WANT TO LIVE LONGER? GO TAKE A WALK

Physical activity doesn’t need to be complicated. Something as simple as a daily brisk walk can help you live a healthier life.

**Regular brisk walking can help you:**
* Maintain a healthy weight
* Prevent or manage various conditions, including heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes
* Strengthen your bones and muscles
* Improve your mood
* Improve your balance and coordination

The faster, farther and more frequently you walk, the greater the benefits.

**Ideally, here’s how you’ll look when you’re walking:**
* Your head is up. You’re looking forward, not at the ground.
* Your neck, shoulders and back are relaxed, not stiffly upright.
* You’re swinging your arms freely with a slight bend in your elbows. A little pumping with your arms is OK.
* Your stomach muscles are slightly tightened; your back is straight and not arched.
* You’re walking smoothly, rolling your foot from heel to toe.

As you start your walking routine, remember to:
* **Get the right gear.** Choose shoes with proper arch support, a firm heel and thick flexible soles to cushion your feet and absorb shock. Wear comfortable clothes and gear appropriate for various types of weather. If you walk outdoors when it’s dark, wear bright colors or reflective tape for visibility.
* **Warm up.** Walk slowly for five to 10 minutes to warm up your muscles and prepare your body for exercise.
* **Cool down.** At the end of your walk, slow down for 5 to 10 minutes.
* **Stretch.** After you cool down, gently stretch your muscles.

April 6, 2016 is National Walking Day. Learn more!
Preparation
Preheat the oven 375°F.

1. Place the spaghetti squash on a baking sheet. Pierce it on all sides with a knife. Bake in the oven for about an hour, or until easily pierced with a knife.

2. Allow to cool enough to touch. Then cut the squash in half and spoon out the seeds and pulp. Using a fork, scrape out the spaghetti squash, separating the strands as you go. It should yield about 2-4 cups.

3. Place the spaghetti squash in a bundle of dish towels (or a kitchen towel), and squeeze out some of the moisture. Place in a mixing bowl, then toss together with the salt and tomato sauce. Add half of the ricotta and gently toss until the ricotta is just slightly broken up but not totally incorporated. Pour the squash into a small casserole dish or oven-safe bowl, dot with the remaining ricotta, and bake under the broiler until browned on top, about 5 minutes.

Ingredients
2 large spaghetti squash
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp garlic
1 tsp onion powder
1 1/2 cups tomato sauce (low-sodium spaghetti will work as well)
1 cup low-fat ricotta cheese
Fresh parsley, basil, and Parmesan cheese for garnishing (optional)

Recipe: Baked Spaghetti Squash with Tomato and Ricotta

Nutrition Information per serving (makes 4 servings): 185 calories | 5 g fat | 13 mg cholesterol | 260 mg sodium | 34 g carbohydrates | 7 g dietary fiber | 8 g protein | 12 g sugar

What if there was a solution to stress so simple that it involved nothing more than feeling thankful for the good things in your life? In fact, there is. That solution is called gratitude.

Studies have shown that people who regularly practice feeling thankful have a leg up when it comes to their health. Robert Emmons, a psychology professor at the University of California at Davis, has been a leading researcher in this growing field, termed “positive psychology.” His research has found that those who adopt an “attitude of gratitude” as a permanent state of mind experience many health benefits. These include the ability to cope better with stress and daily challenges, having stronger immune systems, and taking better care of themselves physically and mentally, just to name a few.

To get started, consider integrating some of the steps below into your daily life.

Focus Attention Outward
According to Emmons, gratitude is defined by your attitude towards both the outside world and yourself. He suggests that those who are more aware of the positives in their lives tend to focus their attention outside of themselves.

Be Mindful of What You Have
Edward Diener, a psychology professor at the University of Illinois, found that a high percentage of affluent people in Japan report low levels of life satisfaction, just as those living in poverty in India do. These findings suggest that it’s not how much you have, but how you feel about what you have that makes the difference.

Reframe Situations as Positive
It’s not actually a challenging situation that is upsetting. It’s how you perceive the situation. The next time you find yourself complaining about life’s hassles, see if you can mentally “flip the switch” to frame things differently. For example, rather than getting down about missing an opportunity, try to see the positive side. You might now have more time to direct towards other priorities.

(Article courtesy of Healthline.com)