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HEART INSTITUTE  
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DE L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA

Prevention and Wellness Centre  
Centre de Prévention et Bien-être

# 10 000 Steps for Health



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*More than walking...*

You could also participate in other activities that you enjoy and that fit in with your daily lifestyle. As the pedometer will not accurately record steps when you are participating in some activities, use the following table to assist in converting your minutes into steps.

<b>Intensity</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>steps</b>
<b>Low</b>	- Leisure walk - Gardening	<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>500 steps</b>
<b>Moderate</b> Slight increase in Heart rate and breathing	- Brisk walking - Swimming - Cycling - Rowing - Dancing	<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>1500 steps</b>
<b>High</b> Difficult to maintain a conversation	-Circuit training - Aerobics - Jogging - Squash	<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>2000 steps</b>

Source: SA Department of Human Services

### *Pedometer Conversions*

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Km</b>	<b>Miles</b>	<b>Steps</b>	<b>Km</b>	<b>Miles</b>
500	0.40	0.25	5500	4.43	2.75
1000	0.80	0.50	6000	4.83	3.00
1500	1.21	0.75	6500	5.23	3.25
2000	2.61	1.00	7000	5.63	3.50
2500	2.01	1.25	7500	6.03	3.75
3000	2.41	1.50	8000	6.44	4.00
3500	2.82	1.75	8500	6.84	4.25
4000	3.22	2.00	9000	7.24	4.50
4500	3.62	2.25	9500	7.64	4.75
5000	4.02	2.50	10000	8.05	5.00

Source: SA Department of Human Services. '10 Grand Steps' logbook, Commonwealth Department of Health and Aging

	<p><b>Hamstring Stretch</b></p> <p>Lie flat on your back with your knees bent at a 90-degree angle and feet on the floor. Straighten your right knee and push your heel towards the ceiling. Gently pull your straightened leg towards your face. Grasp the back of your right calf below your knee. Pull the right knee gently towards your face. Repeat with the left leg. Only pull the leg forward until you feel a stretching sensation in the back of the leg. This should not be painful. The knee must be straight for this exercise to be effective in stretching your hamstrings.</p>
	<p><b>Quadriceps Stretches</b></p> <p>Tighten your abdominal muscles to help you hold your pelvis and upper body up. Lift your right ankle towards your buttocks. With your right or left hand reach back and gently pull your leg into a tightly flexed position and hold the ankle (your right knee should be pointing directly at the floor). Keep your head up and hold the stretch and repeat with opposite leg. Balance yourself by holding on to the wall or back of a chair. If you have knee-joint problems and/or a very limited range of motion in the knee, do not perform this exercise.</p>
	<p><b>Calf Stretch</b></p> <p>Standing facing a wall, approximately three feet away. Place the palms of your hands on the wall at shoulder level. Keep your feet flat on the floor. Keep one foot in place and step forward with the other foot. Keep your back leg straight and gently bend the front knee forward toward the wall. You should feel the stretch in the calf muscle of the back leg. Repeat with the opposite leg.</p>
	<p><b>Shin Stretch</b></p> <p>Start by using a wall or chair as support; place your left foot behind your right foot with the top of the left foot touching the ground. Extend the bottom of your left shin as far forwards as possible and slowly and gently lower yourself by bending both legs at the knee. Once you have stretched the muscles in the front of your shin to the furthest comfortable position hold the stretch. Switch legs and repeat the stretch.</p>

## **Ready...**

Did you know that 63% of Canadians are not active enough to achieve the health benefits they need from physical activity?

Your body is designed to move and it's surprising how little time it takes to become healthy and reduce the risk of heart diseases.

Consider this: you have 1440 minutes in everyday, but you only have to be active for 30-60 minutes. If time doesn't allow you to do it all at once, you can add up your activities, 15 minutes at a time, to get that daily total.

Start slowly... and build up! If you are already walking at an easy pace, consider building-up to a more brisk pace.

Source: Public Health Agency of Canada



## Set...

### *What is a pedometer?*

A pedometer is a simple device used to measure the number of steps you take in a day. It can give you a more accurate picture of how active you are. Generally we spend much of our day behind a desk, in front of a computer, or otherwise sitting. You may be shocked to find out how few steps you take in a typical day.

### *Why use one?*

Wearing a pedometer and recording your daily steps or distance can give you the motivation you need to increase your daily activity and fitness level. A quick check lets you see at a glance how active you've been, and may spur you onto taking a few more steps.

### *How does a Pedometer work?*

It simply senses your body movements and counts your footsteps. When positioned correctly, your pedometer records a step each time your hip moves up and down.

### *How Do I Wear It?*

- Attach your pedometer onto your waistband or belt, directly above your knee. Do not try to attach the clip onto a thick belt as it may cause the clip to break.
- Pedometer should remain upright, not tilting forward, backward or sideways.
- Keep the pedometer cover closed unless checking your totals, or else it won't record.

## Stretches for your activity

Demonstration	Description
	<p><b>Chest and Biceps Stretch</b> Stand with your back straight and tall. Your feet should be slightly farther apart than shoulder-width, knees slightly bent. Hold your arms out to your side and parallel to the ground. The palms of your hands should be facing the rear. Stretch the arms back as far as possible. You should notice the stretch across your chest and in the biceps area. Make sure to hold the stretch gently and be sure to not "bounce" through the process.</p>
	<p><b>Arm / Shoulder / Back Stretch</b> Lift your right elbow toward the ceiling and place your right hand as far down your back between your shoulder blades as possible. Rest your chin on your chest. If possible, using your left hand, gently pull your right elbow to the left. You should feel the stretch on the back of the right arm and down the right side of the back. Repeat with the left arm.</p>
	<p><b>Triceps / Shoulders / Waist Stretch</b> Keeping your knees slightly bent and legs shoulder width apart, stand with your left arm overhead. Hold your elbow with your right hand and gently pull it back and to the opposite side. Slowly lean to the side until you feel a mild stretch. Repeat on the opposite side.</p>
	<p><b>Lower Back and Buttock Stretch</b> Lie flat on your back with one leg straight out. Bend the other knee, and pull the leg towards your abdomen and chest by grasping with both hands at the back of your thigh. Make sure to keep the outstretched leg flat on the floor while pulling the opposite thigh into your abdomen and chest. Repeat with the other leg.</p>
	<p><b>Inner Thigh Stretch</b> Sit on the floor. Place the soles of your feet together, grasp your ankles, and pull your heels fairly close to you. Place your hands against the inside of your knees and gently press your knees down toward the floor.</p>

### *Walking at the right level*

One way to monitor how hard you are walking is to give an overall rating of how hard the walk feels to you, at-the-moment. The Ratings of Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale has numbers from 6 to 20, with words describing the odd numbers on the scale. You can use this scale for rating your effort during any type of exercise. Read the words by the odd numbers and then pick the number that best describes how hard the exercise feels to you.

Rating	Description	Rating	Description
6		14	
7	Very, very light	15	Hard
8		16	
9	Very light	17	Very hard
10		18	
11	Fairly light	19	Very, very hard
12		20	
13	Somewhat hard	<b>Moderate intensity =11-13</b>	

### *Stretching*

Here are 6 steps to a great stretch:

1. Warm- up your muscles with 5 minutes of light activity. Think of your muscle and connective tissue as candy taffy - when it is warm it is stretchable and when it is cold it is stiff and brittle.
2. Move slowly into the stretch and stop at the point when you feel a mild tension in the muscle you are stretching.
3. Hold the stretch position a minimum of 10- 30 seconds. Repeat two to three times as necessary.
4. As you hold the stretch take at least two easy breaths.
5. Slowly release the stretch and relax the muscle.
6. You should stretch the specific muscles required for your activity.

## *How Will I Benefit from Walking?*

To get the most health benefit from walking, walk regularly. **Taking 10,000 steps a day may result in health benefits for healthy adults.**

## *How Do I Get Started and Progress Safely?*

Simply wearing the pedometer is not enough. To be of real value, pedometer readings must be recorded so you can see if you are meeting the activity goals you set for yourself. Your daily step goal should be:

- personally relevant;
- specific (e.g., ↑ number of steps/day by x steps)
- sustainable for the long term;
- recorded to help keep you motivated to be active.

The following steps give you an outline of how to set and achieve realistic goals.

Step 1 – Use the first week with your pedometer to establish a baseline for future comparison. That is, go about your normal daily routine while wearing your pedometer but don't change your activity pattern. After you see what you've been doing, you can determine if you need to be more active. Don't forget to record your total steps at the end of each day.

Step 2 – After the first week check what your lowest and highest steps counts were, e.g. the range may be 3,500 to 5,500. For the next week, if you feel comfortable attempt to match the highest step count each day of the week.

Step 3 – In the third and fourth weeks try to add a further 500 steps per day to the highest total for the previous week.

Step 4 – Continue adding an appropriate number of steps to your daily total until you reach the 10,000 step goal.

If you are not close to the 10,000 step goal don't despair! It is all about making small goals to work towards each week. Even small walking increases make a positive impact to your health and well-being.



## Go...

### *Hints to help you include more walking in your day*

To achieve the 10,000 step goal you might need to increase your level of physical activity. There are many ways to include more steps in your daily routine such as:

- Parking your car further away from your destination
- Taking the stairs
- Taking a lunchtime or after work walk
- Include walking into your daily activities
- Walk to close-by meetings
- Instead of sending an e-mail, go and speak to your colleague

### *Walking Tips*

These walking tips will help you stay healthy and active, while getting more enjoyment out of walking.

- Commit to a walking time, record it in your calendar;
- Add variety by changing your walking route;
- Take a radio, cassette or CD player to listen to;
- Join a walking club in your community;
- Wear appropriate and comfortable footwear;
- Dress in layers so that you can adjust to the weather;
- Walk inside if the weather is bad;
- Wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen in the summer;
- Be careful when crossing the road – use pedestrian crossing when available;
- Drink enough water - 1 to 2 liters per day; and
- Stretch before and after walking.