

# Practice What You Preach

Category: Exercise

written by Tim Sanborn | July 5, 2021

As a cardiologist, I always try to emphasize the American Heart Association's recommendation to exercise for 30 minutes every day. Unfortunately, during the COVID-19 pandemic, my regular exercise facility was closed. But I found it easy to tell myself that I got plenty of exercise walking around the hospital, using the stairs, and going back and forth to the office.

Over the months, however, I noticed I was tracking fewer steps on my cell phone, and my weight was increasing. How, in good faith, could I tell my patients to exercise and not practice what I preached?

So by taking an early morning walk in my neighborhood before going to the office or squeezing in a few minutes' walk before dinner, I soon was able to increase my steps from 4,500 to over 8,000 a day. With the increased exercise, I lost all the pounds I had gained and then some.

Besides the beneficial effect of exercise on our hearts, lungs, muscles, and bones, it is said that exercise releases dopamine and serotonin in the brain, which leads to improved mood and well-being. Soon, I found the early morning walk got my mind activated for the day, and the walk after work helped relieve the stresses of the day.

Now, I carry a prescription bottle in my white coat to show patients; it bears the phrase "Exercise 30 minutes daily." They all chuckle when they read it. When patients return for their follow-up visits they all remember the bottle when I bring it out again. I think it has really helped them with their exercise efforts.

*Tim Sanborn*

*Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin*