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## Editorial

### NOW & AGAIN HOW TO AVOID WALKING

By SANJAY K BOSE

TAKING pot shots at my expanding middle-aged girth is not limited to being just a spectator sport. All my friends indulge in it. Still, it is a little too much when the tailor also makes wisecracks implying that the next time I want to alter my trousers, I should let him try altering my waistline instead.

Stung by these comments on what I insist are my "mildly prosperous" looks, I decided that a visit to the doctor was in order.

Poking unkindly at my mid-section, the doctor wagged an admonishing finger at me as he unwound the pressure cuff from my arm. "Your blood pressure is scaling new heights," he said, "And that is not at all surprising looking at what you are doing to your waistline. What you need is a long walk every morning." Rushing hither and thither in unseemly haste, first thing in the morning, is not really my idea of the perfect start to a great day! I would much rather loll in my favourite chair with a cup of coffee and watch others sweat it out on the roads below.

Actually, one cannot even say that my neighbours set very high standards in this regard. The venerable professor next door is known to be firmly averse to any form of physical exertion. Even his doctor was intimidated and could only gently suggest that maybe he should start taking his dog out for a walk in the morning himself, instead of asking his servant to do it for him. He did follow that advice.

It was quite a sight seeing the professor doing the rounds, tugging his big Labrador by the leash, while seated comfortably on his scooter.

My friend Amit, living two blocks away, was somewhat more conscientious. When he realised that his mirror was getting a little too small for his use, he decided that evasive action was required. The solo morning walk, communing by himself with Mother Nature, was not for him.

A perfect family man, he managed to convince his entire family that what they all needed was a brisk morning walk.

It was indeed a joy to see them on Monday morning — Amit's daughter, his wife, Amit's favourite walking stick and, of course, Amit himself. His daughter was the first to object to this unseemly healthy activity at an ungodly hour. There was no sign of her on Tuesday.

A major domestic revolt and a refusal to let go of her beauty sleep meant that Amit's wife refused to go for a walk on Wednesday and there was only the walking stick and Amit out for a walk that morning. I must confess that, by Thursday morning, I fully expected the walking stick out for a walk by itself, sans Amit.

Thankfully, Amit decided that three days of morning walks were enough for him and has kept both himself and his walking stick firmly at home since then.

As for me, I think I know the ideal way to handle the situation. I plan to ask my wife to walk on my behalf and have chalked out the route.

That 10-km long walk should leave her without the energy left to argue with me. If that does not have a real effect on my blood pressure, nothing will!

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