

39% of U.S. households own at least one dog and there are approximately 78.2 million owned dogs in the U.S.

Shouldn't we be walking them?

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of dog walkers exercised an average of 30 minutes a day at least five days a week. By comparison, only about a third of those without dogs got that much regular exercise.

In a study of more than 5,200 adults, dog owners engaged in more walking and physical activity than non-dog owners, and were 54 percent more likely to get the recommended level of physical activity.

60%

of dog owners who took their pets for regular walks met federal criteria for regular moderate or vigorous exercise.

The dog walkers had higher overall levels of both moderate and vigorous physical activity than the other subjects, and they were more likely to take part in other leisure-time physical activities like sports and gardening.

Even after adjusting for differences in age and physical activity level, dog walkers were significantly healthier than people without dogs:



Diabetes was two and one half times more common among those **without a dog**.



People without a dog were 70% more likely to have high blood pressure and high cholesterol.



People without a dog were almost 50% more likely to have depression.

Living with a pet improves mood, reduces stress effects on the heart, lowers blood pressure, and reduces the risk of irregular heart rhythms. These factors were believed to likely explain the positive heart benefits from pet ownership.



American Heart Association.
Healthy for Good™

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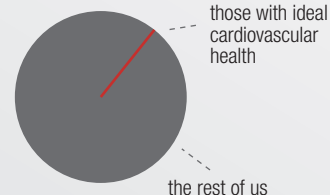
StartWalkingNow.org

Walking is an easy way to reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease. The American Heart Association recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise each week. Thirty minutes a day, five times a week is an easy goal to remember. Walking has the lowest dropout rate among other choices for physical activity, and it's free.

Studies show that for every **hour of walking**, life expectancy may increase by two hours.



Less than one percent of Americans meet the American Heart Association's criteria for ideal cardiovascular health.



One in three Americans has at least one type of cardiovascular disease.



Physically active people save

\$500 a year
in healthcare costs.

Research from *Circulation*, *Journal of the American Heart Association*; *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*; *Collegium Antropologicum*; *Internal Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*