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Take a walk, chat to your neighbour — it could add years to your life

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You don't need a gym membership or a gruelling fitness plan to live longer. According to mobility experts, the secret to better health may be as simple as stepping outside every day, going for a short walk and striking up a conversation while you're at it.

From a quick walk around the block to pottering in the garden or watching birds at your local park, small daily outings can have a powerful impact on both physical and mental wellbeing, even for people who rely on mobility aids.

Daniel Stone, managing director at TGA Mobility, says consistency is the real key, not intensity. "Getting outside regularly, even for short periods, helps the body and mind stay engaged with life," Stone said. Here's why those everyday moments outside matter far more than you might think.

Even gentle movement, a short walk, wheeling through a park, or light gardening, supports circulation, joint flexibility and muscle strength. Research suggests that frequent light activity can actually be more sustainable for long-term health than occasional intense exercise, particularly for older adults.

"You do not need to break a sweat to support your health. Regular low-impact movement keeps the body functioning," said Stone.

Spending time outdoors has been linked to reduced chronic stress and better emotional regulation — benefits that are especially significant for people managing pain or long-term conditions. According to Stone, "natural environments give the brain a break from constant stimulation, which can reduce long-term stress." Even ten minutes outside daily can meaningfully lift your mood.

Natural light helps regulate Vitamin D levels, while outdoor environments expose the body to healthy microbial diversity, both of which support immune function. It's a benefit that's easily overlooked, but becomes increasingly important with age.

Daily outdoor habits gently exercise the mind. Navigating familiar routes, noticing seasonal changes, and identifying birds all stimulate memory, attention, and spatial awareness.

"The brain responds positively to variety, even small changes like a different walking path or garden task," he said. Over time, these moments of stimulation may help slow cognitive decline.

Outdoor spaces create natural, low-pressure opportunities for social connection, a wave to a passerby or simply sitting near others in a shared space. These micro-interactions build emotional well-being without feeling overwhelming or obligatory. Stone says shared outdoor spaces allow for "connection without obligation, which can be incredibly comforting," a quiet but meaningful buffer against social isolation.

Many people scale back their outdoor activity due to fear of fatigue or unsteadiness. But Stone says modern mobility equipment, like the kind stocked by TGA Mobility, can expand opportunity rather than signal decline. "Mobility equipment should be seen as a tool for freedom, not a sign of limitation," he said. When people feel physically secure, they're far more likely to maintain the outdoor routines that benefit their health in the long run.

Perhaps the most counterintuitive finding is that distance is not the goal; habit is.
“Five minutes every day is more powerful than one long outing a week,” he added. That mind-set removes pressure and makes healthy behaviour sustainable over months and years.
Small daily outings may seem insignificant in the moment, but cumulatively they keep you connected to nature, movement and the world around you. And that, experts say, is what quietly adds up to a longer, healthier life.