



# Healthy Living Series

## WALKING & MENTAL HEALTH

You know that walking is good for your *physical* health. But did you know that it has tremendous benefits for your mental health as well? Woah, good news. And the even better news? Mental health benefits occur relatively early in the physical activity routine. Amazing! Walking truly is the best medicine.

### Walking and other forms of physical activity...



Stimulates you mentally and improves cognition, fatigue, sense of excitement, and creative ability

Lowers the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease



Increases concentration and stimulates growth of nerve cells in the memory center of the brain



Exposes you to sunlight, which increases serotonin in the brain and helps boost mood.



Improves self-image and provides a source of pleasure and fun



Increases blood flow to the brain through capillarization



Causes the body to release BDNF which strengthens neural connections that help you learn faster



Gets you out in nature, which lowers stress levels and reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety. Walk outside when possible!

Helps reduce stress by regulating the stress hormone "cortisol". When endorphins are released, they make you feel better and reduce painful sensations.



[www.walkwithadoc.org](http://www.walkwithadoc.org)