

CANBERRA TIMES, RELAX JUNE 26 2005 p. 11

active lifestyles

Keeping fit by keeping count

A lot of people do not like to exercise. The thought of taking time out for a 30-minute walk or to do any other type of physical activity can be unappealing or even stressful for some.

If you feel this way about physical activity, why not try a pedometer?

Pedometers have become very popular in recent years. These small devices measure and record movement associated with the impact of taking steps. They provide a very good indication of how many steps a person takes each day while shopping,

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performing activities during their working day or participating in physical activity.

Of course, a pedometer is not going to do the walking for you but recent research has found that "couch potatoes" find walking 10,000 steps easier than taking a 30-minute walk.

Why? It's psychological. To set the goal of walking 10,000 steps each day enables you to see progressive results and to track where you are at. "No time" is a convenient excuse for not exercising. But "getting some more steps up" is easier and more achievable.

Pedometers have various features. Single function pedometers count the steps only. Multi-function pedometers measure calories burned, time, steps and distance.

Prices vary between \$3 and \$40 and

you can get them at major retailers and sports stores. Pedometers are usually worn at the waist, directly in line with the midpoint of the front of the thigh and kneecap.

You may find that the goal of 10,000 steps a day is initially too exhausting. Increase your steps each day by 5-10 per cent and you will be achieving 10,000 steps in no time.

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