A Step in the Right Direction

Ever go for a walk in the woods or around the block just to give your brain a break? Turns out you gave your brain much more than a break. You gave it the nourishment it needs to grow. Researchers recently used MRI brain scans to determine the effects of walking and stretching on a group of sedentary subjects. Some subjects walked briskly 3 times a week for 60 minutes over a 6-month period while the others stretched for the same amount of time. The results might surprise even the most avid walker. The walkers showed significant increases in grey and white matter in the brain, while those in the stretching group showed no changes. Most of the changes occurred specifically in the prefrontal and temporal cortices. Say where? Ok, in the areas we rely on for general intelligence, daily memory, switching between tasks, and blocking out irrelevant information. In other words, really important cognitive abilities that help us function in our daily lives. Here’s the amazing part- these are the same areas of the brain that tend to shrink the most with aging.

It’s always good to get out of the chair and break up those sitting hours, even for a minute or two. But optimal brain health requires more activity than that. And remember, in this study the walking was brisk enough to improve the subjects’ fitness levels. So when you walk, open up the stride, swing those arms, and get your heart rate up. Climb some stairs or hills while you’re at it. Then go ahead and whistle while you walk- just thinking about all those new capillaries and brain cells you’re forming along the way.

Messiah Wellness Program News

So far over 50 employees are participating in Walking Works- a 10-week online physical activity tracking program, and have accumulated a whopping 2,867,092 steps of exercise in the first 3 weeks. Any activity you do can be recorded. The online calculator then converts your workout to an equivalent number of walking steps. It just takes seconds to record your workouts each day. You can still join, and find out how close you are to 10,000 steps per day! Registration details are at http://www.messiah.edu/info/20897/wellness

Look for posters around campus announcing the specific title of our November nutrition wellness workshop. The workshop will be held on Wednesday, November 18 from 12:00-12:45 in Parmer Cinema. It will be led by some of our Nutrition and Dietetics students.
While walking is important for your own health, it is also a great way to help others!

Here’s how:

Charity Miles
This app allows you to select a charity you would like to support, and a corporate sponsor will donate money for every mile you walk, run, or even bike!
http://www.charitymiles.org/

Wooftrax
“Don’t just take your dog for a walk... take your Walk for a Dog!”
This app will donate money towards your chosen animal shelter when you record a walk with your favorite furry friend!
http://www.wooftrax.com/

Walking is a normal part of everyday living. However, a little extra walking each day adds up to be a huge step toward healthier living. The standard recommended number of steps continues to be 10,000. This attainable goal relates to several health benefits and has a positive impact on your all-around wellness.

Improve Mental Health

Improve Blood Pressure

Improve Sleep

Improve Fitness

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Recent studies have seen positive results for breast cancer patients who remain physically active throughout treatments. In a research study of chemotherapy recipients, breast cancer patients who walked the recommended 10,000 steps per day had less fatigue, swelling, and dyspnea.

While cancer treatments are tough on the body, it is important to get up and moving.

If you, or someone you know is going through cancer treatment, reach out and invite them to be a walking partner! It will be helpful and healthful for them and YOU.

Genesis 13:17

“Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.”
Enjoy Fall & Fitness!

Try these walking loops around the college campus for a fresh new workout- fresh air included!

- **Green** = 1 mile route (easy path, mostly sidewalks. Begins at Murray Library)
- **Red** = 1 mile route (nice walk through and around campus. Begins at Eisenhower Sports Center)
- **Blue** = 1.25 mile route (a more advanced route with beautiful scenery! Begins at Student Union)

Sources: