

Benefits of Walking around the Block

By Kay Brickley

1 I started taking a daily walk around the block after my dad had a heart attack. “I don’t want that problem ever again,” Dad said, “so from now on, it’s a walk around the block every day after dinner.” It didn’t seem right for him to go alone, so off I trotted after him. It was on those walks that Dad taught me some facts about the benefits of walking for exercise.

2 It turns out that when you walk quickly, your lungs and heart have to work harder to bring in extra oxygen. So those parts of your body are made stronger. Dad told me that other exercises like swimming, running, and riding a bike are also good for heart and lung health. Maybe if my heart and lungs grow more powerful, I might be a better football player.

3 People who walk improve their bone and muscle strength, too. I think my bones and muscles are pretty tough already. But if you don’t keep exercising them, bones can become brittle, and muscles can get weak.

4 Another effect of walking for exercise is that you seem to have more energy during the day and sleep better at night. I am paying attention better at school. Dad is glad for that. Dad is snoring less at night, and I am glad for that!

5 “My doctor said that walking releases something in the body that lifts your mood,” Dad said. “The more you walk, the happier you get.” We started doing four turns around the block, so watch us smile now!

6 Finally, all that walking is keeping us fit. Dad even had to buy some new pants. His old ones were getting too loose. He looks good to me. But even more important, his health is improving. So follow our lead—take a walk around your block.



Glossary

Benefits—to make something better

Trotted—to run or ride

Brittle—dry and easy to break

Snoring—to make loud noise from breathing when asleep

Lifts Your Mood—makes you feel better

Exercise. (2011). In *Britannica Elementary Encyclopedia*. Accessed February 9, 2011. Retrieved from <http://school.eb.com/elementary/article?articleId=390745>