Take a Walk

by Lenny Krosinsky

When someone told you to take a walk it was considered a negative statement. “Take a walk”, “get lost”! But I say let’s take it as a positive. Just get out of that chair, leave the stress of everyday life behind and go for a walk.

There are several benefits to walking: walk for health and fitness, walk to ease stress, and racewalking to be competitive.

As we age we lose bone mass, and this can lead to osteoporosis, a serious illness causing bone fractures from minor falls. Walking is a weight bearing exercise that helps to build bone mass, keeping us strong. Walking also helps to strengthen the heart and lungs.

Go for a stroll and you will burn one hundred calories for every mile you walk. Pick up the pace and you add the benefit of an aerobic work out. All of that at one third the stress of running. The general rule to attain fitness is to walk 10,000 steps every day. That adds up to about four miles.

One of the ways to get in those 10,000 steps is to park at the far end of the parking lot when you go shopping. Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.

Once you get into the walking habit you might want to enter the challenge of competition. Racewalking is an internationally recognized sport, and part of the Olympics since 1908. The New Mexico Racewalkers ( [www.nmracewalkers.org](http://www.nmracewalkers.org/)), an active member of USATF, holds several competitive racewalks and teaches racewalk technique.

Several running competitions offer walking events. The Duke City Marathon has two walking races, a 5K and a 10K walk, both with full age group awards.

So, want to stay healthy or fire up that competitive spirit, take a walk.