



Health benefits of walking

Looking for an exercise that's simple, accessible, and won't break the bank? Walking might be the perfect solution for you. There are a multitude of benefits from walking like improving cardiovascular health to boosting mental well-being. Walking is relevant to everyone regardless of age or socio-economic status. Discover why taking a few extra steps each day can transform your health and wellbeing. Learn how easy it is to incorporate this powerful habit into your daily routine and enjoy a healthier lifestyle.

Walking for an average of 30 minutes or more per day, can:

- lower the risk of heart disease
- reduce stroke by 35%
- decrease type 2 diabetes by 40%

The Australian Department of Health recommends adults aged between 18-64 perform 2.5+ hours of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. **This equates to just 30 minutes of exercise 5 days a week.**



Benefits of regular physical activity

- Reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke
- Manages weight, blood pressure and blood cholesterol
- Prevents and controls type 2 diabetes
- Reduces the risk of developing some cancers
- Maintains bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis and fractures
- Improves balance and coordination, reducing the risk of falls and other injuries
- Improves daily mood which leads to better mental health

Global breakthrough – walking better than bed rest to reduce back pain

According to a recent Macquarie University study, **walking can help combat lower back pain.**

In Australia, about 4 million people suffer from lower back pain which is a leading cause of disability and reduced quality of life. Recurrence of back pain is also common with seven out of 10 people suffering a recurrence within a year.

The study followed 701 adults who recently recovered from lower back pain. They were allocated to either a walking program group or a no-intervention control group. The results showed that the intervention group had fewer occurrences of activity-limiting back pain and a longer period before recurrence.

Walking has been shown to not only improve people's quality of life, but also reduce the need to seek healthcare support and the amount of time taken off work by approximately half.

Historically, bed rest is recommended for managing back pain. However, it is now advised that a combination of exercise and education is best practice for both treatment of current pain and to help prevent future episodes.

Recommendations for walking

1. **Begin with short walks.** Just 10 minutes a few times a week is a good start, then, gradually increase the duration and frequency.
2. **Don't be afraid of mild pain.** Some discomfort is quite normal when starting a new activity. Walking will strengthen the structures and muscles in the back over time reducing the likelihood of recurrence.
3. **Track your progress.** Set goals like increasing your daily step count to build stamina for longer walks.
4. **Keep yourself accountable.** Work with exercise physiologists, physiotherapists or allied health professionals. Having a walking buddy can also be beneficial.
5. **Don't stop with recurrence.** Having a recurrence of back pain is still likely even with a good routine of regular walking. If this occurs, the general advice is to stay active and reduce the amount of walking, but first talk to your doctor.





The Great West Aussie Adventure has kicked off! Get active today!

The Great West Aussie Adventure kicked off on Monday, 29 July 2024 and for those participating in the challenge, you now already have your team of colleagues together, and you're ready to get active and have some friendly competition with other local governments.

Over the next six weeks, keep moving with some fun and interactive physical activities.

Here's a few tips to stay active:

- Get the team together and take a walk during lunch
- Friendly competition within the office – compare your number of steps with your colleagues each day
- If you own a bicycle, ride together

Over the coming weeks, keep a look out for updates on the challenge and which team is topping the leader board. You'll see your individual achievements, team achievements and how you rank against other local government teams. Remember, LGIS is giving out prizes for outstanding individuals and teams at the end of the challenge.



Zanana Bread – so delicious and so good for you too!

Tip: You can slice and freeze, making it an easy snack for work or home.

Prep 15min, cook time 1hour 20mins

Ingredients list

- ▶ 2 cups finely shredded zucchini
- ▶ 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ▶ ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ▶ 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ▶ 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ▶ ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ▶ 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- ▶ 200g granulated sugar
- ▶ 2 large eggs, room temperature
- ▶ 1 cup canola oil
- ▶ 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Method

- ▶ Preheat your oven to 180°C.
- ▶ Lightly grease your loaf pan.
- ▶ Rinse the zucchini and trim off the ends. Then, grate the zucchini.
- ▶ Gently wrap the shredded zucchini in a clean towel and squeeze out any excess water.
- ▶ In a large bowl, add the bananas and mash with a fork.
- ▶ To this, add in the sugar, eggs, oil, and vanilla, and stir together.
- ▶ Sift in flour, then add baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt and mix well.
- ▶ Finally, add in the grated zucchini and stir until all wet and dry ingredients are combined.
- ▶ Pour into the greased pan.
- ▶ Bake until a toothpick comes out clean. Check the bread at 70 minutes and continue baking for an additional 10 minutes if necessary.
- ▶ Leave the bread to cool for a few minutes before slicing to enjoy.



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