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## Walking vs Running and reading beyond the headline

Monday, April 08, 2013



First, I must make it clear that I enjoy BOTH walking and running. I believe both are beneficial to your health and would never call either one BETTER.

Which I choose to do depends on the circumstances. Lately, however, I've come across a variety of articles which are intended to show how one is "better" than the other at least according to the headline or how the author interprets a study.

Last week sparker MrsDoyle posted a link to this article

[www.sparkpeople.com/mypublicjournal\\_individual.asp?blog\\_id=5312496](http://www.sparkpeople.com/mypublicjournalindividual.asp?blog_id=5312496)

I thank her for doing that especially since I'm unlikely to access news from the UK and I like knowing how the world thinks beyond my own borders.

Yes, I agree that walking is as good for you as running. I understand that you have to stay at it longer to burn the same amount of calories, but that's OK with me.

But the premise of the article is that it's BETTER than running. Then I looked at their numbers.

Walking 4 miles in 38 minutes is being compared to running 3 miles in 15 minutes.

4 miles in 38 minutes is a 9:30 pace. That's 29:45 for a 5K. Have you ever seen anyone WALK that fast?

3 miles in 15 minutes? Look at the results of any 5K. Maybe the overall winner was able to do that, but few others can. This "running" they say is stressful for the heart. Whew, it's stressful for me to even think about that pace. That's setting my treadmill to 12.0 Does it even go that high?

Perhaps I should conclude that a 9-10 min/mile pace is what's beneficial? Yea! That's me (although I'm running at that speed, not walking).

Today the same study was reported in the US press MINUS actual numbers. It's left to each person's imagination to define "brisk walk" or what speed qualifies as a "run."

[healthyliving.msn.com/diseases/diabetes/brisk-walking-equals-running-for-heart-health-study-1](http://healthyliving.msn.com/diseases/diabetes/brisk-walking-equals-running-for-heart-health-study-1)

However, they seem to be using the same data as the UK article because of this statement. "The advantage of running is you can cover twice as much ground in the same amount of time as you

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would walking.”

Uh oh! That’s not me either. On average I run 3 miles in 30 min and walk it in 45 min. To fit the article’s premise, I have to slow down my walk to a 20 min/mile pace or run 3 consecutive 7.5 min miles. I can safely predict that a 23 min 5K is NOT in my future. It wasn’t in my past either.

Another article takes the same study and states the data and conclusion differently.

[todayhealth.today.com/news/2013/04/04/17588647-brisk-walk-really-may-be-just-as-good-as-a-run-study-finds?lite](http://todayhealth.today.com/news/2013/04/04/17588647-brisk-walk-really-may-be-just-as-good-as-a-run-study-finds?lite)

Runners were 38%, 36%, 71% less likely to develop high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes. The runners were younger and fitter and exercised more but they say that they compensated for the difference statistically in the results.

Yikes, this is like the old game of telephone where it’s hard to determine exactly what the original message said.

Right now I’m concluding that I’d be better off if I quit reading and just went for a run OR a walk. However, there is one more aspect to this issue that is prevalent in the comments – the “bad knees/joints” bogeyman.

I’m always thinking about the average person. Injuries occur if you push yourself too fast or too far or too hard beyond your ability/fitness level and that can occur at a walk or a run (or in any other kind of athletic activity as well). I got a knee injury last year when I tripped over a step eyeing the dessert on the buffet table in the distance.

Warmup is important and so is stretching and cool down – things that are often ignored. Wearing the proper shoes makes a difference as does losing weight. A guideline is that each pound lost translates to 4 pounds less pressure on your knees. Your heart and lungs will be happier too.

According to a study by Stanford University, statistically runners have fewer knee problems than non runners. I used to have a printout of that available to show my mother every time she warned me of the dangers of running. Note: Mom had major knee problems and never ran a step in her life.

Researchers (Stanford University) found that runners delayed major disabilities 16 years longer than non-runners and had lower instances of cancer, infections and other diseases. Also there was no increase in joint problems, knee replacements or osteoarthritis in the subjects studied. Yes, I understand that runners probably had other healthy habits that the control group did not have. However, Stanford does have a reputation for controlling as many variables as possible.

I believe that the absolute best exercise is the one you enjoy doing and will stick with and I will never try to rank anyone’s choices or levels of effort. If you’re moving your body and aiming to improve, it all has value.

Now that my morning mini-novel is complete I’m off for a run. Note, I always take a 1 min walk break every mile or so – my personal workout choice. I sip some water, manually check my HR for 10 seconds and wipe my nose (allergies). I’m pretty sure none of those 3 habits will ever show up in a headline.

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## Member Comments About This Blog Post



**CD13875993**

Agreed! The best exercise is the one you will do....

Walking now - but hoping to lose enough weight to start running again...  
2941 days ago





**EFFRAYECHILDE**



2965 days ago



**ANGELN325**

LOL about the last part where you said you doubt those last 3 habits will show up in a headline. How true, but I love when people use laughter to deal with the constant bombardment and contradiction of what we should be doing. Eggs are good for you. No their bad. No their good. Which exercise is better? I agree. What works is what works for us and we are willing to do. If you don't like eggs, don't eat eggs. I like eggs, but I eat them in moderation. Everything has a place in our diet. How much and how often varies. Same with exercise. It's not what we do, but how often and the intensity level. Too hard and I'm on the sidelines with injuries so I'm taking it slow and concentrating on how I do everything including my form when walking to the bathroom. To me, form is now more important than anything when it comes to how I move through life.

2976 days ago



**CORNERKICK**



2985 days ago



**SHOAPIE**



2986 days ago



**PENOWOK**

burn more in less time-run! I walk~easier on my knees and hips!

2987 days ago



**BLUEJEAN99**



2987 days ago



**JAMER123**



Great blog. I have been following the walk versus run news lately. Interesting!!

2987 days ago



**ILIKETOZUMBA**

GREAT blog. Thank you for delving into some analysis of these kinds of unclear studies and what they actually MEAN.

2987 days ago



**MIMIDOT**

Great blog! You're so right! The best exercise is the one you enjoy doing.

2987 days ago



**SJKENT1**

You hit it right on the head!! The best exercise for me is the ones I will do...

thanks

2987 days ago



**HEARTS116**



2987 days ago



**JUSGETTENBY42**



2987 days ago





**MISSBOOBOOKITTY**



2987 days ago



**KARRENLYNN**

It seems to me that no matter what the subject or theory is, you could find research proving or disproving both sides. The number 1 health killer varies depending on the report and who puts it out.

I'm no expert, but I believe both running and walking have their place depending on your reason for doing it. And at the end of the day, doing either one is better than doing nothing at all.

Do what is good for you and enjoy it!



Karen

2987 days ago



**CD13803686**



2987 days ago



**DIANNEMT**

People should do what they can do and what they like! Walk or run but MOVE!!

2987 days ago



**PATRICIAANN46**

Great Blog.....Thank You. I have found that if I enjoy the exercise(s) I am doing, I will tend to stick with them and will continue to stay active. I do change-up what I am doing as I have found that it helps to keep my interest and metabolism at peak.



2987 days ago



**ALIDOSHA**



Great blog!

2987 days ago




**IAMAGEMLOVER**



2988 days ago



**JIBBIE49**

How wonderful to see your blog featured in the Spark Mail. What an HONOR.  You are

an inspiration today to one and one half million people.

2988 days ago



**LIVELYGIRL2**

You wrote a very interesting   article. I appreciate you sharing your insights with us!

2988 days ago



**ALIHIKES**

Great blog, thanks for sharing this important information. I walk instead of running -- but my brisk walking pace is nowhere near to 4 miles per hour! And when I do my hardest hikes I'm much slower because I'm climbing uphill. The important news is -- do steady regular exercise that you enjoy, at a pace that won't injure you

2988 days ago



**CLAYARTIST**



2988 days ago



mmm



m



**NEPTUNE1939**



2988 days ago



**CD13482248**



I agree with you, I think alot of fitness writers approach a study or information with viewpoint or personnel belief and try to skew it to their point of view. As a skeptic I am open to different information and sometimes change my own view on a subject. "change is HARD"

I also enjoy walking, running, biking and weight training. That doesn't mean any or all are right for everyone. We all must find our own activity to keep the mind and body in good health. Fitness is an ascending scale from couch potato to elite athlete.

It could be a cardio workout for a 300 pound person to walk around the block, but you have to start somewhere and then keep pushing and improving yourself.

As for walking pace, I generally walk at about 15:30 min/mile and speed-walk at a 12 min/mile. Elite racewalkers are probably around 6 to 7 min/mile, much faster than I can even run!

We are all athletes, some are fast some are slow. Just enjoy the journey or at least the glow after a good workout.



2988 days ago



**CD3468195**



Great info, thank you.

2988 days ago



**CARPROTH**



I too walk at a brisk pace (4m/hr) - haven't run since two total knee replacements 5 years ago.

If I need to cover ground faster, I jump on my bike and get there way ahead of the runners.

2988 days ago



**LEWILL1982**



Love it, thank you! I also run and walk (among other activities), I do intervals too, it works for me. Find what you love and run with it (no pun intended)!

2988 days ago



**CD2207060**



The important thing is to EXERCISE daily! I used to run--but can't any longer due to a missing disk in my lower spine...all that pounding & jarring while running is definitely against doctors orders. I love my treadmill though--and love my daily walks. :)

Whatever works for you is what's perfect exercise! And doing it daily is the key! If running is your thing--FANTASTIC! Make it happen!

2988 days ago



**CD13481603**



2988 days ago



**CD13361234**



Thank you for the information. I am learning how to transition from walking to running, and they articles helped me!

2988 days ago



**ROCKYCPA**



Thanks for sharing!

2988 days ago



**JOANNHUNT**



2988 days ago

**DJSHIP46**



Thanks for sharing.

2988 days ago

**SARAWALKS**

Thanks for this excellent summary! I completely agree. It's motivating me to get back to

running, which I've done less frequently since the snowy months set in.



2988 days ago

**OFGREENGABLES**

thanks for sharing the details behind the numbers - I love running, but can't imagine ever going that fast - I think the walk might be faster than my run!

2988 days ago

**JANEMARIE77**

thank you for this is why I do not read the news thank you for understanding their games and giving me so real info that I can use

2988 days ago

**SIMONEKP**

Wiping your nose left to right is better than wiping right to left or straight on, kidding. Just figured I would jump on the "better than" bandwagon.

2988 days ago

**MOMMY445**

what a great blog! have a fabulous day!

2988 days ago

**JENNAAW**

Loved your article and the comments made by others here. I run because I love it (my very favorite exercise) and do not think of it as a health thing.

2988 days ago

**BESSHAILE**

yeah - I'm with Toni - the best exercise is the one you love.

It really isn't a contest.

2988 days ago

**LIFETIMER54**

THANK YOU!

2988 days ago

**LANNIEMANUEL**

very insightful. thanks for the info

2988 days ago

**ROBB1N**

I think the important thing is to just be active whether it's walking or running.

2988 days ago

**NASFKAB**

thanks for sharing

2988 days ago

**TRYINGHARD54**

great blog...

2988 days ago

**CD5826541**

What a great blog! Thanks for sharing :)

2988 days ago

**NCSUE0514**

I'm glad you've found what works for you!

2988 days ago





**LRSILVER**

Interesting. Thanks for sharing.  
2988 days ago



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