



NEWS RELEASE

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One Step at a Time

What small device can help you control weight and reduce your risk for chronic diseases, like cancer? A pedometer. This tiny, electronic gadget counts your steps, when fastened to your belt. Set it at zero in the morning. By the time you go to bed, the meter will tell you how many steps you took all day.

People who use a pedometer often become obsessed with counting their steps. In a sedentary society like ours, this habit can be a healthy obsession. Speaking at the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) annual research conference, Dr. Elio Riboli of the International Agency for Research on Cancer said, "In Western cultures, we overeat and under move. That's why we're experiencing an obesity crisis." Eating a healthy diet with appropriate portion sizes is one part of combating overweight and obesity. The other, equally critical part is exercising more. A pedometer can help.

Success Stories

A 74-year-old grandmother discovered she was making 2,000 steps a day with a pedometer. She strapped on a Walkman and began pacing the hallway of her apartment building. Gradually she brought her total up to 3,000 steps per day.

A 55-year-old attorney, developing a paunch, began walking a longer distance to his office each day after buying a pedometer. He is now thinking of taking up jogging again to bring his total up to his wife's.

A 42-year-old suburban mother saw that she took 8,000 steps with a pedometer during her daily routine. Consequently, she began walking her daughter to school instead of driving. Her total then rose to 12,000 steps on weekdays. She even bought a pedometer for her daughter, which is a good idea. Inactivity is rampant among children, and childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions.

Walk to Live

Many health experts recommend a goal of 10,000 steps per day. But researchers at AICR emphasize that it's more important to gradually increase activity from whatever level you are currently at to the level your health and stamina will allow.

By increasing energy expenditure, you can more easily maintain a healthy weight. But there is another benefit. By fighting excess weight, the pedometer can help counteract the risk of cancer associated with obesity and overweight. A review of scientific literature by AICR has linked obesity to breast cancer in postmenopausal women, as well as to colorectal, prostate, pancreatic, endometrial, kidney and possibly ovarian cancers.

Pedometers come in a variety of brands, models and prices. Some offer additional functions like counting calories, distance and time; some have covers or "delayed rest" buttons to prevent accidentally resetting the counter.

Source: *AICR Ever Green, Ever Healthy*, November 2002, Topic: Lifestyle