more walking into your daily routine**

Try to reduce the amount of time you spend sitting for extended periods. It is recommended that you take regular active breaks at work or when watching TV. Short walks are an ideal way to do this - for example, you could go and speak to a colleague instead of sending an email.



## Ideas for walking more

- **Walk to work or the local shops and leave the car at home for a change**
- **Climb the stairs instead of taking the lift**
- **Use your lunch break to take a walk. Walk with a workmate and you can still catch up on all the chat**
- **Walk the children to school**
- **Walk to relax – take a stroll in the park and enjoy your local area**
- **Wear a pedometer (step counter) and set yourself targets to increase your daily number of steps**
- **Join a local Health Walk group**

## Continuing to be active

To achieve the recommended 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate physical activity per week, you can combine brisk walking with other moderate physical activities, such as golf, dancing or exercise classes. As you become more active, you can also combine brisk walking with vigorous physical activities, such as cycling, swimming or jogging.

## Join a Health Walk group

Walking in a group is a great way to start walking more and stay motivated. Paths for All funds and supports a network of Health Walk groups across Scotland that organise free Health Walks every week. The walks are led by trained volunteers and are low level, fun, social, safe and accessible. Anyone can come along to a Health Walk - new faces are always welcome!

To find a Health Walk in your local area, please visit [www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk) or call us on **01259 218888**.

Here's what walkers have told us about taking part in their local Health Walk group:

Paths for All has given me a purpose in life again; I now have a positive attitude to exercise and realise how important it is to keep mobile.

The walking group is an essential part of my week. It provides physical exercise within a structured but informal format, as well as social interaction.

The enthusiasm of the group is infectious and we feel better for having a good laugh and banter. The walks are the highlight of my week.

# Walk more feel the difference!

paths  
for all



## The first step

Adults of all ages should be active every day to benefit our health and wellbeing. Just 30 minutes of brisk walking on at least 5 days a week is all it takes to feel the difference.

Active people live longer and healthier lives. Being active:

- Can reduce the risk of heart disease by half
- Lowers the risk of strokes
- Reduces the risk of some cancers, particularly colon and breast cancer
- Reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes and can help control diabetes
- Improves mood and reduces the risk of depression
- Helps older adults to protect their joints, stay independent and reduce the risk of falls



## Why walk?

- **It's free**
- **You can start slowly and build up gently**
- **You can walk anywhere and at any time**
- **You don't need any special equipment – just a pair of comfortable shoes**
- **It's a chance to make new friends**

Walking is a safe activity, especially for those who have not been active for some time. However, if you have any concerns about walking and your health, speak to a health professional, such as your GP.

As well as many health benefits, walking can help you feel part of your community. Walking can save you a bus fare, the cost of petrol for your car and will also help the environment.



## You can take a step towards better health

Did you know that brisk walking for just 30 minutes a day on at least 5 days of the week can help you to:

- **Feel good (you will feel fitter and feel better about yourself)**
- **Have more energy**
- **Reduce stress (have you ever noticed how it's difficult to walk and worry at the same time?) and sleep better**
- **Reduce your blood pressure**
- **Manage your weight**
- **Have fun!**

As I haven't done any kind of activity for so long, I found walking was a good way to get active again by doing a wee bit at a time and incorporating it into my daily routine. Instead of taking the bus or car, I would try to walk. Over time, I found I had much more energy, lost weight and felt good.



## Where do I start?

Start every walk slowly and gradually increase your pace. After about 5 minutes, start to walk a little faster until you are walking briskly. You should:

- **Feel slightly warmer**
- **Breathe a little faster**
- **Feel your heart beating a little faster**

“Brisk walking” means walking as if you are late for an appointment. Aim to be able to talk as you walk. If you can't do this then you are walking too fast! Towards the end of the walk, gradually slow your pace down.



Paths for All is the national charity promoting walking for health and the development of multi-use path networks in Scotland. We are funded by the Scottish Government.

Our vision is of a **happier, healthier, greener, more active** Scotland.

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Paths for All is a partnership organisation, for a full list of our current partners please visit our website, [www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk)



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