



WALKING FOR

Weight Loss

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CHAPTER 1

WHY SHOULD YOU WALK



Chapter 1

Why Should You Walk

Walking is perhaps the easiest way to take care of your health. With just 30 minutes of walking on a daily basis, most people can improve cardiovascular fitness, reduce excess body fat, strengthen bones and enhance muscle power.

And for others who may be predispositioned to certain health conditions, walking can reduce the risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis and even some cancers.

Having said that, ‘easiest’ does not only imply to health benefits catered by walking. Instead it also happens to be a free-of-cost way of improving health. There are no expensive price tags attached to walking, the practice doesn’t demand rigorous training and can be done without the use of any special equipment.

Plus, it is a low impact exercise that is not bound by time constraints. You can go out for a walk whenever you feel like it even though there are some suggestions regarding more suitable timings for walking for weight loss. But that comes later.



For now, know that walking is a highly recommended form of physical activity for people who are overweight, elderly and even those who haven't worked out in a while. If you fall in any of these categories, please do continue reading to find out what walking can do for you. If you are a healthy individual who works out regularly, you can still find something useful here and fit a walking regimen into your usual workout routine to optimize the benefits.

How to get started?

Nothing technical here, just a few ideas to get you going. Some you might've thought of yourself already, others can come in handy as useful suggestions to make the walk a more comfortable experience.

Since walking is not exactly rocket science, don't be too hard on yourself when you first decide to walk. Take baby steps and work your way up. Simple suggestions to get started are discussed below:

- **Consult a physician**

Before starting a walking routine it is better that you see your doctor. Walking is not unhealthy for your body at all. However, sometimes joint pains and cardiovascular diseases get worse with exertion. Even during the walk keep a lookout for danger signs like chest pain, constricted breathing etc.

- **Buy appropriate gear**

Your shoes are the most important factor in a smooth walk. Buy shoes that comfortable, light and relatively flat. The soles of the shoes should be soft and the heels a bit firm. Buy one size larger than your usual shoes as your feet tend to swell after exercise.

Wear clothes that have moisture absorbing qualities to keep you dry and chafe-free. Also, put on some socks to protect the feet from blisters and unnecessary friction.

- **Assign a specific time**

You need to assign a specific time of the day to your workout. This will make sure that you walk daily without interruptions. Try to devise your workout in accordance with your normal routine so that it can be easily incorporated without any inconvenience.

- **Plan your route**

After deciding the time of your workout, plan the route as well. You can have a nearby park where you want to walk daily. You may want to walk back home from the office.

Planning where you will be walking beforehand will ensure that you will finish your workout. Any ambiguities can demotivate you. However, do not stick to only one route. This will make your workout boring and less exciting.

- **Keep a journal**

Keep a journal about your daily exercise. Write about the time and speed of your walk. Describe your feelings during the walk. Keep track of your weekly weight.

Documenting your progress will motivate you. It will also help in developing a habit. Once you reach a week or a fortnight you would want to fill the journal to the end. Looking at how far you have come will give you a feeling of accomplishment.

- **Have a support system**

You can have a walking buddy. This way you will have someone to look forward to when you go for a walk. Even if you feel down your partner will be there to cheer you up and get you going. Your walk will become more pleasant and will feel less like a workout.

If you cannot find someone to walk with, join an online forum. Connecting with other people keeps a person focused and active. Listening to the struggles of your group fellows makes you realize that you are not alone. This keeps you from quitting.

- **Get fancy**

Download a workout app on your phone. It can connect you with your friends. It can also help you keep track of your walk. You can measure the speed of your walk as well.

Buy a pedometer to count the number of steps you take each day. Wear your favorite workout outfit to feel good.

Develop a fun playlist for your walk. Motivating songs and upbeat melodies can make your walk enjoyable and amusing.

- **Break your walk into intervals**

If you find walking for one long spell very challenging you can break your walk into smaller sessions. A 20-minute walk can be broken into two 10-minutes sessions or four 5-minute sessions.

Dividing the sessions will not decrease the effectiveness of your walk. It will also make it easier to fulfill your daily walk goals.

- **Frequency per week**

Walking is not a very intense exercise. Therefore, most people are able to walk daily. However, a beginner should start with 3 days per week and increase the number of days to 5 or 6 later on.

Also, do not underestimate the importance of rest. Give yourself a day or two to recover and rejuvenate.

- **Walk whenever you can**

Apart from your daily workout, add as much walking into your routine as you can. Walk to your grocery shop. Park your car farther than your office. Take stairs instead of lifts.

These simple changes will build your stamina and increase your progress during the walk.

- **Vary the terrain**

Try to add a few uphill walk into your routine as well. Go for a hike or walk on the beach every weekend. Not only will it make your exercise less monotonous but it will also build more endurance.

- **Treat soreness and pain**

Stock up on simple medicines and treatments for small injuries at home before starting your walk.

Apply petroleum jelly or other ointments on parts of the body that are likely to rub against your clothes. These areas include thighs, neck, arms, skin under your bra etc. Treat blisters with ointments as well.

After any workout, a person is bound to feel a bit sore. For ordinary muscle aches that improve with movement, apply ice packs. If the pain hampers your movement and stability in any way it is better to skip the workout for one day.

If the stiffness and ache do not subside even after a few days' rest, see a doctor.

Simple walking exercises

Choose the easiest way you can incorporate walking into your routine. It can be based on time or distance covered.

10-minute walk:

If you are a complete beginner, start with ten minutes of walking for the first week. When you get used to it, add five more minutes in the next week. This will gradually increase your stamina and decrease the chances of injury.

Don't worry about your speed in the beginning. Once you get used to walking regularly, your pace will increase automatically. For weight loss, a person should walk for at least 60 minutes five days a week at a brisk pace (you get breathless and are unable to talk while walking). Slowly increase your walk up to this level.

1-mile walk:

For the more adventurous, you can start off with a 1-mile walk as well. Walk for a mile anywhere you want three to four times a week. Once you build enough endurance, add half a mile to your walk in the successive week. You can gradually increase the distance walked based on your strength and ease of walking.

As mentioned earlier, the pace of your walk does not matter in the beginning. Once your body gets accustomed to the daily walk you can try to complete the same distance in a shorter amount of time.

CHAPTER 2

YOUR WALKING TECHNIQUE 101



Chapter 2

Your Walking Technique 101

Just like any other exercise, walking needs to be done in the correct manner to reap its benefits. There are certain walking styles and techniques that can help a beginner to up their walking game.

Importance of walking technique

A correct walking technique can greatly aid weight loss goals. It increases the efficiency of the walk; and the energy used by the body is effectively utilized.

People may not think about it too much but good posture is an integral component of the walking techniques. An overall accurate posture minimizes the chances of injury. Poor strides can rip leg muscles and lopsided demeanor raises the risk of back and knee pain. A good posture, on the other hand, relaxes muscles and assists the walker to breathe deeply.

When you walk in a stable manner your body finds it easier to move forward. The increased ease of walking helps you to stride even faster than before.

Plus, an effective walking technique can increase the rate of calorie burn. It strengthens and tones your muscles even faster. Greater muscle mass increases the metabolism rate of the body, even at rest, which further aids the weight loss process.

It is also productive in targeting and destroying the visceral fat around the organs in your body. The importance of an appropriate walking technique cannot be stressed enough. It makes the whole process of walking easier, more enjoyable and inviting for the person.

Different Walking styles

There are various walking styles that people employ in their daily lives. Not all styles may be for everyday walkers but it is good to know the options available. You may want to adopt one that best suits your style and health goals:

- **Brisk walking**

This is the easiest way of walking. Using this technique, a person walks slightly faster than the normal speed. Brisk walking is quite appropriate for beginners with the speed being generally around 5 km/hr.

- **Power walking**

Power walking employs a perfect posture. It is a more efficient way of losing weight and improving your health and fitness. The average speed of a power walk is around 7-9 km/hr. It is believed that power walking may well burn as many calories as jogging. This technique may also suit your needs better if you have knee issues.

- **Race walking**

Race walking is a sport in the Olympics. It requires an extremely high levels of fitness. The main rule is that one foot of the athlete should always touch the ground. This implies that before one foot leaves the ground other should already be in position.

- **Pole walking**

Pole walking is a Nordic practice. This type of walking uses a pair of poles or sticks to walk. The poles are used as a support to push oneself forward during the walk. It helps to engage core muscles and improve balance. It is usually employed during hiking.

- **Marathon walking**

Marathon walking is not very fast. However, it requires a lot of stamina as marathons are usually quite long. You need to practice for a few months before formally walking a marathon.

- **Chi walking**

Chi walking applies the rules of Tai Chi in walking. It is a fivefold approach which includes maintaining perfect posture, effective muscle usage, achieving ultimate balance, weighing options and advancing forward.

- **Stroller walking**

Stroller walking is exactly what the name suggests. A parent pushes their child's stroller while walking. Its disadvantage is that your hands do not swing while walking. Keeping the hands in the same position can hurt your neck and back.

Benefits of various walking styles

All walking styles build muscles and tone your body. However, some styles are more effective in losing weight and burning calories.

- Brisk walking is a good cardio exercise. It also strengthens your leg muscles.
- Power and race walking are highly fruitful in building muscles and getting leaner. They help burn calories at a rapid rate.
- Pole walking is less abrasive on the joints. It also builds upper body strength by engaging the arms, chest, shoulders and back muscles. It improves the balance of your body as well.
- Marathon walking is very good for developing discipline and patience. It builds stamina as well.

- Chi walking is an art. It develops the ability to concentrate and pay attention to details. It can be considered more of a meditation.
- Stroller walking is very beneficial for parents who do not have spare time to work out. As it requires pushing some weight, it consumes more energy as well.



Recommended Posture

Always remember to check your posture before going for a walk. A simple, yet effective aspect of walking, here is what you need to do:

Stand as tall as you can and align your whole body. Your head, neck, back, knees and feet should be in a straight line, yet you don't have to make your body rigid and stiff. Instead, keep yourself as relaxed as possible.

Make sure you don't have an arched back. Protruding buttocks and a large belly can often cause such an arch in the back. In order to avoid this, tuck your pelvis and pull your stomach inwards. Sucking your stomach inwards also engages the core muscles.

Keep your gaze straight ahead. A good option is to look 15 to 20 feet in front of you.

Keep your head straight and stable. Your chin should be parallel to the floor. Make sure you do not subconsciously tilt your chin upwards or downwards. Bending your neck to look down puts a strain on your back. Just lower your gaze slightly if you have to see where you are going. It minimizes undue stress and improves breathing as well.

One very important of correct posture is that the walker's shoulders should not be tense. They should be relaxed so that the distance

between their ears and shoulders is optimum. Also, move your shoulders slightly backward. This prevents shoulder muscles to get sore.

How to perform a power walk

While there are so many walking styles, power walking is definitely one of the most popular ones. Almost everyone can go on a power walk and can get weight loss benefits as well. So coming up, this next bit may sound a little bit technical, but is well worth the read, especially if losing weight is what you are aiming for.

After you have emulated the perfect posture, you can start your power walk.

Warm up your body by walking slowly for a few minutes. You can also do some gymnastic exercises like jumping jacks to get ready for the power walk. Perform pre-walk stretches as well.

When power walking your arms should be bent at a right angle and should be able to move as fluidly as possible. Keeping your arms at an angle prevents any numbness in the fingers and palms. Also, bent arms build and tone muscles and burn more calories. They help increase the pace of your walk as well.

Your arms should swing back and forth at the height of your waist while walking. Keep your hands slightly closed but do not clench your fists. Your elbows should be close to your body during the walk to avoid the 'chicken walk'.

If your arms get tired initially try to keep them raised for 5-10 minutes and give them rest when worn-out. This way you can gradually build stamina.

The movement of the lower body is the most important part of a power walk. It involves the hips, legs, ankles, and feet.

In a power walk, when you put your leg forward you should land on your heel first. At this point, your foot should be flexed and your toes should point upwards. Then roll your foot forward so that your toe is the last part to leave the ground. When lifting the toes, give a push forward to your body. This will give your body more momentum and help you increase your pace even more.

When walking, make sure that your strides are not very long in the front. Long strides are often associated with knee and muscle injury. To shorten them, the distance between your forward foot and the body center should be small.

Instead of lengthening your steps in the front, try to increase the distance of the back leg from the center of the body. This can be

done by keeping your back foot on the ground as long as you can. Such a change in your stride will provide more push to your body.

During a walk alternate the movement of arms and legs so that you can easily walk in a straight line.

Finish off your walk by slowing down to cool off your body. Do some stretching exercises again to release any stiffness in the muscles.

Following the correct techniques of a power walk can help you lose weight and tone your body quite rapidly.

CHAPTER 3

WALKING FOR WEIGHT LOSS TIPS & STRATEGIES



Chapter 3

Walking For Weight Loss Tips & Strategies

You don't need to have a fancy gym membership to lose weight. Instead, all you really need is motivation, determination and consistency. Stick with these three and losing weight can be practically free if you put your head to it.

In fact, walking is the least expensive and most straightforward way of dropping those stubborn pounds. If you do it correctly and pair it with the right techniques the results can be extremely impressive.

So to get you motivated, know that walking increases your metabolism and reduces stress. Your body starts to burn more calories even at rest due to stronger muscles.

Next comes determination. Following certain exercises and strategies before and after the actual walk will boost the effectiveness of your workout. Don't let anything get in the way of that.

And to help you with consistency, step by step instructions to plan your walk are discussed below.

Pre-walk warm-up exercises



Warming up your body before starting any workout reduces the chances of injuries to the muscles. It eases your body into the ensuing regimen. Before your actual walk, start off with an easy paced stroll to get your body going. After this follow simple stretching exercises involving all the muscles used during the walk. You can do this along the following lines:

- Take long breaths. Stretch your arms in front and take them all the way up. Slowly release them to the sides.
- Make circles with your neck.

- Lift your right arm and take it over your head. Stretch it so that you can feel the tension on the right side of the body. Repeat the same on the left side.
- Make at least six circles with each ankle in clockwise and counter-clockwise directions.
- After this, move your legs from your buttocks back and forth a few times.
- Make small circles with each leg, in the form of an eight, 15 to 20 times.
- Bend your knees and open your feet as wide as your hips. Slowly rotate your hips for ten repetitions one way then the other.
- Stretch your arms to the sides and swivel them 12 times. Do the same with your shoulders.
- Hop forward like a rabbit twisting your body left and right. Do 20 reps.

Other exercises like squats and lunges are can also be included in pre-walk stretching.

What is the optimal posture for walking?

Before starting the actual walk it is important that your posture is correct. A bad posture will reduce the calorie burning benefits of walking. Also, it can induce more injury to your back and legs. There are four aspects of a perfect posture.

- Neck

Straighten your neck so that the space between your ears and shoulders is maximized. However, do not tense your neck as it can lead to constricted breathing. Let down your shoulders to avoid any sore muscles post-walk.

- Arms

Move your arms fluidly back and forth keeping them at a 90-degree angle. Moreover, let them swing as far back as they can without any strain to the muscles. Keep your hands relaxed; not in a fist.

- Pelvis

Keep your back straight and long. Slightly tug your abdominal muscles inside so that they are taut. Your hips should be relaxed however they should not wiggle when you walk.

- Feet

Plant your feet firmly. Slightly glide your feet off the floor when walking so that your heels are the first to leave the ground and your toes are the last. Your steps should be long but just enough to avoid any injury to the leg muscles.

Walking strategies

Planning out your walks beforehand can help you fight procrastination. A good recommendation is to go on a walk soon after waking up as your body burns most calories in the morning when it has no energy from food to consume.

Keep your pace fast while walking as this helps burn more calories. Moreover, increase your pace during your workout for a few minutes. When increasing your speed, go for more steps per minute instead of longer steps.

Also, incorporate varying terrains into your workout. Go for a hike or walk on grass, jogging tracks and footpaths interchangeably.

Decide which routes you are going to take during the week. For instance, plan to go uphill three times a week. Designate three days for fast-paced intense walks whereas two days for moderate walks.

Instead of going for an hour of a continuous walk, break down your walks into 20-minute spans. Walking a little after each meal is also better as it helps to balance sugar levels.

If all this seems much for you, then stick to the basics and follow one simple rule. Try to take 10000 to 15000 steps a day. Keep a pedometer with you and monitor your movement. If even this seems like a lot, start with fewer steps and slowly work your way up to the goal.

Post-workout stretches

After the walk, it is important to cool your body and bring it to normal temperature. Also, post walk stretches help release some of the muscle tension and avoid any soreness.

After the workout, slow down and walk the final furlong at a slow speed. Sit on a bench or a chair and extend one leg out. Plant the heel, flex your foot and lean forward. You will feel some tension in the leg. Repeat it with the other leg. Keep each posture for 10 to 20 seconds.

After this, hold on to a support. Extend your left leg back keeping your heel on the ground. Bend the right knee and stoop towards the support. Hold the position for 20 seconds and repeat with the other leg.

With support, stand with legs slightly wider than the shoulders. Keep one foot straight and tilt the other foot outwards at an angle. Perform a lunge in the direction of the tilted foot making sure that the knee does not go past the toes. Repeat on other side.

The stretching exercises for pre and post walk can be performed interchangeably as well.

CHAPTER 4

OVERCOMING THE MENTAL STRUGGLE



Chapter 4

Overcoming the Mental Struggle

People who have known the struggle of losing weight understand how it is more than restricting your diet or going to a gym. Losing weight comes with a lot of mental challenge, and requires a package of emotional support and rational thoughts. Simply said, it is a mind makeover.

However, in order to successfully continue on the road of success the first thing you need is to cut yourself off from the mental baggage prior to the working on your waistline. By accepting that you will be changing everything from your eating habits to lifestyle patterns, continue reading the following tips that would help you maintain a positive attitude throughout.

Weight loss is no magic

One of the major psychological blocks people face is when they expect too much. Blame it on science, but weight loss takes its time. Unless you spend days starving yourself while running across the street for half the day, you won't be seeing any magic.



Weight loss is slow especially when you opt for healthy ways of losing weight such as walking. The diet plan and workout trends advertised promising a dramatic size change within weeks are nothing but a grave threat to health.

At this point, it is important to remember that it is not fat but lean tissues and water that is running out of your system. As such, pushing yourself too hard would not only put you in a psychological turmoil, but would also make you unhealthy.

Set your goal

“I want to lose weight”. So now that you have made up your mind, what exactly is it that you plan to do? The answer to this question remains vague for many.

Some days you may want to diet, on others you go to the gym. Such haphazard planning does not help assist weight loss and can eventually become depressing as it likely stops you from achieving your goal.

To avoid getting trapped in this dilemma, set a target for how much weight you want to lose, and give yourself a “realistic” deadline.

Do not fear the results

Always remember that losing weight is just a part of life, results will come but in time. While you keep yourself active in your struggle to lose weight, do not punish yourself by stressing over the results. Let things move at their own pace.

Give yourself a change of perspective- imagine yourself in the future and let go of the overwhelming feeling of being fat. Fear is an obstacle, so sit down for 5 minutes every day before you eat your meal, go to walk and put your goals in front of you. When feeling anxious about your body, tell yourself that your efforts will pay off. Facing your fears empowers you, giving you the ability to continue with your weight loss routine.

Set realistic expectations

It is good to weigh yourself occasionally to know the pace of your progress, but developing a habit of doing so too often would just stress you out.

Research shows that in weight management one of the most important thing is to let yourself relax. Do not tell your brain every

second that it is doing something different. Let your new routine integrate smoothly in your life.

Another aspect of stress is having unrealistic expectations. Nutritionists often complain of people coming to them for a diet plan that would make them size zero within weeks. Such a huge jump is neither healthy nor physically possible. As much as it may hurt you, the most recommended weight loss per week is 1-2 pounds. Such a realistic approach is manageable, easy on your body and sustainable.

Unconscious Habits

Oftentimes failure results from unconscious habits that get develop over the years. With a new routine comes the challenge of paying attention to every little habit that may have been considered petty before such as opening up a pack of chips whenever convenient, eating too fast, and drinking sodas with food.

To get rid of such unwanted habits that wreck routine requires focused attention. One of the best strategies is to not force yourself. Tell yourself that you want to lose weight, but do not stop doing what you do- except by paying attention to it.

Observe yourself for a week and you may be surprised to see how much you can change by understanding the eating pattern you have. Pick a habit that you consider to be a hindrance between you and your goal- replace it with a healthier one such as schedule a daily walk during your snack time.

Get Support

A person can only have so much will power, and will likely need some sort of motivation. Finding support from friends and family is highly recommended and often one of the easiest to find.

If friends and family appear to be too busy, join a weight loss community group and share your success or failure stories. By knowing that there are people who share the same struggle will help you go on for a longer time.

Give yourself a break

Just as it is for most of us, it can be stressful to work on a routine that is out of your comfort zone. It is a great idea to reward yourself

after a few weeks for the progress that you have made. Trust your body, eating a spoonful of full cream ice cream would not ruin your efforts.

Our bodies are flexible enough to accept a few routine shifts. It is important to keep yourself satisfied, motivated and not bored and restricting yourself from too much can be stressful.

Every diet planner always recommends a cheat day. And if a cheat day is not your idea of pampering, go visit a spa and let others treat you well. This will break the monotony of your boring restricted routine, helping you start fresh the next day.

Remember that losing weight is constant juggling between mind and body. The road towards a desirable weight is connected with both your mental state and your physical efforts.

People who feel depressed while working out are less likely to achieve successful results- they will lose unhealthy weight due to stress which would make them look weak and worn out. The goal is to let your new routine smoothly fit in with your old one. Be yourself, and be happy about what you are doing.

CHAPTER 5

BENEFITS OF WALKING



Chapter 5

Benefits of Walking

There are numerous benefits of walking, mental and physical. It is a much easier, safer exercise than all those complicated exercises as advertised which require expensive personal trainers, gym machines and a rather large proportion of the day.

It is far less stressful with even more benefits than all that. It is therefore, recommended by physicians in all fields. It is recommended for people of all ages, healthy or not, male or female. Walking has its benefits for all.

Take a look at individuals with certain health conditions. People on borderline for diabetes, hypertension or high cholesterol problems never hear their physician tell them to hit the gym and workout on complicated machines till they drop off. Instead, physicians will *always* start by recommending regular walks.

In fact, it is not just diabetes, hypertension or high cholesterol levels that can be helped with this. It is a number of other diseases, even those that have a genetic predisposition can at least be delayed with the help of regular walks.

Medical practitioners find it very favourable for their patients, be it a heart patient, a young athlete, a middle aged women towards menopause, a child yet to have another growth spurt and so on. Even patients who might be fit physically, but in emotional stress or recovering from a difficult phase in their life, are recommended regular early morning walks for a healthier mind and outlook on life in general.



Walking and physical health

Before getting into how it can help prevent a disease, delay the onset of a disease or reduce symptoms of one, let us discuss the simple benefits that can be reaped of walking.

Walking **improves circulation**. And this is where you benefit the most. The muscles, ligaments and joints of the body need maximum circulation to gain ample nutrients and oxygen, without which they will not only get weak but over time, they will also lose their function, flexibility and smooth movement. Likewise, sprains or muscle spasms will be more frequent and difficult to overcome.

Walking can play **a key role in weight loss**. Any walk that makes you slightly breathless and makes you feel like your body is actually working, can help with weight loss. This is important to understand so you do not count that long walk from one lecture hall to the next, or that one time you walked across the playground as actual walk. Those, in no way will help reduce weight.

A proper walk will mobilize all those stored fats and carbohydrates from your body and use them up right away to give you energy.

Walking is also extremely **beneficial for bones**. Walking involves all the weight bearing bones of the body. A person who

does not walk much, does not use the bones much either. So instead, the body itself starts taking out calcium from the bones so it can utilize this mineral for other functions. And just like that, your normal and healthy bones start to lose their density and strength.

Many painful and progressively worsening diseases can be prevented by a short, regular 30 minute walk every day. These include arthritis, osteoporosis, cardiac conditions, fatty livers, muscular and joint problems, hypertension, diabetes and the list goes on.

Walking and mental health

One of the very few things other than sedatives which help with insomnia is a walk. Be it a morning walk or a walk in the evening, it is known to help with insomnia and improve the quality of sleep, so that the person wakes up fresh and with a clear, active mind the next day.

Another benefit of walking is that it activates the natural analgesia system of the body, releasing hormone-like substances in the blood that help lower stress and improve the mood.

Walking also improves the overall functions and activity of the brain. It helps improve memory, learning, behavioral responses and functions. It even affects social behaviours in people. This is primarily why rehab centres, old homes, psychiatric wards, always take patients for walks in a healthy, beautiful environment.

In a way, walking is like meditation. It gives you time to think, releases substances in your body that help reduce stress and calms down your nerves. Imagine what an early morning walk in the park, when the weather is also very pleasant, can do for you.

There are a number of degenerative brain disorders that can be prevented or the symptoms slowed down and reduced by regular walks. In patients with memory loss due to trauma, dementia due to a genetic predisposition, walks are prescribed as part of their treatment.

Why walking can be better than running?

Popular opinion will probably tell you that running is better than walking as it burns more fat. Truth is, both can burn equal calories, one of them just takes longer.

Running is more stressful on the body, and not always in a good way. For those suffering from heart disease, running can be very risky. The more they run, more the oxygen depletion in muscles causing the heart to beat faster and with more force than normal, exhausting and overburdening it.

For people who have always had an unhealthy lifestyle, with fatty foods, hardly any exercise, smoking and the like, running can be risky.

Such people are very likely to have fatty deposits in the walls of their arteries, making their lumen smaller so that the heart has to pump with greater force to keep up with the oxygen and nutrient demand of the muscles involved. Whereas in simply walking, calories are burnt just the same but with almost no over stress of the heart.

Running also exposes the individual to higher risks of sprains, fractures, cartilage damage in knees, all of which are at a much greater risk of wear and tear than they are during walking. In fact,

the susceptibility to certain illnesses is also increased in runners than it is in those who walk, with the illness or injury being severer and lasting longer.

Earlier on, the mental health benefits of walking were discussed. None of those can be associated to running. Running cannot compare to the peace and quiet of an early morning walk that relieves emotional stress. The physical benefits to be gained by both are many, but even in that, walking can come out the winner.

It does not require one to take out a lot of time from their busy schedules, done a new workout outfit every day, grab a gym bag and go to a personal trainer. Neither does it require one to invest in expensive machinery or work out equipment. It also does not stress your body so much that you are too sore to move a muscle for the rest of the day. So to conclude, walking is a complete exercise in itself with all the benefits that other workouts can give.

CHAPTER 6

**WHY NON WALKING
CAN KILL YOU**



Chapter 6

Why Non-Walking Can Kill You

So after discussing the benefits of walking to the body and brain, let us now take a look on the flip side. Just as walking has physical and mental perks, not walking has its own set of repercussions in both these areas.

The human body has been made to move and stay active. If this does not happen, there are consequences. Recent studies have shown that sitting for long hours continuously deters our physical and mental health.

Contemporary office environments and accessibility to computers and TVs at home further aggravate this issue. Even working out might not be that effective in countering the damage caused by non-walking.



What happens when you sit for too long

The moment a person sits down their body goes into a passive mode. Muscle activity decreases and metabolism slows down as well. Plus, the rate at which the body burns calories dwindles to one calorie in one minute.

What happens subsequently presents a scary picture but should be enough to motivate people to get moving more often.

After a day of continuous sitting, the glucose absorption in muscles decreases. A few weeks later, cholesterol and fatty compounds start to accumulate in the body. Muscles weaken and the ability of the body to consume oxygen effectively decreases.

After about a decade, such a lifestyle can even reduce life expectancy by as much as seven years.

Physical condition of a non-walker

The body of a non-walker deteriorates slowly due to inactivity. The above-mentioned factors make their body more prone to various diseases and complications.

1. Impaired organs

Heart and pancreas are the most damaged organs of a non-walker. Accumulation of fatty molecules and high cholesterol, due to sitting, can clog the blood vessels and increase the risk of heartache and other cardiovascular diseases.

Less absorption of glucose causes the pancreas to produce more insulin which can lead to diabetes.

2. Weak muscles

The more muscles are used, the stronger they get. As abdominal muscles are not employed while sitting, they become weak. Tragically, most people can lose any hope of ever getting abs.

In addition, hip muscles get tight and less flexible from inactivity. Their movement becomes restricted and they are more likely to bruise. The glute muscles also suffer by becoming weak which hinders smooth walking and reduces steadiness of the legs. In a nutshell, it is pure chaos all over.

3. Slow digestion

Non-walking slows the digestive process of the body as well. The mid-section of the body gets compressed while sitting and inhibits the movement of food through the gut. It leads to bloating, irregular bowel movements, acid reflux, and muscle cramps.

4. Obesity

The body burns thirty percent fewer calories in a sedentary position. Obese people are usually found to sit one or two hours more than slimmer individuals. Moreover, statistics show that sedentary time and obesity are directly proportional to each other.

The number of overweight people increased two times when the sedentary time increased by eight percent.

5. Weaker bones

If people don't walk or move, their bone mass and density decreases. The chances of osteoporosis also increase. It has been found that women who sit for more than 6 hours each day lose 0.01 part of their bone mass every year.

Inactivity makes the joints stiff as well. It sometimes causes swelling and redness. The backbone also becomes rigid as most of the nutrients are not absorbed due to constant compression.

6. Shoddy posture

Most of the people hunch forward when they sit down. If such a posture is maintained constantly during work, it can have detrimental repercussions on the back and neck of the person. The cervical bones become stressed which leads to pain in the neck, back, and shoulders.

Does non-walking affect your mental state?

Walking has long been associated with clearing one's mind and getting some fresh air. Our brain requires good blood flow, sufficient oxygen and ideal glucose levels to perform effectively. A sedentary state decreases the flow of blood to the brain and makes it fuzzy.

The activities that people do while sitting, also affect the functioning of their brain. Looking at computer screens, watching TV, mindlessly checking mobile are all harmful to the brain. Not only are the rays emitted by electronic devices harmful but restricted human contact also agitates brain function.

The chemicals that improve our brain function are produced when we move. Therefore, sitting for longer periods of time, while working, will only decrease productivity. Less productivity leads to frustration and anger.

It has been found that people who sat for longer periods of time were more likely to suffer from stress and anxiety. Moreover, studies show that women who did not walk were more likely to get depressed than those who regularly worked out.

Non-walking: a vicious cycle

When a person does not walk, their body gets used to sitting down and being inactive. Their muscles lose strength and their brain becomes complacent. As a result, the person finds it more difficult to get up and do any kind of activity.

Even if such a person tries to walk and do some kind of physical work, they are hampered by their physical condition. Due to lower oxygen absorption, they get out of breath very quickly. Their muscles become sore and cramped rapidly. Some people even experience pain in their knees and ankles due to their weight.

Sitting all day long soon becomes a habit. This habit affects other affairs in the life of a non-walker as well. Such a person gets comfortable sitting at home and watching TV instead of going out to meet friends and socialize. Doing simple chores becomes a huge task for such people as well. They procrastinate more and get less done.

Not walking is synonymous with suicide

You might have heard the phrase; sitting is the new smoking. This phrase is an understatement of the harm inflicted by sitting on a person's health.

It is found that one cigarette reduces life by eleven minutes whereas an hour of sitting reduces life by twenty-two minutes. So even if you do not smoke but sit all day long, your chances of death are higher than those of a smoker.

The chances of death increase exponentially for people who sit for the better part of the day. Studies have shown that people (45 and older) who sit for more than 10 hours every day are more likely to die in the next three years than others who sit for a total time of less than 4 hours a day.

On a general level, the relationship between sitting and early death is direct for all the age groups and genders. Higher sitting time resulted in 6.9% of deaths.

The chances of cancer also rise with prolonged sitting durations. As insulin production increases the cell growth also increases which can lead to the growth of defected cells as well. Prostate and breast cancer are 30% more likely to occur in people who do not walk or perform any physical activity.

Sitting renders workouts useless

Thinking that working out for an hour each day offers protection against prolonged sitting is such a huge misconception. In fact, nothing could be farther from the truth.

As an example, if an hour of jogging is followed by 10 hours of sitting then eighty percent of the benefits of the jog are usually lost. This means that you need to incorporate frequent walks into your daily routine. It is recommended that a person walk for five minutes after an hour of sedentary work.

This increases the blood flow and metabolism of the body and alleviates some of the harms of sitting.

If you are still sitting, stand up and do a few stretches and walk for a few minutes. It will not only release the tension in the muscles but will also make you feel good.

CHAPTER

7

**7 FITNESS APPS
TO GET YOU
STARTED**

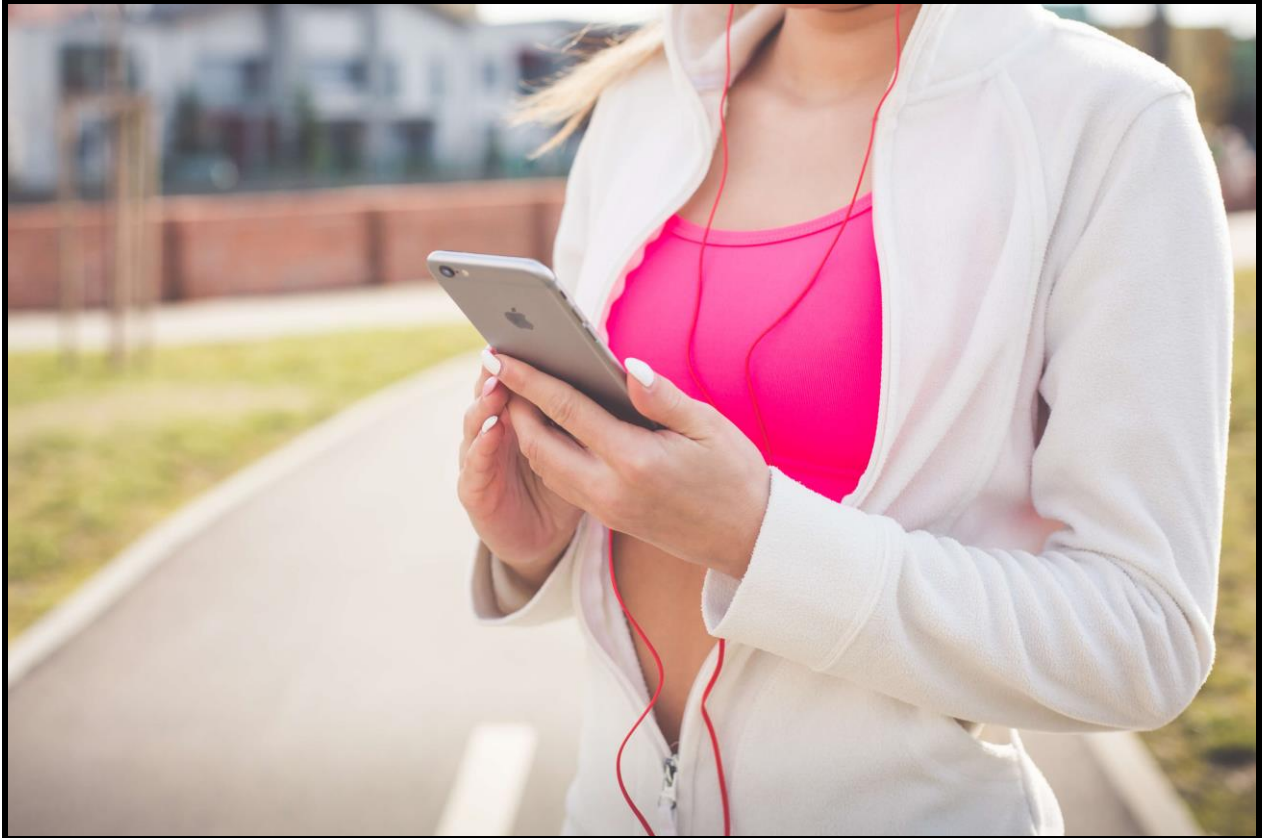


Chapter 7

7 Fitness Apps To Get You Started

The pace at which life moves these days hardly leaves a room for a fitness regime. Either people are rushing between a tough work routine or are bound to spare time for social obligations. The last on the list comes a fitness plan- and making time for the gym makes the majority of the people sigh.

Fortunately, technology has stretched its wings, allowing the work stricken population of the world to stay in shape- by just access to a good fitness app. The best part of this facility is that you don't have to spend a lot of time. The high-intensity training programs will make you sweat with time in your grasp.



1. Workout Trainer

Workout Trainer by Skimble is a collection of thousands of workouts with step by step video and audio guidance. The timed instructions are helpful for you to understand and get aligned with. Whether your goals are a six-pack ab or just the usual condition of body, Workout Trainer has something in store for everyone.

This app also comes with a customized library where you can make your own workout routine which can also be shared online. Workout Trainer app requires a premium subscription for

additional features like exercise routines, HD videos and ad blocking. Overall, it is a good value for price. For Android and iOS.

Pros:

- Large database
- Easy to use
- HD videos

Cons:

- Ads are an interference
- Have to pay additionally for new features

2. Nike Training Club

Nike Training Club joins the fitness world like a pro. With an aesthetically pleasing and comprehensive 100+ workout plans varying from exercises for mobility, endurance, strength and conditioning. Workouts of 15 minutes and longer allow you to plan your own work routine.

AppleTV and Airplay support provides visual instructions, as well as features several famous athletes including Ellie Goulding, Rory McIlroy and Serena Williams. This application comes with an additional benefit of syncing Run Club with Nike to automatically

system your training profile. It allows you to experience a complete view of your fitness. Your profile can also be shared online with friends and Nike community. For Android and iOS.

Pros:

- Keeps you motivated
- 100+ workout plans
- Celebrity training clips

Cons:

- N/A

3. Freeletics

Freeletics features multiple workouts including high intensity interval training. This application is divided into four platforms- BodyWeight training, Fitness Gym, Running Bodyweight and Nutrition. Simply said, the app includes everything that pushes you towards your fitness limit.

From jump squats, sprawls, burpees, pull-ups and sprints- the program covers it all. The comprehensive and well shot videos

demonstrate each exercise, which is great as it keeps you motivated.

For the paid subscription you get access to “coach” for different workouts fitting your health and fitness goals. With another additional subscription you get access to Nutrition guidance. This provides a weekly list of nutrition complementing with your workout plan. This serves a dual purpose and adds more value to your investment. For Android users.

Pros:

- Professional
- Includes intense workout training
- Worth the price

Cons:

- N/A

4. Daily Burn

The Daily Burn app can be compared to your personal YouTube channel. One of the most detailed application for fitness, it comes with more than 500 videos of workouts taught by the most professional trainers. Videos range between 15 minutes to one hour.

Depending on your investment, you can select the appropriate workout for yourself. If you feel bored of your current plan, you can always subscribe for new videos.

This application also includes a variety of twenty programs- from yoga to cardio to complement your walking regimen. Each video can be streamed to FireTv, Roku, Apple Tv, Android, Chromecast, iPhone, iPad and desktop.

The goal is simple: access the right workout at the right time. Daily Burn is slightly more expensive compared to the other apps, however it features all the right content you need to get in shape and is recommended as a good value for price. For Android users.

Pros:

- Nutrition guide
- Good approach to fitness

- Customized workout plans
- Good customer support

Cons:

- Personal trainer on subscription
- Tad bit expensive

5. Runkeeper

Runkeeper is a golden oldie. A fitness tracking application that has been supporting many with their fitness goals for a long time. This application allows you to custom plan your fitness goals and develop your own plan.

Once you have created your customized workout routine you can track your walks, runs and cycling sessions using the GPS system of your phone. It gives you all the boost you need to stay motivated and on track with your fitness routine.

By helping you track your progress, it allows you to analyze how well you are doing. You can share your progress online to have your friends cheer you up. It is compatible with iPhone and iPad.

Pros:

- Accurate tracking
- Simple interface
- Syncs with Fitbit and Pebble
- Includes apple watch

Cons:

- Expensive in-app purchase

6. All Day

Adidas's new app All Day is a fitness application for iOS. This application is not only for workouts but for allowing people to maintain a healthy routine. It features a range of workouts from strength training to mind relaxing yoga. For every workout plan it gives guidance on nutrition with recipes that help you stay hydrated. Furthermore, this application helps you meditate, plan your day, and sleep well using sleep aiding techniques. It is basically a complete package for health and peace. Using a multi-purpose approach it maintains interest and keeps you motivated. For Android and iPhone users.

Pros:

- Multipurpose
- Includes nutrition recipes
- Health insights
- Keeps you motivated

Cons:

- More expensive than other apps

7. Yoga Studio

Yoga Studio by Gaiam comes with a library of 70+ meditation and yoga classes that are timed between 10-60 minutes. These yoga sessions are designed to add strength, relaxation and flexibility to your routine.

It aims at building your focus, increasing stamina and duration of mindfulness.

For more advanced yoga you can custom plan your classes in the library. There are more than 300 poses available with 20 pose blocks. You can also download these videos in your phone and play

them whenever you have time. It removes the need of internet which adds more flexibility to your fitness routine.

Yoga Studio was developed with the goal of maintaining a more “anywhere, anytime” fitness plan. With sessions as small as that of 10 minutes, it allows you to take a break from your stressful work routine in order to restore the lost balance of your mind and body. For Android and iPhone users.

Pros:

- More than 300 yoga poses
- 70+ videos
- Customized library
- Relaxation and meditation sessions

Cons:

- N/A

Fitness apps remove the bridge of time and space, by allowing people to exercise wherever they have time to. With a price much less than that of gym, there is instant access to professional training and trainers.

With health routines so upside down, fitness applications help improve health and lifestyle. Fitness at a click away adds more variety and flexibility to life. Whatever health goals may be, there is an application in accord with it. Those mentioned here can help you select the right one, most suitable for your needs.

CHAPTER 8

HEALTHY WEIGHT LOSS DIET RECIPES



Chapter 8

Healthy Weight Loss Diet Recipes

You love eating, but also want to lose weight? A commonly heard complaint from all those who struggle to maintain a healthy weight.

The good news, however, is that you can keep your taste buds satisfied without gaining weight. It is a misconception that eating carbohydrates increases your weight- even more amusing is the fact that eating makes you gain weight.

Our body needs all forms of energy to perform effectively, which includes both fats and carbohydrates. The only trick is to eat which is easily digested and converted into a form of energy.

Below we have compiled a 3 day meal plan that would help you maintain a healthy weight. Switch the recipes around the week and follow.

Day 1

Breakfast:

Oatmeal (no sugar)

Consider taking a switch from a dry cold bowl of cereal to hot full grain cereal with fruit. It helps you reduce around 100 calories. It is a simple trick that sums up to a reduction of 10 pounds in a year. Moreover, a hot bowl of whole grain cereal leaves more energy in your body- fills you up faster than dried cold cereal.

- If you need to, have a cup of tea or coffee without sugar with nonfat milk

Snack:

- Steamed vegetables with tortilla (green bell, tomatoes and onions recommended)

How to prepare:

Warm up the tortilla with moistened paper towels for 1 minute in the microwave. Add topping with salsa & vegetables.

- Option 2 is to have any of your favorite 2 citrus fruits

Lunch

- 2 cups of mixed greens
- 1 cup of chopped vegetables with balsamic vinegar

Salad preparation:

Slice tomato and lettuce. Add one fruit of your choice to the salad. Add any of the other diced vegetables like yellow squash, bell pepper, cucumber, carrots or sweet potatoes. Avoid adding too much olive oil. 1 tbsp would do.

Snack:

Option1:

- 1 cup of yogurt without sugar
- Berries of your choice

Greek yogurt is popular amongst majority of the best diet plans. It not only adds flavor to your meal, but fulfills your energy intake.

Option 2:

Option 2 is to make a farmer style salad seasoned with fresh herbs. If desired you can add red wine vinegar or sprinkled olive oil for taste.

Dinner:

- Salmon with Mustard Coating

How to prepare:

In a bowl add garlic, mustards, wine and shallots. Coat all sides of salmon with the prepared paste. Cook fillets in a medium, non-stick pan. Cook each side for approximately 7 minutes. Flip to cook the rest of the mixture on the other sides. Sprinkle with mint or dill.

Tip: It is healthier to grill or bake.

- Baked potatoes on side

Potatoes help you lose weight by increasing your energy intake, while not taking much storage space in your body.

Day 2

Breakfast

Avocado Egg Toast:

- A slice of bread (whole grain)
- 1 egg cooked with tsp of olive oil
- 1/4 avocado
- A pinch of salt and pepper on the egg for flavor

How to prepare:

Toast the bread with 1/4 mashed ripened avocado. Spray cooking oil in a non-stick pan and fry the egg. Place the egg on the avocado toast. Add salt and pepper for flavor.

Morning Snack

- 7 walnuts/ almonds
- 3-5 dried apricots

Lunch:

- Soup (vegetable or ravioli)
- 1 clementine/mandarin

Evening snack:

- Any fresh vegetable (cucumber or carrot)
- 2 tbsp of hummus

Dinner:

- Vegetable burger Pattie in a whole-wheat bun

The greener your diet, the healthier you are. When it comes to losing weight the best way to add more calories to your diet without gaining is to increase the vegetable intake. Vegetables like broccoli, asparagus, cauliflower and carrot are most recommended for dinner.

- Option 2 is to have 1/2 cup of curry with brown rice.

Day 2:

Tip: If you are buying packed museli, buy the one that comes without sugar. Sugar in whole grain foods takes away the goodness of the meal.

Breakfast:

- 1 cup of yogurt
- 1/4 of fruit of your choice (berries preferred)
- 1/4 cup of museli

Snack:

- 2 citrus fruits

Lunch

- 2 Cheese toast with tomato
- Half cucumber
- 2 cups of mixed greens
- 1/4 cups of carrot (grated)
- 1 tbsp of almonds or walnuts

- Mix all ingredients and sprinkle half spoon of vinegar and olive oil

Snack: (70-80 calories approx.)

- 6 almonds or walnuts

Dinner:

- Spinach Salad

Spinach salad with other vegetables like potatoes and tomatoes gives you good energy with a balanced calorie chart. Add no salt. Toss the spinach salad with rice vinegar and 1/2 tsp of wasabi.

- Baked chicken with tomatoes and brown rice

How to prepare:

Season your chicken with garlic, chili and onion powder. In a pre-heated non-stick pan spray a little cooking oil. Bring the heat to medium and cook the chicken for 3 minutes each side. Add tomatoes with lemon juice to the pan. Blend the tomatoes with chicken and add desirable vegetables. Cook for 8-10 minutes.

Day 3

Breakfast:

- 1 cup of any of your favorite fruit
- 1 cup of yogurt with no sugar
- 1/2 toasted bagel (whole grain) with fat-free cheese

Snack:

- 1 cup of beans/vegetable soup

It is recommended that you prepare a homemade soup, for they contain a low amount of sodium. Compared to the home soups, canned soups have 1,200 milligrams of sodium which dramatically increases your calorie count and is injurious for health.

How to prepare:

Add 1 cup of red beans to a soup pot. 4 cups of vegetable juice. 2 cups of sliced/chopped vegetables like carrots and celery. Add salt and pepper to your taste.

Lunch:

- Tuna Sandwich

Prepare for yourself a tuna sandwich. It is recommended again to smear it at home, as an alternative to canned tuna. Add 1 tbsp of yogurt or non-fat mayo. Combine chopped vegetables like onions, celery and peppers. Put tuna in a whole wheat bread that is low in sodium.

- Pineapple and Carrot salad

Add sliced carrots and pineapple slices to a bowl. Combine it with a low fat cream cheese.

Snack:

- Sweet Potato

Potatoes are rich in potassium that helps you maintain a good flow of energy throughout the day. Sweet potatoes are great in flavor, easy to cook and healthy in nature.

Bake a batch of sweet potatoes for 425 degrees. Cover in foil before baking. This can be microwaved and used for 1 week. Dress with salt, yogurt or cream cheese (low fat).

Dinner:

- Curried Quinoa & Tofu
- Salad with mustard and honey dressing

How to prepare:

Quinoa and tofu is a delicious dinner. This is one of the few diet recipes that does not sound boring. Filled with nutritional riches, it is both waist friendly and great in taste. Tofu contains 1/3rd calories of poultry and meat with no saturated fats.

Clean 1 cup of quinoa. In a saucepan add the quinoa with 1 tsp of turmeric and curry powder. Add 2 cups of chicken broth. Bring the mixture to a boiling point. Simmer and cover till the water is absorbed by the quinoa. Add 1 cup of cubed tofu and carrots. This can be refrigerated for 1 week.

For salad, cut lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and other desirable veggies. Add 1 apple or 3 pineapple slices. Dress with honey and mustard.

How to add deserts?

There are many ways to add deserts to a meal without compromising health. To make dieting easier there are many low fat delicious deserts that can curb taste buds. Some of these recipes are:

- **Sautéed Strawberry Sundae**

1 tsp of vinegar

1/4 cups of strawberries

1/2 cups of vanilla ice cream (low fat)

1 teaspoon of honey

Saute all vinegar, strawberries and honey for 3 minutes. Top with ice cream and berries.

- **BlackBerry and Peach Crepe**

1 chopped peach

1/4 cup of cottage cheese (low fat)

1 crepe (premade)

100% blackberry fruit spread

Mix together cottage cheese and peach. Roll the paste in crepe. Microwave for 30 seconds and drizzle with the blackberry spread.

- **Ice cream**

1/2 cup of light ice cream

Graham Crackers

4 small rectangles of graham crackers

2 tablespoon of chocolate chips

Microwave the chocolate chips for less than 30 seconds. Put the graham crackers in the melted chocolate till the chocolate hardens.

Weight loss diet is not as scary as it sounds. The only trick is to maintain a calorie chart and consume a diet full of nutrition. Dieting is never about starving oneself. Instead, consider the body as a machine which requires fuel to work. Without depriving your body of this fuel you can easily break down the stubborn fat. Always remember that a diet plan works well with a combination of physical fitness routine.