

## **5 Ways to Burn More Calories While Walking**

By: Sarah Ray, Health Department

As you know by now, walking really is one of the most underrated forms of exercise. It is low impact on joints, doesn't require special gear, and can be done anywhere! Now that you have established your baseline, it is time to focus on maximizing your efforts when walking. Here are my top 5 tips for blasting calories and making your walk more enjoyable!

### **1) Invest in a pair of excellent walking shoes**

Walking in poor shoes can cause damage to your feet, knees, hips, joints and back. Wear poor shoes and you may not be walking for a long time! If you want to feel great after a walking workout (and be ready for the next one tomorrow), make sure you have the best possible walking shoes you can afford. You can upgrade your current shoes with a good pair of insoles.

Bonus Benefit: A solid pair of walking shoes can actually help you lengthen the time that you walk, which again means more calories burned.

### **2) Take plenty of time to warm up.**

Walking is one of the best exercises you can do for stress relief and long term fat loss. However there's this little thing called shin splints that can threaten to put you out of walking commission for a while. Many walkers and runners struggle with this problem. This constant repetitive flexing of the shin muscle can create soreness when a walker increases their speed or distance.

To help ward off shin splints or other muscle injury, take plenty of time to warm up before you really get into your workout. Also, make sure you stretch. Pointing and flexing your foot helps stretch and build the shin muscle. Ankle rotations also help with this. Stretching properly will definitely keep you happy and walking for a long time to come!

### **3) Get your arms pumping.**

Bring your upper body into your workout by pumping your arms. This is an easy way to burn more calories while walking. If you want to tone up and use more arm muscle during your workout, try carrying 2 - 5 pound hand weights.

Bonus Benefit: pumping your arms propels you forward and helps you move faster - which means more distance covered and more calories burned!

### **4) Build in incline intervals.**

Walking on an incline is one of the fastest ways to drastically skyrocket your calorie burn. But you don't have to spend your whole workout on an incline. Try building in 30 - 60 second intervals of incline walking on your treadmill every 5 to 10 minutes.

If you're walking outside and can't control your incline, try stopping every few minutes and doing 10 - 15 squats or lunges to tone your lower body.

Bonus Benefit: Building in intervals will also help your body continue to burn calories post-workout.

### **5) Increase your pace, not your stride**

Got short legs? No problem! Instead of increasing your stride (and possibly pulling something), increase the number of steps you take. This also increases your speed which means more distance covered and more calories burned.

So there you have it. Keep these 5 essential tips in mind and you're guaranteed to enjoy many stress-relieving, fat burning walks!