

# Blue Zones

“Without your health, you’ve got nothing going on. I thank God every day for good health.” – Ric Flair



Nino Magaddino from MaxFlex Fitness and Track Your Trek participants. SPECIAL TO THE NAPLES DAILY NEWS

## Research says walking this much per week extends your life

Aislinn Leonard Business Coordinator at Blue Zones

The study from the American Cancer Society followed 140,000 older adults and reported that those who walked six hours per week had a lower risk of dying from cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and cancer than those who were not active, but that walking even as little as two hours per week could begin to reduce the risk of disease and help you live a longer, healthier life. “Our bodies were designed to move,” said Dr. David Agus, Professor of Medicine and Engineering at the University of Southern California. ● The world’s longest-lived people don’t pump iron, run marathons, or join gyms. Instead, they live in environments that constantly nudge them into moving without thinking about it. They grow gardens and don’t have mechanical conveniences for house and yard work. They have jobs that require them to move or get up frequently. And they walk every single day. Almost everywhere. ● In Amish communities in North America, one study showed that the average woman logged 14,000 steps per day and the average man logged 18,000 steps per day, and both genders averaged about 10,000 on their day of rest. These Amish communities also had the lowest rates of obesity of any community in North America. This study eventually hit the media and began the movement to reach at least 10,000 steps per day.

### Walking benefits:

- Activates lymphatic system
- Eliminates toxins
- Fights infection
- Strengthens immunity

Your environment greatly impacts your activity level, but there are ways to nudge yourself to move more if you do not live in a walkable community:

#### Take several small walks.

Take your dog out for a short morning jaunt around the block. Walk instead of drive to pick up workday lunches. Step outside after dinner with your family. Research shows it is better for you to break up your movement throughout the day than to work out for 30-40 minutes in the gym and sit all day.

#### Walk to the grocery store.

If your location safely allows you to, walk

to the grocery store. Though you may not be able to purchase a week’s worth of groceries in a single trip, you can buy the freshest ingredients and return again later in the week.

#### Park in a spot farthest from the building.

If you work in the suburbs, in a mall, or a business park with very few parking options, just choose to park far away from the entrance to add a few more steps to your day.

#### Walk 5 minutes each hour.

Get up out of your desk and take a round of the office. Fill up your water bottle. Get outside to maximize benefits, if possible.

#### Take one long walk of 30-40 minutes.

Recruit a friend (or your moai!) to take a post-work walk. Forty minutes will fly by before you even realize how far you’ve gone.

Now that you know the benefits of walk-

ing and have decided to take those extra steps, this is the perfect opportunity to join Zones Project Southwest Florida’s Track Your Trek! On Jan. 20, Blue Zones Project is launching a free, community-wide step challenge. Track your steps for 10 weeks and then celebrate your accomplishments on April 4 at North Collier Regional Park. Our goal is for Southwest Florida to walk the distance it takes to get to all 5 Blue Zones locations around the world (1: Ikaria, Greece 2: Sardinia, Italy 3: Okinawa, Japan 4: Loma Linda, California 5: Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica).

Walkers will be entered into a drawing to win special Blue Zones Project prizes! To register, visit RSVP to participate - [Trackyourtrek2020.eventbrite.com](https://www.trackyourtrek2020.eventbrite.com).