

# Six minutes of walking can increase motivation to perform physical activity

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Just six minutes of walking can increase a person's motivation to perform physical activity and improve feelings of energy, fatigue, depression, and confusion, according to research conducted by Clarkson

University Associate Professor in Physical Therapy, Ali Boolani.

Boolani recently completed a study where he measured the mood of patients over the age of 65 before and after taking a six minute walk, and found that patients saw decreased [mental fatigue](#) and improved physical [energy](#) after their walk.

Patients were asked to participate in a three-day study. On the first day, Boolani and his team measured their moods, had them walk around, and measured their moods again. On days two and three, the patients were given cognitive tasks that were meant to make them feel worse, after which their mood was measured. Then, it was time for a walk.

We had them walk for six minutes around a track, and we had them walk at a pace that they felt comfortable with," Boolani said. "Even on the days they did [cognitive tasks](#) they started feeling better, and they even got up above baseline, which was really cool."

Levels of anxiety in patients were also found to decrease, according to Boolani.

"Feelings of anxiety definitely improved, this is along the lines of most of the studies that have been done that show that physical activity improves feelings of anxiety," he said.

On top of an increase in physical energy and a decrease in mental [fatigue](#), Boolani measured patients' motivation levels.

"Turns out, after six minutes of [physical activity](#), they were more motivated to perform physical tasks," He said. "In a real setting if you're having a tough day, you don't feel like working out, maybe six minutes of just walking can make you more motivated to be more physically active."

According to Boolani, similar studies have been conducted in the past, but six minutes is the shortest amount of time anyone has tested the impact of walking.

He also said the pace at which patients walked had an impact on their energy and fatigue levels.

"The faster they walked, the more their feelings of energy increased and their [feelings](#) of fatigue decreased," Boolani said.

Provided by Clarkson University

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