

A Reason a Day to Walk more in May

1. **Improved Sleep** - Exercise boosts the effect of natural sleep hormones and walking first thing in the morning could help regulate your sleep- wake cycle.
2. **Saves the NHS money** - Did you know inactivity causes direct costs to the NHS of around £91 million pounds a year?
3. **Reduces loneliness and isolation** - Walking around your local community helps to increase feelings of belonging to that community and joining a walking group, like a health walk, can increase opportunities to connect and develop friendships with others.
4. **Increased productivity** - Walking during the working day can increase productivity by clearing the mind allowing you an opportunity to re-focus
5. **Reduction in pollution** - Walking for short journeys instead of using the car helps reduce pollution caused by carbon emissions.
6. **Reduction in traffic collisions** - Walking for short journeys or using public transport instead of the car helps to reduce the number of cars on the road and thereby reduces the amount of traffic collisions.
7. **Increased energy levels** - Walking increases oxygen flow through the body and increases the level of hormones that help to elevate energy levels.
8. **Reduces the risk of developing Dementia** - Studies have suggested that the risks of developing Dementia were significantly reduced in participants who were more active.
9. **Helps manage the symptoms of Stress & Anxiety** – Walking releases feel good endorphins which help to balance the hormones released by stress and anxiety.
10. **Helps with Weight management** – Physical activity burns calories, a brisk 30 minute walk can help burn 150 calories.
11. **Can reduce your risk of developing heart disease** – Studies have shown that walking briskly for 3 or more hours a week can reduce your risk of developing heart disease by up to 40%.
12. **Lowens the risk of Stroke** – Studies have shown that walking briskly for 2 or more hours a week can reduce your risk of stroke by 30%.
13. **Reduces the risk of developing diabetes and helps manage a diagnosis of diabetes** – Walking for 30 minutes each day can protect against developing type 2 diabetes. Walking also leads to improved glucose control for those who have a diagnosis of diabetes.
14. **Reduces risk of developing depression & helps lift a bad mood.** – Walking produces endorphins and dopamine which are the two main mood boosting hormones.
15. **Reduces the risk of falls** – Walking helps strengthen and tone the muscles of the lower body, important for balance. Walking uphill or upstairs has a greater impact on these muscles.

16. **Reduces joint and lower back pain** – Walking helps to active and stretch muscles which in turn increases the flexibility of the spine. Hormones released while walking can also work as a natural pain relief.
17. **It's free** – It does not cost anything to go for a walk and you do not need specialist equipment just a supportive pair of shoes.
18. **You can do it in your own time, at your own pace** – Walking is not regulated like an exercise class.
19. **Reduced blood pressure** – Studies suggest walking for 30 minutes a day is as good for lowering blood pressure as drugs. Exercise is a good way to keep blood pressure at healthy levels.
20. **It's fun** – there are lots of things you can do while walking to make it fun and enjoyable. Walk with others, listen to audiobooks, music, podcasts, search out wildlife etc...
21. **Saves you Money** – Walking for short journeys saves you the associated car/ public transport costs.
22. **You can go anywhere (normally, but we recommend staying local just now)** – We are lucky in Scotland to have the “right to roam” but please see [this guide](#) for more information on your rights and responsibilities while doing so.
23. **It's a safe activity** – No special amendments to your life insurance policy is required for everyday walking.
24. **Its low impact** – Walking is an activity that is easy on your joints.
25. **Reduces your risk of developing some Cancers – (Colon and Breast)**
26. **Keeps lungs healthy** – As you walk faster your breathing gets faster and this works the lungs helping to increase overall capacity.
27. **Reduces *bad* Cholesterol** - Regular walking can help to reduce *bad* cholesterol and increase *good* cholesterol in the body. High levels of *bad* cholesterol is a major cause of heart disease.
28. **Works arms and shoulders muscles** – Swinging your arms while walking or using poles (like Nordic Walking) helps to increase strength and tone of muscles in the arms and shoulders.
29. **Sun exposure increases levels of Vit D in the body** – Vit D is needed to keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy.
30. **Helps to maintains bone strength** – sedentary lifestyles have been shown to weaken bones and increases the risk of osteoporosis.
31. **Reduces waist circumference and engages abdominal muscles** – Walking not only helps with weight management, it also works our abdominal muscles which in turns helps to strengthen and tone the waist area.