

Fitness Made Easier

Easy Tips To Elevate Your Walk To A Workout

(NAPSA)—There's an easy way to shape up that's accessible, affordable and can accommodate even the busiest of schedules—it's walking. No wonder it's the No. 1 fitness activity for adults. And with the simple addition of a few fitness goals and a pedometer, you have everything you need to elevate your walk to a workout.

Walk It Out

Many people don't realize the walking they already do each day is a positive step to help them get fit. In fact, studies at the Stanford School of Medicine have uncovered a long list of benefits from walking, including reduced body fat, lowered cholesterol and blood pressure as well as increased flexibility and mental well-being. It's widely recommended that adults take 10,000 steps a day, the equivalent of about five miles, which can be achieved by walking 30 to 60 minutes at one time or in multiple 10-minute increments over the course of the day.

Walking is also a key component to many fitness plans, including that of trainer-to-the-stars Ramona Braganza, who's helped shape some of the hottest bodies in Hollywood, from Jessica Alba to Halle Berry. "For me, being fit is a lifestyle. I'd be bored just going to the gym every day. That's why I always recommend walking to my clients as a great form of exercise," Braganza said. "Adding a few easy things into your daily routine can help you make sure that every step counts."

A Passion for Pedometers

One of Braganza's favorite fitness tools is a pedometer, which



When it comes to keeping fit, walking is more than a step in the right direction.

can keep track of the steps you're taking and give you a benchmark for measuring progress. Stanford School of Medicine research also shows using a pedometer can increase physical activity by about 2,000 steps—or an extra mile—each day, proving it's also a great motivational tool that can push you to go further.

Further Your Finish Line

"I arm all of my clients with a pedometer to ensure they're still held accountable, even when I'm not there," Braganza said. "It's like having a personal trainer in their pocket that keeps pushing them to go further."

Braganza recommends the GOsmart Pocket Pedometer from Omron, which features smart sensor technology, making it one of the most accurate pedometers available. Using smart sensors, it can count steps whether it's clipped at your hip, buried in your

pocket or even attached to your bag, and since there are no moving parts, there's no annoying clicking sound. Trusted for its accuracy, this line of pedometers lets you track steps taken, calories burned and distance walked. Coupled with a seven-day memory, it provides what you need to chart progress, compare to your goals and manage your shape-up strategy.

Free Downloadable Tip Sheet

Braganza's other get-fit tips include:

- **Warm Up First.** Before you walk, perform some dynamic stretching exercises (arm circles, hip circles and leg lifts) to get your blood flowing and reduce the risk of injury. Always wear comfortable shoes, preferably ones with arch support.

- **Mix It Up.** Add variety to your walking program, especially if your personal fitness goal includes weight loss. Try alternating intervals of fast walking with intervals at a slower pace. Walking up hills is also great for a challenge.

- **Add Cardio.** Include some upper body exercises as you walk, such as arm reaches overhead or to the sides, to add another dimension to your walk and increase calorie burn. Hold small water bottles while you do the exercises for added resistance.

Learn More

Visit www.gosmartpedometers.com to download all of Braganza's tips or learn more about pocket pedometers, including models that let you download your data directly to your PC.