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Arthritic Today

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THE WALKING ISSUE

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MARCH-APRIL 2012

Surprising Ways to Motivate Yourself

Want to stick with your walking workout? Stop focusing on your health and consider how physical activity makes your day better. That's the surprising finding from a study in *The International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* of 260 working women, ages 40 to 60.

"'Improving health' can seem like a vague concept and lacks urgency. But when you think about the immediate benefits of physical activity – for example,

increasing your energy so you'll be able to play with your kids – you're more likely to fit it in to your busy day," says author Michelle Segar, PhD, associate director of the Sport, Health and Activity Research and Policy Center for Women and Girls at the University of Michigan.

"If the word 'exercise' makes you think 'hard,' 'painful' or other negative things, try referring to walking and other physical activity as 'daily movement,'" says Segar.

She and Mark H. Anshel, PhD, a professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance at Middle Tennessee State University, offer these reasons you're going to love walking.

STRESS RELIEVER. It takes your mind off things that are bothering you.

MOOD BOOSTER. It improves your state of mind, both in the short and long term, research shows.

FULFILLING. It gives you an immediate

PLAN 2: STEP IT UP (intermediate level)

If you've completed Plan 1 and want to progress, start at Week 3.

WEEK 1	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Warm-up Walk	3 min., slow	Day off	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	Day off
Walk	10 min., slow to moderate		10 min., slow to moderate		10 min., intervals		
Cool-down Walk	3 min., slow		3 min., slow		3 min., slow		
Total Time	16 min.		16 min.		16 min.		

WEEK 2	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Warm-up Walk	4 min., slow	Day off	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	4 min., slow	Strength exercises	Day off
Walk	15 min., moderate		15 min., intervals		15 min., moderate		
Cool-down Walk	4 min., slow		3 min., slow		4 min., slow		
Total Time	23 min.		21 min.		23 min.		

WEEK 3	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Warm-up Walk	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	4 min., slow	Strength exercises	3 min., slow	4 min., slow	Day off
Walk	14 min., intervals		22 min., moderate		14 min., intervals	12 min., moderate	
Cool-down Walk	3 min., slow		4 min., slow		3 min., slow	4 min., slow	
Total Time	20 min.		30 min.		20 min.	20 min.	


sense of accomplishment, which can boost your confidence and motivation, says Segar.

VALUE BUILDING. "Health, hard work, integrity, even friends and faith – physical activity touches on all of these things," says Anshel, whose research has shown that focusing on values helps people stay the course with an exercise regimen.

CHANCE TO EXPLORE. It gives you a

reason to go to a different neighborhood or area you'd like to see.

SLIMMING. It helps you fit into your favorite slacks.

ENERGIZING. It makes you feel more energetic, making it that much more likely that you'll be able to do other things you love, says Segar. 

Camille Noe Pagán is a contributing editor to Arthritis Today.



WEEK 4	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Warm-up Walk	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	4 min., slow	Strength exercises	3 min., slow	4 min., slow	Day off
Walk	14 min., intervals		32 min., moderate		14 min., intervals	12 min., moderate	
Cool-down Walk	3 min., slow		4 min., slow		3 min., slow	4 min., slow	
Total Time	20 min.		40 min.		20 min.	20 min.	

WEEK 5	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Warm-up Walk	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	4 min., slow	Strength exercises	3 min., slow	4 min., slow	Day off
Walk	19 min., intervals		37 min., moderate		19 min., intervals	17 min., moderate	
Cool-down Walk	3 min., slow		4 min., slow		3 min., slow	4 min., slow	
Total Time	25 min.		45 min.		25 min.	25 min.	

WEEK 6	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Warm-up Walk	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	3 min., slow	Strength exercises	3 min., slow	4 min., slow	Day off
Walk	24 min., intervals		39 min., moderate		24 min., intervals	22 min., moderate	
Cool-down Walk	3 min., slow		3 min., slow		3 min., slow	4 min., slow	
Total Time	30 min.		45 min.		30 min.	30 min.	