Stepping in place during commercial breaks has already helped readers shed up to 11 pounds in a week!

If you love watching TV almost as much as you love fitting into skinny jeans, we’ve got great news: University of Tennessee scientists have discovered a fat-melting miracle that works as you watch your favorite shows! No matter what you tune in to—from Good Morning America to Grey’s Anatomy or Dancing with the Stars—just get up during commercials and step in place or walk around the house,” urges lead researcher Jeremy Steeves, Ph.D. “Our study shows you’ll end up being active for about 25 minutes every hour and burn as many calories as if you walked a mile. You’ll also nearly double your metabolic rate compared to sitting the whole time!”

Folks who tried the strategy in a UT lab “were shocked by how easy it felt,” reports Steeves, who points out this approach is absolutely free, safe for virtually anyone, done in the privacy of your home and a cinch to fit into your normal routine. What’s more, it’s only done during commercials, so you can still give full attention to Mad Men’s drama or The Voice’s high notes. “It’s a relatively small behavior change,” Steeves adds, “with the potential for very big benefits!”

Tune in, trim down
There’s no need to get fancy. Participants in the UT study simply moved during commercial breaks, averaging a moderate 100 steps a minute. Steeves encourages people to do this during at least an hour of programming daily.

Does “TV walking” work without a diet? Probably. Even so, experts agree that cutting calories can double or even triple the amount you lose. Walking guru Leslie Sansone recommends the no-fuss plan, which dishes up an energizing mix of ordinary foods for about 1,400 calories per day. Combined with TV walking, “it’s the perfect plan for me,” says Nevada Jeopardy! lover Kathryn Gilman, 34, down nine pounds in a week. “I didn’t have to change my life to use it—and the weight seemed to fall off!” Maine American Idol fan Cody Mumma, 32, agrees. “I lost nearly 11 pounds in seven days!” Adds Ohio NCIS fan Tracey Ellis, 45, who also dropped nine pounds: “I think it will work for anyone!”

Fact!
The average American watches five hours of TV per day. That adds up to nearly 125 minutes of commercials!
3 huge benefits!

TV walking offers real advantages over traditional strolls:

● You eliminate the number-one exercise excuse. Surveys show that “lack of time” is the reason most of us aren’t active more often. But you don’t have to make time for TV walking. “It’s tucked into your usual routine,” says Steeves. Moms can do it as their kids play or sleep nearby. Kids can join in! “It’s also great for people who physically can’t exercise for long periods.”

● You flip a get-slim switch! “Watching TV can be a very strong cue to be inactive. You sit down and might not budge for hours. Plus, food commercials cue us to eat as we sit there,” notes Steeves. A TV walking habit can turn it around. “Commercials become a reminder to move, turning a fattening cue into a slimming one!”

● You trick your brain! Research shows short bursts of exercise work just as well as one long bout but feel significantly easier. So people are more likely to stick with them—a key factor for losing big, says Steeves.

Whether you walk during commercials or nonstop on a treadmill, minute for minute you’re burning the exact same calories. So if TV walking appeals to you, go for it! Says Sansone: “I know for sure this strategy can help people slim down. Be consistent, and your potential to lose is endless.” Given that readers are already dropping nine or more pounds a week, we figure many of us can be up to 36 pounds slimmer by summer!

TV Walkers’ Miracle Diet!

After years of experimenting, WalkAtHome.com’s Leslie Sansone is convinced 1,400-calorie menus like these will help walkers take weight off fastest. When readers used them in combination with an hour of “TV walking”—for a total of 25 active minutes daily—they shed up to 11 pounds a week. While using this plan, drink as much water as you like. Add ultra-low-cal extras (spices, vinegar, Splenda) in moderation. A daily multivitamin with calcium is recommended. Get a doctor’s okay to try any new plan.

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Create your own menus!

If you prefer to come up with your own meals, just follow these simple guidelines:

- Unlimited vegetables
- 9 servings lean protein
- 3-4 servings whole grain
- 4 servings good fats
- 2 servings dairy
- 2 servings fruit

Menus adapted by Neva Cochran, R.D. Photos: iStockphoto (2); ABC/Photofest; Frank Ockenfels/AMC; courtesy of American Broadcasting Companies; Adam Larkey/Getty Images; Nell Redmond/IKONIK; Fotolia.com; Heath Robbins/Stockfood; Food Collection/Agefotostock.com.