



January 12, 2011 – Grand Rapids, MI

Million Stepper

On the first day of November last year, I issued a challenge: you could walk one million steps before the New Year if you walked 16,400 steps per day. The challenge was the result of long-time reader and friend, RD, who said that he had walked four million steps up to that time and was going to try to reach 4.5 million by the end of the year. A couple of people wrote and said they were going to try to do it. I tried myself and didn't come close. Only one person reported their results: it was RD who was really responsible for the challenge. He reached one million steps on January 6th.

Didn't quite make it, you say? Well, he had a setback by catching a stomach virus for two weeks—you probably wouldn't want to be too far from a bathroom, either. Otherwise he would have made it easily.

There's one more thing that you need to know about RD, and I'm sharing this with his permission. He was in his second year of recovery from breast cancer treatment. He used walking to help reduce the effects of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation on his body.

But that isn't all. He had a stroke in 2007 that paralyzed his right side for quite some time. Knee surgery and back surgery before that. As you can probably guess, RD is no spring chicken, but he wasn't ready to hang up his walking shoes. The only thing he had on his side was climate—he lives in a warm state. That and determination. He had plenty of excuses, but he didn't use any.

There are two lessons here. First, by setting that goal, he almost doubled what he would have walked, and he will reap those benefits physically and mentally. He didn't let life get in the way and came close.

The second lesson is for us. How often do we let life get in the way? RD persevered and finished what he started. He could have never started with all the health issues he faced. He could have folded at the stomach virus, but he continued and finished six days later. Does it really matter whether you lose 30 pounds by December 31 of this year or by January 6th of next year? Your body and your health won't notice the difference.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

WGVU FM 88.5/95.3 **npr** ***Straight Talk on Health***

Hear Dr. Chet's take on the latest health news and research—listen to *Straight Talk on Health* at 7 p.m. Sunday in the Eastern Time Zone on WGVU-FM 88.5 or 95.3, or listen live via the Internet by going to www.wgvu.org and clicking on "Listen Live" in the gray bar at the top.

The health information in this message is designed for educational purposes only. It's not a substitute for medical advice from your healthcare provider, and you should not use it to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. It's designed to motivate you to work toward better health, and that includes seeing your healthcare professional regularly. If what you've read raises any questions or concerns about health problems or possible diseases, talk to your healthcare provider today.

Subscribe to the Message from Dr. Chet at DrChet.com — © Chet Zelasko PhD LLC