

## A Good Walk Can Make You Young America's on the Move in September!



are almost no reports of complications in adults from walking," he says.

That makes walking a great way to fulfill the U.S. Surgeon General's recommendation that we spend at least 30 minutes a day in moderate physical activity, says I-Min Lee, M.D., Sc.D. "Moderate activity like walking can extend longevity," says Dr. Lee, an associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. "It can reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. It's also been associated with a lower risk for certain cancers, such as breast or colon cancer."

Moderate, Dr. Lee says, is a relative term. It depends on your level of fitness. "For many people, walking between 3 and 4 miles an hour would be moderate. But for people who haven't been active, 2 miles an hour would be fast enough to get the benefits." The way you can tell whether you're at a moderate level, she says, is that your heart rate will go up and you'll sweat lightly, but you should still be able to talk with someone.

### Start Slow

Thirty minutes a day may seem like a lot of walking if you're not used to it. But you don't have to do it all at once, says Dr. Franklin. "Thirty minutes should be a goal, but you don't have to start there," he says. "Just a few minutes each day provides benefits. The idea is to start slow, going at your own pace."

"People who don't walk might feel a few aches and pains at first," Dr. Lee says. "But those go away." She adds that even people with arthritis find their joints don't hurt as much after they've been walking for a while. "The important thing is to move and not fret about goals," she says. "Work on enjoying it. If you enjoy it, you'll keep doing it."

**W**hat would you do to take 20 years off your age? The answer may be as simple as walking, says Barry Franklin, Ph.D.

"Starting at the age of 20, we lose about 1 percent of our aerobic fitness each year," Dr. Franklin says. "A walking program can improve that fitness from 10 to 20 percent in three months. That's the same as 10 to 20 years of rejuvenation."

Dr. Franklin runs the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program and Exercise Laboratories at the William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Mich. "Walking is one of the best and easiest exercises someone can do," says Dr. Franklin, a spokesman for the American College of Sports Medicine. "You don't need any equipment beyond a good pair of walking shoes. It's a great activity to do with others. And it's safe."

### No Complications

With almost all other types of physical activity, Dr. Franklin explains, there is some risk for complication involving bones, muscles, heart, or lungs. "But there

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Both Drs. Lee and Franklin recommend trying to increase what you do a little each week. Trying to walk about 10 percent farther or 10 percent longer each week is reasonable, they say. And if you can't get in 30 minutes all at once, both advise breaking up the time into 10- or 15-minute periods. "Three 10-minute periods," Dr. Franklin says, "will give you almost as much benefit as one 30-minute period."

Dr. Franklin also says you shouldn't limit yourself to a formal walking program. "The key isn't to walk 30 minutes and then say you're just going to watch TV the rest of the day. I sometimes recommend getting a pedometer you can wear on your belt. A pedometer counts the number of steps you take. Then, at the end of the day, you can look to see how much you're walking."

The average person takes between 2,500 and 3,500 steps each day. Dr. Franklin recommends challenging yourself to increase the average number of steps you take on a weekly basis. "The more you move," he says, "the better you'll feel."

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## 5 Fun Fruits You Should Try

September Is Fruits and Veggies - More Matters Month

Fruit is one of nature's perfect foods. It's packed with vitamins, minerals, and fiber, without fat. Even though they are filling, most are naturally low in calories. And it's delicious. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the American Cancer Society, the National Academy of Sciences, and the National Cancer Institute recommend that 5 to 9 servings of fruits (and vegetables) be consumed every day, depending on a person's energy intake, to maintain good health and reduce the risk of cancer.

So go bite into an apple, a banana, or a... carambola fruit. Haven't heard of that one? Don't worry. As Americans are adopting healthier diets and becoming more adventurous, exotic fruits like the carambola are showing up in markets.

Here's a guide to five you should try:

### Carambola (Star Fruit)

This is a fruit that's a winner in all categories. It tastes great and it's attractive as well. Nutritionally, it's low in calories and has 27 mg vitamin C, beta-carotene, and potassium. It can be substituted for fresh lemon and lime slices, or eaten fresh.

### Guava

Even if you've never had a guava, you may be familiar with its taste. Guavas give a tropical flavor to fruit drinks. Low in calories, high in vitamin C and potassium, they can be eaten plain. They've also widely used in jellies, jams, and sherbets.

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### **Kiwi**

The kiwi, like its namesake bird, is small and cute. It's high in pectin, a key fiber. Eat them plain, or carve them into a succulent garnish.

### **Papaya**

This is one of the best sources of beta-carotene. You'll also find lots of vitamin C, potassium, and calcium, and a taste that many people say is addictive. Naturally low in calories, just cut it in half, scoop out the seeds, and dig in.

### **Mango**

So lush and tropical that they're almost decadent, mangos are actually one of the healthiest foods you'll ever eat. They are high in vitamin A and potassium, and even have vitamin C. Each mango gives you about a tenth of your daily fiber requirement. Peel and eat, but not while you're wearing a suit; mangos are messy.

## **Building a Better Salad**

If the word "salad" makes you think of a little limp lettuce, a pale slice of tomato, and a glob of bottled dressing, you're missing a whole lot of taste, and an easy way to get a lot of important nutrients without fat.

But if you take advantage of the variety and the nutritional value found in a colorful spectrum of fresh vegetables, you'll get benefits that no single ingredient can provide and end up with a picture-pretty salad that's a pleasure to eat.

You can't live by salad alone, of course. But many of us consume too much fat and too many calories. Salad's are a tasty way for you to fill up without overeating.

Add a glass of skim milk and a whole-grain roll, and you can make salad a meal that's packed with nutrition.

Let's build a salad, looking at the nutritional values of each ingredient as we go:

### **Lettuce**

Practically every salad starts with greenery. A cup of iceberg lettuce has 5 calories, 1 gram of protein, and 2 mg of vitamin C. Not much there. Switch to the

same amount of romaine, and you get 10 calories, the same gram of protein, but five times as much vitamin C. Romaine also adds more vitamin A value -- 1,060 IU, compared with 180 IU in iceberg.

### **Endive**

Also called escarole, endive is in the middle, nutritionally speaking. Now, for a really big green boost: Switch to spinach. The same amount (one cup) also has 10 calories, but doubles the protein to 2 grams, and adds calcium, iron, potassium, and vitamin C. It adds color and crunch, too.

### **Broccoli**

Is broccoli the perfect vegetable? Maybe so. Of all our salad possibilities, one 40-calorie spear alone contains the most protein (4 grams), calcium (72 mg), phosphorus (100 mg), potassium (491 mg), and vitamin C (141 mg -- a tie with the red pepper). Only mushrooms have more riboflavin and niacin. But tired broccoli that's a long way from the farm won't necessarily have the same benefit. Make sure it's fresh.

### **Options**

Options can include mushrooms, which have the B vitamins, niacin, and riboflavin, in larger amounts; radishes, which add color and crunch; celery, which adds some vitamin C; and bean sprouts, which put in some more protein and calcium. Other options:

- Carrots. This is a big addition, any way you slice it. A cup of grated carrots (about two medium) tops the chart for calories (45), carbohydrates (11 grams), and vitamin A value (30,940 IU). One carrot can give you four times the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of Vitamin A for an adult male.
- Peppers. A sweet pepper puts in 20 calories, no matter what color it is. For a real nutritional boost, opt for the red, which has 4,220 IU of vitamin A instead of 390 IU for the green. It's 141 mg of vitamin C (instead of 95 mg for green) make it the vitamin C champ.
- Cucumbers. Cucumbers have a pleasant taste but not much else. An average cucumber has only 5 calories and nutrients that barely show up on the chart... and that's with the peel. By itself, not much, but in concert with the rest, a bit of taste.
- Tomatoes. One average tomato has 25 calories and a reasonable amount of vitamin A (1,390 IU) and vitamin C (22 mg).

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- Onions. A cup of sliced white onions has 40 calories. It also has a little more calcium (33 mg) than a tomato and a lot more than lettuce alone.



### Now for the Topper

Perhaps the best part about a salad lies in what it doesn't contain -- fat. Americans get too much fat in their diets, and any dish that provides nutrition without fat is a plus.

But all your work in constructing a healthful salad can be lost if you smother that salad in a fatty dressing. Try one of the many low-fat or no-fat dressings on the market. If calories are not a major concern, you might want to use a dressing containing olive oil, which is 100 percent fat but which contains little saturated fat, the prime culprit in heart disease.

Olive oil has a great taste, but use it in moderation. One tablespoon has 125 calories, more than an entire bowl of salad. Try it with its traditional companion, vinegar. Vinegar has a trace of calories and not much else, except lots of flavor.

### Create a Salad Dressing

Bored with bottled salad dressing? Making your own dressing can be easy and better for you.

Here's a recipe for a low-fat creamy mustard-garlic dressing:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon mustard (Dijon or whole-grain adds tang)
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 clove crushed garlic
- 1 tablespoon minced onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons nonfat yogurt

Mix all ingredients in small bowl or jar. Pour over salad.

### The Salad Recipe

- 1 cup romaine lettuce, broken into bite-size pieces
- 1 cup spinach, broken into bite-size pieces
- 1 cup tomato, diced (approximately 1 large tomato)
- 1 cup red pepper strips (approximately 1 large pepper)
- 1 cup shredded carrot (approximately 1 large carrot)
- 1 cup cucumber slices (approximately 1 large cucumber)
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 1 cup sliced onion

Toss and serve with mustard-garlic dressing. Serves 4. Each two-cup serving, with dressing, contains approximately 86 calories, 4 gm protein, 11 gm carbohydrates, 51 mg of calcium, 11,000 IU vitamin A value, 3 gm fat, and 89 mg vitamin C.

Source: U.S.D.A. *Nutritive Value of Foods*

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