Shake Up Your Walking Routine

Has your usual walking workout grown stale? Here are some ways to spice up your daily steps:

- **Tweak your technique.** Keeping your chin up, your tummy tucked, and your shoulders back will give your stride more power. In addition, keep your arms at a 90-degree angle and swing them back and forth in time with your stride. Your foot should land on its heel, roll forward, and push up from the toes.

- **Invest in proper gear.** If you’re serious about walking for exercise, consider investing in a pair of good quality walking shoes. This will help protect your body from injury. Wear clothes that are comfortable and allow for a good range of movement.

- **Be mindful.** “Mindful walking” combines the benefits of exercise with a meditation practice. Be in the moment by focusing on the sensation of walking or staying attuned to your surroundings. To learn more about mindful walking, visit mylifematters.com and watch part three of the Mindfulness Program.

- **Shake things up.** If you normally walk out the door and turn left, try going right instead. Varying your route will keep boredom at bay. Other options include driving to another neighborhood, walking in a park or on a nature trail, or going to a local mall on bad weather days.

- **Vary your treadmill routine.** When using a treadmill, rotate new songs into your playlist or watch something engaging on TV or your phone. If watching news programs while you walk is stressful, choose something energizing or uplifting instead.

- **Find a partner.** If you struggle to stay on track with your walking routine, walk with a partner or bring along a four-legged friend. Joining a walking club is another good way to connect with others.

- **Make a “bucket list.”** Make a list of places you would like to walk, such as national parks or a city you have always wanted to visit. Consider building future vacations around these walking routes.

LifeMatters can provide more suggestions for adding variety to your workout routine. Call 24/7/365.

Source: The Staywell Company, LLC