

## **1- Walking: the first steps in CVD prevention**

Health professionals are presented with the challenge of prescribing physical activity that is likely to be sustained by the sedentary majority. Walking is eminently suited to physical activity prescription for inactive individuals as it is accessible to men and women of all ages and social groups and poses little risk of injury. This paper reviews recent evidence of the health benefits of walking and promotion of walking behavior.

Large observational studies consistently show associations between walking and cardiovascular disease endpoints over long periods of follow-up. Intervention studies further support the health benefits of walking, showing improvements in clinical biomarkers and measures after shorter periods of follow-up. Walking appears to have cardiovascular disease-related health benefits in younger, middle-aged, and older men and women, in both healthy and patient populations. Pedometer-based, mobile phone-based, and computer-based programs are effective in increasing walking levels. Neighborhood and workplace amenities and programs may be important supports for walking behaviors.

Walking has the potential to play a key role in the primary and secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease. Clinicians can prescribe walking to assist patients meet physical activity recommendations and help identify supports available to the patient.

### **Reference:**

Murtagh EM, Murphy MH, Boone-Heinonen J. Curr Opin Cardiol. 2010 Jul 9. [Epub ahead of print]