

Focusing on:

Group Walking



Good for You, Good for Them

One of the greatest features of walking is that it's a perfect activity for large numbers of people to participate in together. Plus, contrary to so many mass-participation activities, walking involves very little individual athletic effort.

Because of this convenience, numerous associations and organizations, both local and national, have used walking as a central activity to get the public involved in their campaigns. Find out if any of these walk-a-thons are coming to your community, and tell your wellness coordinator that you're interested in participating. Not only is it good exercise, but it's also a great way to support a variety of important efforts and associations.

One example of these events is the annual "Race for the Cure," put on by the Komen Foundation to raise the public's awareness of breast cancer. This fitness run/walk is held in more than 100 U.S. cities and attracts over a million people every year. You can find out more about this event at www.raceforthecure.com.

An Appetite for Exercise

If you're hungry for more walking programs, you might want to consider getting in touch with your local YMCA—they offer a variety of fitness courses, including walking. Not only can this satisfy your need for more physical activity, but it can also provide the opportunity to meet new people, who share the same interest in physical activity as you do.



You can find out what YMCA is nearest to you by logging on to www.ymca.net/find_your_y/findy.htm. Or you can call them at 1-888-333-9622.



Walking can help the body with its sizable chore of producing new bone tissue—the equivalent of a whole new skeleton every seven years.

—*Too Busy to Exercise*, Porter Shimer

Make it a Group Thing

Walking solo is always an option, but sometimes working out in a group can add some fun. Try the following suggestions to include others in your walking routine.

- Walk with your dog—your pet can be great company while you workout.
- Walk with family—walking is a great activity that can involve all family members.
- Walk with friends—a lot of people have tennis buddies, so why not have a walking buddy? Instead of scheduling weekend tennis matches, you can set aside time for a walk around the neighborhood or park.
- Walk with co-workers—if you walk during your lunch hour, coffee break, etc., ask a co-worker to come with you. You may even find that a walk contributes to a great brainstorming session.



“The road is always shorter when two people walk it.”

—Anon



This Week's Challenge

Bike your routine. If you own a bicycle, try biking your normal walking route, and then some.

Five Questions

Here are five questions for you to consider as you progress through this campaign.

1. What's the longest amount of time you have stuck with one exercise program? What did you like about that particular program? What caused you to abandon it?
2. Would you like to modify any other lifestyle behaviors in the near future? What would they be?
3. Have you made any new friends or acquaintances as a result of becoming more physically active?
4. Do you have an improved vision of your self-esteem and self-image?
5. Have you been able to let go of negative behaviors and move forward without them?