

EDISI 10

JUN 2023

BULETIN APB

AKADEMI PENGAJIAN BAHASA
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA
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Simple S.T.E.P.S. to a Healthier Life

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A sedentary lifestyle refers to a lifestyle with little or no physical activity or exercise. It usually involves activities typically spent sitting or lying down, such as working at a work desk, watching television, or using electronic devices, without engaging in any physical activity for an extended period. Hence the term “couch potato” came to be.

The concept of 10,000 steps a day as a goal for physical activity and better health has become popular in recent years. It is often recommended as a benchmark to maintain an active lifestyle and achieve health benefits. The comparison between a sedentary life and 10,000 steps includes aspects of health effects, energy expenditure, physical and mental well-being, and long-term health outcomes, to name but a few.



Additionally, among the commonly known benefits of walking 10,000 steps a day are the following: improves cardiovascular health, burns calories, increases muscle strength, lowers the risk of chronic disease, improves mood, improves sleep quality, maintains bone health, improves mental health, and increases one's creativity.

The target is to get 10,000 steps a day to stay physically active. However, it is important to note that the specific step count may vary from one individual to another. Factors such as age, fitness level, and overall health play a role. The most important thing is for us to ensure that regular physical activity becomes a daily routine, like a way of life, while the sedentary part is reduced as much as possible. Thus, the question is how can we achieve these 10K steps at the workplace on a day-to-day basis? The answer is through S.T.E.P.S.

What is S.T.E.P.S? The abbreviation S.T.E.P.S follows:

- S**tairs over elevator
- T**ake walking breaks
- E**ngage with friends
- P**ark farther away
- S**tanding at the desk over sitting

Stairs over elevator:

There are various advantages to using stairs instead of a lift. Climbing a few flights of stairs is a great way to increase the step count. It provides a low-impact workout that can help improve cardiovascular health, build leg muscles, and increase overall fitness. Even a small amount of physical activity can be beneficial for one's mental health. Going up and down stairs can increase endorphin levels, reduce stress, and improve mood tones, especially when we can avoid the potential congestion of the elevators and give a sense of more direct routes to the destination.



Take walking breaks:

If the situation requires one to work at the table or spend a lot of time sitting, one should try to take breaks every hour or even less. Stretching one's legs and taking a short walk is a good simple exercise to break the sedentary space. Setting the alarm every hour also helps to keep track of the time. Instead of calling or emailing, we can go and talk to colleagues face-to-face by walking up to their desks or to their office spaces. This may be several steps away or even on a different level. That brings one to the choice of stairs over the elevator. This will not only help us in achieving the step targets but will also encourage face-to-face interaction and improve professional relationships with a personal touch.



Engage with friends:

Engaging with friends in walking is a fantastic way to enjoy each other's company while promoting a healthy lifestyle. Having friends to do walking activities can make the walking activity more enjoyable and helps one to stay motivated. Apart from taking care of our health, the relationships between "walking buddies" can also be enhanced. As the saying goes - killing two birds with one stone. The walking time can be used to catch up and have meaningful conversations. It makes the experience more enjoyable as two friends, or more, engaged in light-hearted discussions or shared interesting stories, experiences and advice.

Park farther away:

Parking the car farther away and walking is a great way to incorporate physical activity into our daily routine. Most of the time, we will try to find the closest parking space. Over time, parking the car a little further away from the intended destination can give us a chance to get some extra steps packed into our time, help to build strength and enhance the overall fitness apart from getting some fresh air. Rather than spending time circling for a closer spot, parking farther away can sometimes save you time and help reduce stress or tension.



Standing at the desk over sitting:

If we have the option, stand at the desk rather than sit all day. By doing this, we will be able to take more steps and burn more calories. When standing, it naturally encourages better posture. Problems such as back pain, neck pain, and poor circulation brought on by extended hours of sitting can be reduced. While standing, we tend to be more alert and focused. The upright position can promote better blood flow, leading to increased energy levels and improved cognitive function. The option to switch between sitting and standing positions potentially will lead to better work performance.



By implementing these simple S.T.E.P.S., we can easily achieve 10,000 steps at work without even realizing it. Remember, health is wealth. All the best and watch your STEPS while enjoying them!