

# The Power of Walking

## Paul Chek

Today, many civilized countries are facing the highest incidence of obesity, disease and orthopedic injury than ever before in recorded history. Even worse we are experiencing this ill health in spite of the fact that we have the greatest number of medical doctors using some of the most advanced medical technology than ever before. Knowing this, if there are things we can do for ourselves, we best get moving now!

There are a few factors that can be correlated with our declining health, such as:

- \*A tremendous increase in the consumption of medical drugs (85% of Americans are on at least one prescription drug!)
- \*Replacing water consumption with caffeinated and sugar-laden beverages
- \*A massive decline in food quality due to soil depletion and use of industrial farming technology, as well as a huge increase in the quantity of processed foods
- \*Lack of exercise!

These points merely scratch the surface of reasons why people are becoming so sickly, but am only going to address the last point in this article.

While many of you could, and probably do, have many reasons why you don't participate in a regular, structured exercise program, none of you can honestly say that you don't have time to walk! The human body is not only designed for daily movement, it is essential for optimal physiological function, which contributes to health and well-being. To demonstrate my point, consider the following benefits of walking:

### **METABOLISM**

**Walking is one of the most primal movement patterns known to man. Because walking was essential to our survival during our developmental years, our bodies have developed so that walking and movement are essential to health; as it has been said, form follows function.**

**Walking requires the integrated use of our arms, legs and torso. Hundreds of calorie-burning muscles are utilized simply by walking. Walking briskly on a daily basis not only results in calorie burning, it increases enzyme and metabolic activity that may result in increased calorie consumption for up to 12 hours after walking as little as 2 miles. The more deconditioned you are, the greater the metabolic effect of walking.**

**Increased metabolism means more than simply burning calories, it means that your body will be more likely to draw in nutrients from your food and supplements. It also means that your desire to drink more water will increase, which will support all your bodily systems of detoxification and elimination, and will improve digestion.**

### **CIRCULATION**

**Walking results in rhythmic contraction and relaxation of muscles as well as rhythmic pressure changes in body cavities. This results in improved circulation of blood, lymph and even synovial fluid (the lubricating fluid made in joints). Because much of your immune system travels through your body via blood and lymphatic fluids, improving your circulation through daily walking can improve immune function, as well as your metabolism and general health.**

### **MOBILIZATION OF INTERNAL ORGANS**

**As you walk, pressure changes in body cavities due to rhythmic skeletal motion and contractions of muscles. The diaphragm is your primary breathing muscle and contracts rhythmically with the abdominal muscles to aid respiration, as well as to stabilize the body. The result of diaphragmatic contraction is a massage for your internal organs. The increased respiratory demand that occurs from muscle actions during walking keeps the internal organs mobile and healthy.**

**An example of an internal organ dysfunction that often responds well to walking is constipation. When people become sedentary, they lose the natural visceral mobilization provided by functional exercise. Couple this loss of needed activity with the dietary habits of modern man, and constipation, along with numerous other problems, is the likely result! In fact, today, it is common for people to report to hospital emergency rooms with terrible back and sciatic pain, only to be told that they are constipated and given a laxative, which frequently alleviates the back or sciatic pain. Consider that in the US, laxatives are the third best selling drug store item. Most of these people would look and feel much better by simply walking as little as two miles a day and drinking an ounce of water for**

each Kg of body weight on a daily basis!

### **THE P-M-E-S CONNECTION**

The human being is a unique organism in that we are physical (P), mental (M), emotional (E) and spiritual (S) beings. With only a little self-observation, you will quickly realize that any time your physical being is sluggish or functioning suboptimally, your mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being also suffers. Most of you would be surprised at the improved mental clarity and the emotional and spiritual well-being that results from walking only a couple miles a day.

### **TIME TO GET WALKING!**

Now that you know that walking can aid in improving all aspects of your well-being, it is time to get moving! Stop driving around a parking lot for 10 minutes just to get a spot next to the front door! Park at the opposite end of the parking lot and walk! Stop taking elevators and escalators, and start taking the stairs! If you need more vitality in your life, climbing a few stairs when ever possible will be a big step (literally) in the right direction. Also, if you ever have the opportunity to go for a walk or a hike in nature, you will be reaping even more benefit from the uneven terrain and chance to breathe fresh air, not to mention the benefits to your Physical, Mental, Emotional and Spiritual well-being!