



Discovering new paths: Exploring the benefits of walking to work

We all know that walking is good for us. But did you know that walking to work can have some fantastic benefits? Walking to work can help improve your health, reduce stress, and boost your mood. So next time you consider driving or taking public transport to work, think about giving walking a try.

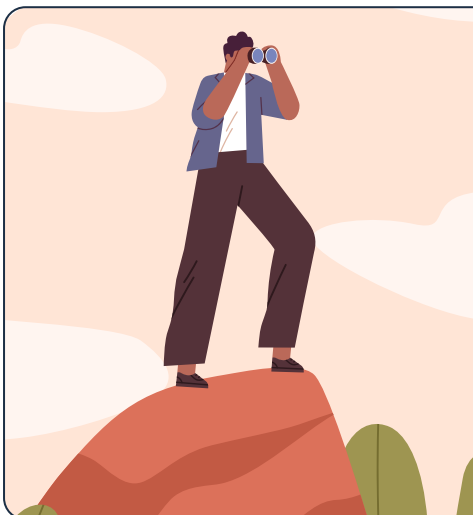


The benefits of walking to work

Are you looking for an energising start to your workday? If so, why not consider walking to work? Not only is walking an effective way of increasing physical activity but transitioning from your front door to the office can also be incredibly beneficial for your mental health.

A study by Imperial College London in 2016 showed that people who walked at least 30 minutes four times a week had higher cognitive functioning scores than those who did not include walking in their daily routine. Research from the Department of Health and Social Care in 2021 revealed that two-thirds of adults aged 18-24 who walked at least 20 minutes per day reported overall better health than those who didn't walk as much.

Other studies have shown that during workdays, when a person has walked, they tend to be more productive than on days when commuting via other methods. When you walk, you can enjoy the outside world, take different routes every day and experience something new – leading to a much more refreshing work environment overall.



The impact of optic flow on your mental wellbeing

Optic flow is the phenomenon that happens when we move our eyes and body while we walk. It occurs when our visual field is filled with changing images, such as objects in our path, which helps orient us to our surroundings. While this optical flow is happening, our brain is also experiencing several mental health benefits due to physical activity and exposure to sunlight. Studies have linked physical activity to improved cognitive performance and reduced symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, and other mental health conditions. Optic flow during a walk helps create an immersive experience that can positively impact physical and psychological wellbeing.



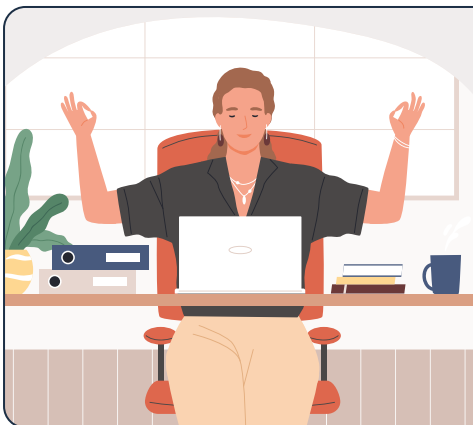
Save money on transportation costs

Walking to work is an easy, affordable way to save money on transportation costs. It's an ideal form of exercise requiring no gym membership or equipment. Walking will improve your physical health while allowing you to keep more of your hard-earned money in your pocket. According to a report commissioned by Sustrans in 2022, those who chose to walk instead of drive could save up to £2,000 per year in fuel costs alone. Furthermore, UK studies show that commuting via public transport costs nearly double the expenses needed for cars over five years (£7,456 compared to £14,356).



Reduce your carbon footprint

Walking can also be a great stress reliever, allowing you to clear your head after a long day at work, and it's good for the environment, too, since fewer cars mean reduced emissions. Data from 2019 collected by Transport for London show that pedestrians were the main contributor towards reduced emissions from road transport – accounting for 25% of total emissions reduction between 2014-2017 in Greater London.



Other health benefits include reduced stress

Walking to work is a great way to get ahead on your health. Not only does walking provide much-needed exercise, but it also has a significant impact on mental wellbeing. Studies have shown that walking for even five minutes can significantly reduce stress levels – giving you a much-needed pep when you reach the office. It's also one of the most natural types of physical activity, making it much more accessible and sustainable than working out at the gym.



Explore your surroundings and discover new places

Walking to work is a great way to start your day while simultaneously checking out the sights around you. It gives you the time and opportunity to explore your surroundings and discover new places you hadn't known before without stepping out of your neighbourhood. Walking to work can reinvigorate you and energise you for the day ahead. Finding hidden gems along your commute can also be a rewarding experience.



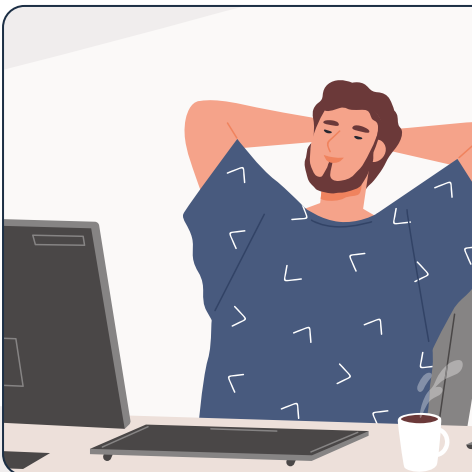
Making the transition

Transitioning from driving or taking public transport to work to walking can significantly enhance your physical and mental wellbeing. Although it may seem intimidating initially, the goal is achievable if you make gradual progress with step-by-step goals. Start by setting a realistic goal of walking a certain distance each day that you feel comfortable with; gradually increase the distance until you can walk to and from work.



Switch to walking today

Planning out your route beforehand and allowing more time for your commute can help ease any anxieties about the transition. Walking can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience once the change is complete - so give yourself grace when adjusting and stick with it! It's definitely worth it in the end. Walking to work is becoming increasingly popular thanks to its many benefits. Not only can walking improve mental and physical health, but it's also linked to lower stress levels and increased productivity.



What if you work from home?

Working from home provides many advantages, but it can also have its own unique set of challenges. One major issue is that being confined to a home office for long periods can lead to decreased physical activity and increased stress levels. Fortunately, if you work from home, you can still experience the benefits of walking by taking some time before or during your work day to get out and go for a walk. Taking a break from the computer screen to exercise will help clear your mind and give you more energy throughout the day. Additionally, it will allow you to explore the area around your house and create a clearer separation between work and home life. A few minutes of walking each day can make all the difference.

Walking to work is a great way to save money. It's also perfect for anyone looking to start or maintain a healthier lifestyle without having to make any drastic changes immediately. All it takes is 15 minutes out of your day – why not give walking a go and start enjoying its benefits today? Our experts are here to help. Contact your HealthHero or Validium service for more support and advice.

