Wellness Wednesday

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A New Study Challenges The 'Ideal' Daily Step Count. And It's Lower Than You Think.

In recent years, the notion of walking 10,000 steps daily has gained traction as a benchmark for physical fitness. However, a groundbreaking study published in The Lancet has prompted a reevaluation of this widely accepted goal. The research indicates that achieving just 7,000 steps a day can yield significant health benefits, challenging the long-held belief that more is always better when it comes to physical activity.

Understanding the Study's Findings

The Research Overview

The study involved a comprehensive meta-analysis and systematic review of existing data, examining the relationship between daily step counts and various health outcomes. Researchers discovered that while increasing step counts does correlate with improved health, the benefits begin to plateau after reaching 7,000 steps.

Key Health Benefits

The findings revealed that individuals who walked 7,000 steps daily experienced a remarkable reduction in health risks compared to those who only managed 2,000 steps. Specifically, the study highlighted the following reductions in risk:

- 47% lower risk of death
- 25% lower risk of cardiovascular disease
- 38% lower risk of dementia
- 28% lower risk of falls
- 22% lower risk of depressive symptoms
- 14% lower risk of type 2 diabetes
- 6% lower risk of cancer

These statistics underscore the importance of regular physical activity, even at lower levels than previously thought necessary.

The Origins of the 10,000 Steps Myth

Marketing Influence

The 10,000-step goal can be traced back to a marketing campaign in Japan during the 1960s. This target was popularized as a universal standard for fitness, despite lacking a solid scientific foundation. The recent study serves as a reminder that fitness goals should be based on evidence rather than marketing hype.

Shifting Perspectives
Experts are now advocating for a more flexible approach to physical activity. Dr. Asim Cheema, an internal medicine and cardiology specialist, emphasizes that even moderate daily activity can lead to substantial health improvements. He notes that the study's findings encourage a shift away from the "all-or-nothing" mentality that often surrounds fitness.

The Implications of the Findings

Rethinking Fitness Goals
While the study suggests that 7,000 steps can provide significant health benefits, it does not imply that 10,000 steps is an undesirable target. For individuals who are already active, increasing their step count from 4,000 to 5,000 or more can still yield positive results.

The Importance of Overall Activity

Beyond Step Counts
It's crucial to recognize that step counts alone do not provide a complete picture of health and fitness. Activities such as cycling, swimming, or weightlifting may not register on step counters but are equally important for overall well-being.

Encouraging Movement Throughout the Day
Dr. Badgett advocates for a holistic approach to fitness that includes regular movement throughout the day. He suggests that individuals focus on reducing sedentary behavior and incorporating physical activity into their daily routines, whether through household chores, yard work, or short walks during breaks.

Practical Tips for Increasing Daily Steps

Small Changes, Big Impact
To help individuals reach their step goals, experts recommend making small adjustments to daily routines. Here are some practical suggestions:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park further away from store entrances.
- Get off public transport a stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Incorporate short walks during breaks or phone calls.

These minor changes can accumulate over time, making it easier to reach or exceed the 7,000-step mark.

Setting Realistic Goals
Dr. Cheema advises starting with achievable targets and gradually increasing step counts. For instance, beginning with 2,000 steps and adding 500 steps each week can help build a sustainable habit. Consistency is key to long-term success.

The Role of Lifestyle Factors

Adapting to Individual Needs
For individuals with physical limitations, alternative forms of exercise, such as swimming or using an elliptical machine, can provide similar benefits without the strain of walking.

This recent study suggests 7,000 steps may be enough for significant health benefits, challenging the 10,000-step standard. This supports a more realistic, compassionate view of fitness—focusing on consistent movement over arbitrary targets. Whether you aim for 7,000 or 10,000 steps, the key is to keep moving and enjoy the path to better health.

Cucumber Tomato Salad

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup red onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon + 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar, or white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 6 Persian cucumbers, halved and sliced
- 2 large ripe heirloom tomatoes, or beefsteak, diced

Creative Variations to Try

While the classic Cucumber Tomato Salad is delightful on its own, you can easily customize it to suit your taste. Here are some variations to consider:

Add More Vegetables

- Avocado: Incorporate diced avocado for creaminess.
- Bell Peppers: Add chopped bell peppers for a sweet crunch.

Incorporate Cheese

- Feta: Crumbled feta cheese adds a salty, tangy flavor that complements the salad beautifully.

Fresh Herbs

- Basil, Dill, or Mint: Fresh herbs can elevate the salad's flavor profile. Add them just before serving for a burst of freshness.

As the sun shines brighter and the temperatures rise, nothing beats the refreshing taste of a Cucumber Tomato Salad. This vibrant dish is not only easy to prepare but also a perfect accompaniment to your summer meals. With its crisp cucumbers, juicy tomatoes, and a zesty dressing, this salad is a delightful way to enjoy the season's bounty.

The Essence of Cucumber Tomato Salad

Cucumber Tomato Salad is a quintessential summer dish that embodies freshness and simplicity. It's a versatile side that pairs beautifully with grilled meats, seafood, or can even stand alone as a light meal. The combination of crunchy cucumbers and ripe tomatoes creates a delightful texture, while the dressing adds a tangy kick that elevates the flavors.

Why This Salad is a Must-Try

- Quick Preparation: This salad can be whipped up in under 15 minutes, making it an ideal choice for busy summer days.
- Nutrient-Rich: Packed with vitamins and minerals, cucumbers and tomatoes are low in calories yet high in hydration, making this salad a healthy option.
- Customizable: You can easily modify the ingredients based on your preferences or what you have on hand.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 ¼ cups, Calories: 92 kcal, Carbohydrates: 4.5 g, Protein: 1.5 g, Fat: 1 g, Sodium: 284 mg, Fiber: 1.5 g, Sugar: 2.5 g



INSTRUCTIONS

How to Make It

1. Add onions to a mixing bowl and top with salt, 2 tablespoons of olive oil and vinegar. Let it marinate 5 to 10 minutes, then add the tomatoes with their juices and cucumber.
2. Toss well, drizzle with the remaining teaspoon of oil and adjust the salt and vinegar to taste.

Storage Tips for Your Salad

To maintain the freshness of your Cucumber Tomato Salad, consider the following storage tips:

Make Ahead

You can prepare the salad up to an hour in advance. However, it's best to add the dressing just before serving to prevent the vegetables from becoming soggy.

Refrigeration

If you have leftovers, store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator. The salad is best consumed within a day, as it may become watery over time.

Reference: SkinnyTaste

https://www.puregym.com/exercises/legs/quad-exercises/lunges/clock-lunges/

Featured Exercise

►Clock Lunge:

HOW TO DO IT:

1. Start – Stand tall, feet hip-width, core engaged.
2. 12 o'clock – Step forward right, bend knees 90°. Return.
3. 1 o'clock – Step diagonally forward-right, bend knees 90°. Return.
4. 3 o'clock – Step right, bend right knee, keep left straight. Return.
5. 6 o'clock – Step straight back right, bend knees 90°. Return.
6. 9 o'clock – Step left, bend left knee, keep right straight. Return.
7. 7 o'clock – Step diagonally back-left, lower hips. Return.
8. Repeat – Complete reps on right leg, then switch.

THE BENEFITS:

- Strengthens Key Muscle Groups: The clock lunge primarily targets the quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes, and calves. By engaging these muscles, you can build strength and endurance in your lower body.
- Improves Balance and Coordination: The multi-directional nature of the clock lunge challenges your balance and coordination, which is essential for everyday activities and sports performance.

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Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

Meet Ulliance Senior Wellness Account Manager

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