

# Week 3:

## Hitting Your Stride & Reaping the Rewards



### **MOOD BOOSTING**

Studies show that regular walking can modify the nervous system leading to a decrease in anger, hostility and feelings of frustration. This ultimately lowers stress and improves your mood. Taking a stroll outside in the sunshine adds further benefits by helping to stave off Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and putting your brain into a state of meditation. Additionally, the social interaction of walking with a friend can help you feel more connected, further boosting your mood.



### **SHARPENS THE BRAIN, MEMORY & LEARNING**

Fluid intelligence is an innate learning capacity. It does not depend on education, experiences or previous learning. Rather, it refers to a person's ability to solve new problems and use logic to process and analyze information. This intelligence steadily declines as we age.

Brisk daily walking can help to increase the fluid intelligence you have by activating the genes that help with cognition. <sup>1</sup>



### **RAISES IMMUNITY**

Walking may help the body fend off illness better.



### **IMPROVES SLEEP**

Walking may help you fall asleep faster and sleep more soundly.



### **STRENGTHENS BONES**

Like muscle, bones are living tissues that become stronger with weight-bearing exercise such as walking.



### **LOWERS BLOOD PRESSURE & BLOOD SUGAR**

Consistent exercise such as walking enhances circulation, helping to lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of stroke. Also, it has been shown to lower blood sugar levels and overall risk for diabetes.



### **REDUCES PAIN**

Walking can spur the release of endorphins (pain-inhibiting hormones).



### **KEEPS YOU REGULAR**

Walking after meals speeds up your rate of digestion and accelerates weight loss. <sup>2</sup>



### **STABILITY & BALANCE**

Regular walks could help prevent slips, trips and falls by strengthening the lower body and helping to improve balance.

TRY: Walk with an exaggerated heel-to-toe action to help strengthen these muscles even more.



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