

## **Here's the New Magic Number as Experts say you don't need 10,000 Steps**

An international team of researchers reassessed the arbitrary 10,000 daily step goal that has served as the unofficial '[healthy](#)' benchmark for decades.

The study collated and reanalysed data from 57 independent studies to define the precise dose-response relationship between daily steps and a wide range of [health outcomes](#).

Study findings revealed that daily walking can promote significant health benefits (cardiovascular disease, [dementia](#), mortality, etc.) as low as 7,000 daily steps, contrasting the popular yet scientifically unverified 10,000 daily steps recommendation.

While 10,000 steps demonstrate additional benefits over 7,000 steps for outcomes such as all-cause mortality, dementia, and [depression](#), these represent relatively smaller gains per step compared to the initial 7,000 steps.

Adults aged 65 and older showed continued linear [mortality](#) reductions beyond 7,000 steps, suggesting that higher targets may benefit older populations.

These evidence-backed findings suggest that leveraging walking for optimal long-term [health outcomes](#) may be far more achievable than previously thought.



### **The 10,000-Step Origin**

Public health guidelines have long sought to standardize physical activity recommendations, traditionally recommending at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week for optimal long-term health outcomes. In today's age of smart wearables (fitness bands, fitness rings, and [smart watches](#)), daily step count is fast becoming a more intuitive and popular metric.

Consequently, [public health](#) agencies now recommend the '10,000-steps-a-day goal'. Unfortunately, although this goal is well-known and has existed for decades, its origins lie in a 1960s Japanese marketing campaign, rather than scientific evidence.

To address this discrepancy, recent high-quality research leverages device-based measurement techniques (pedometers and accelerometers) to elucidate a more straightforward, evidence-based overview of the impacts of different activity patterns on [human health](#).

Previous systematic reviews have validated the positive association between higher step counts and improved health. Still, they predominantly evaluated cardiovascular outcomes, with other chronic disease markers (e.g., cancers, [mental health](#)) largely ignored. Furthermore, dose-

response curves, which directly correlate the number of daily steps with specific disease risk reductions, have not been established.

### **The 7,000-Steps Sweet Spot**

The meta-analysis demonstrated a robust dose-response relationship between daily step count and health outcomes. Notably, the shape of the dose-response curve varied by specific outcome – for all-cause mortality, CVD incidence, [dementia](#), falls, and cancer mortality, the association was non-linear, with the steepest risk reductions occurring up to a certain point before leveling off. In contrast, for CVD mortality, cancer incidence, T2D, and depressive symptoms, the association was linear, meaning risk continued to decline steadily as steps increased.

Perhaps the study's most important finding was the emergence of a scientifically validated and achievable adult daily walking target – 7,000 steps. Compared to a baseline of 2,000 steps daily, 7,000 steps were associated with a 47% lower risk of all-cause mortality (HR 0.53; 95% CI 0.46–0.60), a 47% lower risk of CVD mortality (HR 0.53; 95% CI 0.37–0.77; low-certainty evidence), a 25% decrease in CVD incidence (HR 0.75; 95% CI 0.67–0.85), a 38% reduced risk of dementia (HR 0.62; 95% CI 0.53–0.73), and 22% lower risk of [depressive symptoms](#) (HR 0.78; 95% CI 0.73–0.83).

While cancer incidence did not significantly decrease (6% reduction, HR 0.94; 95% CI 0.87–1.01; low-certainty evidence), cancer-associated mortality showed a 37% [reduction](#) (HR 0.63; 95% CI 0.55–0.72).

Falls demonstrated substantial improvements (–28%, HR = 0.72; 95% CI 0.65–0.81), although the certainty of evidence was very low. However, the Post-hoc analysis confirmed additional benefits at 10,000 steps compared to 7,000: a 10% lower all-cause [mortality rate](#), a 12% lower risk of dementia, and a 14% lower incidence of depressive symptoms. The relationship between steps and health may vary depending on the measurement device used (e.g., pedometers vs. accelerometers).

### **Study Significance**

This comprehensive review provides the first scientifically validated optimal daily step target for healthy adults (~7,000 steps per day). It highlights how achieving and maintaining this highly feasible target can substantially lower chronic disease risk and promote healthy [aging](#).

While 10,000 steps a day remains an excellent goal for more [active people](#), this new research establishes a more realistic and scientifically grounded target that may motivate a larger portion of the population. Importantly, adults over 65 may gain further benefits from exceeding 7,000 steps, and evidence strength varies across outcomes.

Future guidelines should consider age-specific targets and nuances in [device measurement](#).

### **Source:**

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20250727/Experts-say-you-dont-need-10000-steps-here-the-new-magic-number.aspx>