

# REHAB NEWS



Submitted By: Therapy Department at Healthcare Therapy Services, Inc.

## Walk This Way...to Better Health!

Physical activity is a vital component to maintaining overall health. According to the CDC, "Older adults can obtain significant health benefits with a moderate amount of daily physical activity. The loss of strength and stamina attributed to aging is in part caused by reduced physical activity."

Did you know walking is one of the very best exercises you can do? Walking is an activity that most everyone can take part in and can be done just about anywhere. For older adults, the World Health Organization recommends at least 150 minutes of physical activity weekly. Walking has many health benefits as it can help prevent coronary heart disease, lower blood pressure, and improve circulation! Below are recommendations that can assist you in developing your own walking program. Always make sure to consult with your physician before beginning any new exercise routine.

### Getting Started:

- ✓ Doctor's permission
- ✓ Good pair of walking shoes
- ✓ Safe place to walk
- ✓ Walking buddy
- ✓ Water bottle

**Warm up** your muscles to avoid stiffness and to reduce the risk of injury. Try flexibility exercises such as heel and toe raises.

**Walk** at a speed in which you feel comfortable. Start slow and gradually increase as tolerated. Walking should be continuous and rhythmic. Pay attention to your posture, hold your head up, eyes forward and walk tall!

HOW MANY STEPS DO I NEED PER DAY?	
For long term health and reduced chronic disease risk	10,000 steps a day
For successful, sustained weight loss	12,000 - 15,000 steps a day

**Stay Hydrated!** Drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise.

**Cool down** after walking to return your body to its "resting state" and reduce risk of muscle soreness. Try stretching exercises such as a seated arm reach and piriformis stretch.

If you are having trouble standing, walking or moving around, physical therapy can help. Physical therapy can improve mobility and strength, and manage or eliminate pain. Talk to your doctor about any challenges you're having and if physical therapy can help your condition.