

Bio-Medicine

Cobblestone Walking May Be The Key For Healthy Living.

<http://www.bio-medicine.org/medicine-news/Cobblestone-Walking-May-Be-The-Key-For-Healthy-Living--3812-1/>

A recent pilot study showed that walking on a cobblestone mat surface resulted in significant reduction in blood // pressure, improves balance and physical performance among the age groups of 60 and adults.

John Fisher, Ph.D., from the Oregon Research Institute said that Compared to conventional walking, the experience of walking on the river rock-like surface of manufactured cobblestone mats improved participants' balance, measures of mobility, as well as reducing their blood pressure."

The study of the research team from Oregon led them to china where cobblestone pathways are extremely widespread. The Research team noticed that on the whole the Chinese population spent a minimum of nearly 30 minutes each day walking, standing and even participating in traditional dance forms on the common cobblestone pathways of the cities gardens and parks. The Oregon team felt that the cobblestone walking is an activity which is rooted in traditional Chinese medicine and relates to some of the principles of reflexology, in that the uneven surface of the cobblestones stimulate and regulate "acupoints" located on the soles of the feet.

These acupoints are supposedly linked to all organs and tissues of the body. Although there is considerable subjective evidence indicating the health benefits of cobblestone walking, (e.g., pain relief, sleep enhancement, improved physical and mental well-being), until recently no actual controlled studies was undertaken to scientifically evaluate its benefits and efficacy.

John Fisher and his team manufactured mats that replicated the cobblestone paths and developed a special protocol so that participants gradually got used to walking on the uneven surface of the mats. They then compiled a study using two groups - One group, which used cobblestone mats for walking and the other group who used the conventional flat surface for walking. Both groups spent one hour, three times per week for 16 weeks participating in the study. At the end of the study it was found that the participants who had walked on the cobblestone mats actually scored better on measures of balance, physical function and blood pressure than those in the conventional walking group.

Hence it could be concluded that a breakthrough in understanding the benefits of this new physical activity could provide a different choice of physical activity that is therapeutic and health enhancing and which can be done quickly and easily in the comfort of one's home.

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