

WALK FOR FUN, FITNESS AND HEALTH

Benefits

Walking is one of the most popular physical activities. Whatever your age, it is a safe, inexpensive and enjoyable way to stay fit, improve your overall health and quality of life. Studies show that physical activity may help prevent heart disease, hypertension, osteoporosis and diabetes. Before starting any exercise program or greatly increasing physical activity, check with your doctor.

Safety Tip

If you experience any of the following, stop all activity and seek medical attention immediately:

- Pain or pressure in center of chest
- Shortness of breath, dizziness, or lightheadedness
- Chest pain extending to jaw, shoulder or arm.
- Cold sweat, absence of sweat, nausea or vomiting.

Selecting Sneakers

- Purchase sneakers designed for walking with a beveled (angle) heel, which permits the smooth rolling motion of a walking gait. A non-beveled heel will cause the toes to slap down causing shin soreness.
- The heel cup of the shoe should be stiff and able to lend lateral (side to side) support as the heel contacts the ground.
- As you walk, your toes bend and extend behind you during the push-off phase of the walking stride. Walking shoes need to be flexible enough in the forefoot to allow this.
- Make sure shoes are comfortable at the time of purchase. They should not need to be broken in.
- Always shop at the end of the day when your feet are most swollen.
- Leave a thumbnail width between the end of the shoe and your longest toe. Make sure the shoes are wider across the ball of the foot.
- Walk around the store until you are satisfied with the fit.

Walking Techniques

1. **Health Walking** – Greater than 15 minute mile pace
 - Head centered, chin parallel to the ground, eyes look ahead
 - Shoulders down, pulled back and relaxed.
 - Chest lifted
 - Abdominals contracted and buttocks tucked under the hips.
 - Arms relaxed and swinging in opposition to the legs.
 - Comfortable stride.
 - Emphasis on posture

2. Fitness Walking – 13-15 minute mile pace

- Maintain good posture.
- Flex the elbows to 90 degrees. The forward swing should not cross the center of the body or swing higher than the top of the sternum. Keep the elbows close to the side of the body.
- Speed up the arm swing to speed up the leg action.
- The hips rotate slightly.
- Land on the heel of the foot with the forefoot raised. Roll from the heel to the ball of the foot.
- Forcefully push off the forefoot.
- Lean slightly forward from the ankles, not the hips.
- Emphasis on arm swing and foot roll.

3. Speed Walking – 12 minute mile pace or faster

- Maintain good posture
- Drive the elbows back on the arm swing. Hand should not reach farther back than the buttocks.
- Increase the speed of the arm swing.
- Rotate the hips forward and backward.
- Place the feet closer to a straight line, like tightrope walking.
- Forcefully push the forefoot against the ground.
- Keep the ball of the rear foot on the ground until the heel of the forward leg has contacted the ground.
- Lean forward from the ankle, not the hips.
- Do not hyperextend the knees.
- Increase the speed of steps.
- Emphasis on hip rotation.

Tips for Success

- Wear proper clothes and sneakers.
- Carry a cell phone and identification.
- Walk in the daylight.
- Wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen in warm weather.
- Find an enjoyable walking route and vary frequently to prevent boredom.
- Recruit a family member or friend to join you. You will be more likely to stick with it.
- Try walking at the same time each day.
- Bad weather – try mall walking.
- Thirty minute aerobic workouts most days of the week will reduce the risk of heart disease. Four to six thirty minute weekly sessions are ideal for weight management.
- Carrying an extra ten pounds of body weight may be related to high cholesterol, hypertension and diabetes.
- Brisk walking uses nearly all 206 bones and 620 muscles in your body.
- Walking is a great stress buster! It helps you escape from life's little ups and downs.
- Warm up for 5 minutes by walking at a slower pace.
- Walk at a comfortable yet brisk pace once you have warmed up.
- Keep a log of your walking program i.e. how many days/week and length of walk.
- Reward yourself for being consistent.
- Monitor your intensity with the talk test. If you can't carry on a conversation, slow down.
- Drink plenty of water before during and after exercising.
- Cool down and stretch after walking.
- You can estimate your speed in steps per minute:
60 steps per minute = 2 mph
90 steps per minute = 3 mph
120 steps per minute = 4 mph

Beginner 12 Week Walking Program

<u>Week</u>	<u>Warm-Up</u>	<u>Walk Briskly</u>	<u>Cool-Down</u>
1 & 2	5 minutes	20 minutes	5 minutes
3 & 4	5 minutes	25 minutes	5 minutes
5 & 6	5 minutes	30 minutes	5 minutes
7 & 8	5 minutes	35 minutes	5 minutes
9 & 10	5 minutes	40 minutes	5 minutes
11 & 12	5 minutes	45 minutes	5 minutes

Calorie Expenditure for brisk walking

<u>Weight (lbs)</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>180</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>220</u>	<u>240</u>
15 minutes	40	48	56	64	71	80	88	95
30 minutes	80	96	112	128	142	160	175	191

*For activities lasting 45 minutes, add the 15 and 30 minute totals together. For activities lasting 60 minutes, double the 30 minute total.