

# The Courtyard Clinic

Physical  
Health



## Osteopathy/Physiotherapy Sports & Remedial Massage

- Back, Neck & Shoulder pain
- Joint & Muscle Injuries
- Headaches
- Arthritis
- Rib Pain
- Sports Injuries

## Podiatry/Chiropody

- Toenail Problems
- Corns & Callouses
- Verrucae
- Diabetic Foot Checks
- Foot Odour
- Footwear Advice



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"What type of exercise should I do?" Is a question we are repeatedly asked at The Courtyard Clinic. My initial reply is generally "What sort of exercise do you enjoy?" Because nothing kills off a new exercise routine quicker than trying to force yourself into the habit of doing something you hate.

If pressed though, I will always say walking. There are many different types of exercise that may benefit our body in a variety of ways but for me the one that covers the most bases is walking. Here's why....

### 1. It doesn't cost anything.

Swimming needs a pool, cycling needs a bike, gym workouts need...a gym. Going for a walk requires only you!



2. **You can do it anytime and anywhere.** This point should be taken with a pinch of salt. Obviously, we do not recommend walking on your own in the middle of the night in a secluded area - please be sure to keep yourself safe. As long as you are sensible, good walks can be found anywhere, especially around here. My favourites are the canal walk between Heybridge Basin and Chelmsford, and the sea wall walk between Goldhanger and Tollesbury. There are loads of others, we really are spoilt for choice.

3. **Mental health.** Walking with friends can give you the chance for a natter and a catch-up, or it can be the opportunity for a bit of a cathartic moan as you eat

## Best Foot Forward

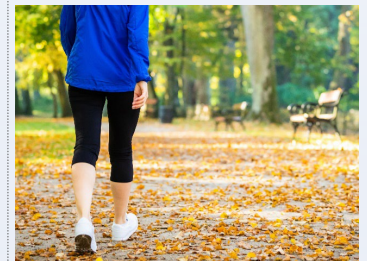
up the miles. Walking on your own can be meditative, an opportunity for your mind to wander and take in the world around you. In fact, many studies have shown walking to have an incredibly positive effect on stress, anxiety, and depression.

4. **Improve bone density.** There is a something referred to in biology as Wolff's Law, and this states that 'Bone grows in response to the stresses and strains that are placed upon it'. The more we use it, the stronger it gets. This is supported by the fact that astronauts often lose bone density after long periods in space due to the weightless environment. This rule is particularly useful in preventing osteoporosis. In fact, one study of post-menopausal women found that 30 minutes of walking each day reduced their risk of hip fractures by 40%.



5. **Improve joint health.** Generally, the cartilages that stabilise and line the surfaces of joints have a poor blood supply. This means that they can be slower to heal than other tissues. Joint cartilage gets most of its nutrition from the fluid that circulates inside the joint which is facilitated by movement. Walking intermittently applies and releases pressure on the cartilages, this promotes the absorption of essential nutrients from the fluid into the joint tissues.

6. **Live longer.** There are some fantastic statistics that show walking significantly improves our longevity. A 2019 study on older women found that those who walked 4,400 steps a day had a lower mortality rate over four years of follow-up than those who walked the least (about 2,700 steps a day or fewer). Similarly, a 2020 study found that taking 8,000 to 12,000 steps a day was linked to lower risk of dying of any cause during the study, compared with 4,000 steps a day.



7. **Boosts immune function.** Walking can help protect you during cold and flu season. A study of over 1,000 men and women found that those who walked at least 20 minutes a day, at least 5 days a week, had 43% fewer sick days than those who exercised once a week or less. And if they did get sick, it was for a shorter duration, and their symptoms were milder. Daily walks were people's saviour during the pandemic, but perhaps the habit has been dropped a bit since. Maybe a regular walk in the park could make future pandemics a walk in the park!

For more information on how to get active, or if pain and discomfort are preventing you doing the activity you would like, please get in touch. We would love to help.

## The Courtyard Clinic - Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy, Podiatry/Chiropody



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