

START A WALKING PROGRAM

Leave time in your busy schedule to follow a walking program that will work for you. Keep the following points in mind as you plan your program:

- Find a partner or group of people to walk with you. Your walking partner(s) should be able to walk with you on the same schedule and at the same speed.
- Bring water with you when you walk, and make sure that everyone has enough, especially in the summer.
- Be sure to use sunscreen on all exposed skin when you are outdoors. People can burn just as badly on an overcast day, so make it a habit every time you walk.
- Wear shoes with proper arch supports, firm heels, and thick flexible soles that will cushion your feet and absorb shock. Before you buy a new pair, be sure to walk in them at the store.
- Make sure that your socks are clean, dry, and fit properly, otherwise blisters, rashes, and callouses can develop. Your socks are at least as important as your shoes.
- Wear clothes that will keep you dry and comfortable. Look for synthetic fabrics that absorb sweat and remove it from your skin.
- For extra warmth in winter, wear a knit cap. To stay cool in summer, wear a baseball cap or visor.
- Think of your walk in three parts. Warm up by walking slowly for five (5) minutes. Then increase your speed and do a fast walk. Finally, cool down by walking slowly again for five (5) minutes.
- Do light stretching after your warm-up and cool-down.
- Try to walk at least three times per week. Each week add two (2) or three (3) minutes to your walk. If you walk less than three times per week, you may need more time to adjust before you increase the pace or frequency of your walks.
- To avoid stiff or sore muscles and joints, start gradually. Over several weeks, begin walking faster, going further, and walking for longer periods of time.
- If you tighten your stomach muscles and swing your arms while you walk, you will work more muscle groups and burn more calories in the same distance and time.

- Be careful about using things like ankle and wrist weights. Too much weight can lean to hyperextension and joint damage. Making a conscious effort to lift your knees and swing your arms just a little higher has been shown to be just as effective as weights and eliminates almost all of the risk.
- Most of our area parks are animal friendly, so bring your dog (on a leash of course) with you. Your furry friend will love the exercise and companionship.
- Set goals and rewards. Examples of goals are participating in a fun walk or walking continuously for 30 minutes.
- Keep track of your progress with a walking journal or log. *There is one provided to get you started on pages 10 and 11.*
- The more you walk, the better you feel and the more calories you burn!

Experts recommend 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. If you cannot do 30 minutes at a time, try walking for shorter amounts and gradually working up to it.

While you are at the park - try these other calorie burning activities!



30-minutes of these activities can burn:

ACTIVITY	CALORIES
Walking	100
Outdoor basketball	204
Disc Golf	137
Outdoor volleyball	133

Note: This is an average number of calories burned for the average person. However, calories burned depends on your specific height and weight.

Info from www.LiveStrong.com. Compiled by New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension.