

Walking Works!

March 30, 2023



Concepts Taught:

- Learn the benefits of walking as physical activity.
- Review the recommendations for physical activity.
- Explore some walking spots in Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and Van Buren counties.

American Heart Association:

- Reports there is a link between being inactive or sitting too much with a higher risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, colon and lung cancer, and early death.

BUT:

- Research also shows that being active helps us live longer, healthier lives.

Physical activity recommendations:

- 150 minutes per week of moderate-paced exercise
 - Break it up - 5 days per week for 30 minutes
 - Break it up further, if needed - 10 minutes three times per day 5 days per week
 - What is moderate-paced?
 - Having enough oxygen available to hold a conversation, but not enough oxygen available to sing a song.
- Don't forget muscle-strengthening exercises at least two times per week.
 - Resistance bands or hand weights are great options.

Area walking spots:

• Calhoun County:

- Historic Bridge Park
- Leila Arboretum
- Linear Path
- Kimball Pine
- Ott Preserve

• Kalamazoo County:

- Bronson Park
- Mayors' Riverfront Park
- MSU W. K. Kellogg Experimental Forest
- Asylum Lake Preserve
- Bow in the Clouds Preserve

• Van Buren County:

- Kal-Haven Trail
- Van Buren Trail State Park
- Michigan Heritage Trail



Physical Benefits:

- Taking more steps over the age of 40 lowers all-cause mortality
 - Taking 8,000 steps vs 4,000 steps daily decreased risk by 51%
 - Taking 12,000 steps daily decreased risk by 65%
- Being socially active & walking for exercise shows older adults are 50% less likely to have trouble falling asleep and staying asleep.

Mental Benefits:

- Grows the area of your brain that is responsible for memory
 - Any regular aerobic activity shows these results
- Can lower risk of becoming depressed by 26% for each major increase in physical activity
 - Example: Swapping out an hour of watching TV for an hour of walking.

Reference:

- www.aarp.org