L LIFESTYLE

Life saver

20-minute daily walk cuts early death risk

A BRISK 20-MINUTE walk each day is enough to reduce an individual's risk of early death, say British researchers.

After analysing over 334,000 European men and women, they also found that twice as many deaths may be attributable to lack of physical activity compared with the number of deaths attributable to obesity.

"We found that just 20 minutes would make a difference. Physical activity has many proven health benefits and should be an important part of our daily life," said professor Ulf Ekelund from the Medical Research Council (MRC) epidemiology unit at University of Cambridge.

For this, researchers analysed data across Europe participating in the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) Study.

Over an average of 12 years, the researchers measured height, weight and waist circumference and used self-assessment to measure levels of physical activity.

The researchers found that the greatest reduction in risk of premature death occurred in the comparison between inactive and moderately inactive groups, judged by combining activity at work with recreational activity.

"Doing exercise equivalent to just a 20-minute brisk walk each day would take an individual from the inactive to moderately inactive group and reduce their risk of premature death by between 16-30 percent," the authors noted.

The impact was greatest among normal weight individuals but even those with higher BMI saw a benefit.

Using the most recent available data on deaths in Europe, the team estimated that 337,000 of the 9.2 million deaths amongst European men and women were attributable to obesity.

However, double this number of deaths (676,000) could be attributed to physical inactivity.

"Encouraging people to make small but achievable changes in physical activity can have significant health benefits and may be easier to achieve and maintain," added professor Nick Wareham, director of the MRC Unit. The results were published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. IANS

SKIN DEEP

Do away with dark knees, elbows

NATURAL OIL, LEMON and daily care can help bid adieu to dark knees and elbows, says an expert.

International beauty expert and executive director of Alps Beauty Clinic Ishika Taneja shares how:

• **Use lemon:** Rub your knees and elbows with used lemon pieces filled with half teaspoons of salt and sugar. Follow up by washing them off with lukewarm water. Lemon contains vitamin C, and citric acid is the best natural product for lightening skin. The granules of salt and sugar will exfoliate the skin and take off all the dead skin.

• **Don't neglect elbows and knees:** Remember to wash them daily while bathing, using a good soap and loofah. Also, remember to exfoliate these areas once a week, for removing the deep skin impurities and dead cells that create an illusion of darkness.

• **Papaya boost:** Papaya is filled with a skin cleansing enzyme called papain and vitamin A and C that can aid you in getting rid of dark elbows and knees. Take a slice of papaya and mash it with curd then rub the paste to your skin. With regular application, the nutrients contained in papaya will lighten these problematic areas, while curd will help to turn it fair.

• **Nourish with oils:** Natural oils like olive, coconut and almond oil contain vitamin E that provides moisture to dry and rough skin. Olive oil also contains anti-oxidants, known for repairing dark and damaged skin. Apply one of these oils to your elbows and knees before hitting the bed. IANS

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Healing through hypnotherapy

I once worked with a client who had been through a huge emotional trauma in her childhood; the war in Lebanon had affected her life immensely.

She lost her father and brother to the war and ultimately had to leave the country with her mother without any belongings one cold winter night. This happened many years ago. She is now a successful lawyer, lives in an affluent neighborhood in Dubai, is married to a wonderful man and has a beautiful baby girl.

But she has suffered from acute foot pain since her childhood, diagnosed with a condition that causes pain while walking. She went through many doctors and specialists, but somehow the pain always returned. When she decided to try hypnosis to see the cause of the pain, it was a gamble for her.

The first few sessions were a bit difficult, as she did not want to go deep into the old memories connected to the war. But after a lot of internal struggle she finally let go. What followed was an amazing journey of healing and acceptance. She was able to access a memory where she was running after her father just before he was killed and had injured her foot. Subconsciously she had been living that memory for years and thus her chronic foot pain never went away. With help of hypnosis she released and reconciled with many painful events of the past. This had a direct impact on her pain, which reduced drastically. She still suffers from foot pain, but it's not crippling like before. I am certain that over time it will completely disappear.

Some people do have physical ailments or injury. But for many, physical pain and discomfort that they experiencing are the direct result of a painful memory or an event that occurred in their past. I am not a medical professional, so I will never disregard what the doctor prescribes. But I always encourage people to also look at other holistic therapies that could complement the traditional ways of dealing with pain.

So if you are suffering from chronic pain with no apparent physical injury, along with your doctor's advice, why not book in a session for hypnotherapy? Why not look at things differently, so that you might be able to identify events in your life that have created the chaos? You just might find something buried deep inside you that is causing you discomfort.

Shivani Adalja is a Dubai-based wellbeing expert. She runs the Alignment Insitute which offers effective solutions that focus on stress management and overall wellbeing. Email align@shivaniadalja.com

Photos: Corbis Images