

Why do Physiotherapist Recommend Walking 10,000 Steps per Day?

Walking is a healthy weight-bearing exercise that can provide a total body workout. Walking, skating, blading and other cardiovascular activities help fight obesity, heart disease, arthritis, and osteoporosis.

How do you know if you are doing enough? One way to monitor your activity level is to wear a pedometer that counts the number of steps you take in a day. 10,000 steps per day is the “magic number” recommended to achieve an active lifestyle.

Getting Started

1. How active are you?

Lifestyle Index	Sedentary	Low Active	Somewhat Active	Highly Active
Steps/day*	<5000	5000 – 7500	7500 – 10,000	>10,000

- The above recommendations are for healthy adults. Children and youth require more steps/day/ Elderly and disabled persons require less steps/day

2. Aim for 10,000 steps/day

Research shows that taking 10,000 steps/day will have health benefits. If you’re walking at a brisk pace, 10,000 steps is about a 30 – 60 minute walk. This advice fits in with Canadian Physical Activity Guide recommendations to accumulate at least 30 to 60 minutes of activity most days of the week.

From your current activity level, aim to reach 10,000 steps/day over a 6 week period by adding 500 steps every 2 weeks. If you’re already highly active, keep it up and consider increasing your steps for greater fitness capacity.

A few examples of activity step equivalents are listed below:

- Cycling at 5 mph = 50 steps/minute
- Cycling at 15 mph = 150 steps/minute
- Slow steady swim = 100 steps/minute

3. Measure your progress

Record your daily steps to track your progress. Research shows that keeping an activity log results in increased steps taken per day and commitment to reaching and maintaining your goal over a long period.

Steps added = Calories burned!

Steps/Day	Calories Burned per Day
2100	100
8400	400
10,000	476