

Focusing on:

Treating Your Body Right

Walk This Way

4 Do's and don'ts

It might sound crazy, but you could be walking the wrong way. In fact, improper technique can cause strain on your body and even result in injury.

- 1 Don't:** Over stride—when you try to walk fast, a natural inclination is to lengthen your stride in the front, reaching out further with your forward foot. This increases the risk of straining your leg muscles.
Do: Take shorter, quicker steps. If you want to move quickly, taking shorter, quicker strides is the way to go.
- 2 Don't:** Be a stiff arm—straight, motionless arms act like a long pendulum, slowing you down. Lack of arm movement can also throw off your balance as you walk.
Do: Bend your arms at 90 degrees and swing them naturally back and forth, opposite the leg motion—you can add power and speed by using your arms effectively.



- 3 Don't:** Put your head down—walking with your head down could cause back, neck, and shoulder strain.
Do: Look up! Good posture for walking allows you to breathe well. Your chin should be parallel to the ground, and your eyes should focus on the street or track 10 to 20 feet ahead.
- 4 Don't:** Lean your body—leaning your body forward or backward doesn't contribute to speed or good technique. In fact, leaning can result in back pain.
Do: Stand up straight but with relaxed shoulders, chin parallel to the ground. Your back should have a natural curve—if you feel a strain in your lower back, you're probably not at a relaxed position.

Do Your Body Good

3 Do's and don'ts

1 Don't: Use heat to treat an injury—heat increases blood flow to the area and results in more swelling.

Do: Treat your injuries with ice—it numbs the affected area and prevents pain and swelling.

2 Don't: Continue your walking if you feel any pain—by neglecting your pain you risk worsening the injury.

Do: Use ice or take pain relievers to alleviate the pain. For more serious injuries call or visit your health care professional.

3 Don't: Use your injury as an excuse to quit being physically active.

Do: Continue some form of physical activity that does not put your current injury at risk. If you have hurt your ankle, try some upper body strength training exercises. Return to your normal routine once your doctor gives you the OK.

There are 300 different foot ailments, none of which should be neglected.

—The American Podiatric Medical Association



This Week's Challenge

Pick up the pace.
Everywhere you go,
walk faster than you
normally would.

“Don't let people drive you crazy when you know it's in walking distance.”

—Anonymous

Five Questions

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

1. Who and/or what makes your workout more enjoyable?
2. What physical changes, if any, have you noticed since starting?
3. Do you have moral support from family, friends, and co-workers?
4. What's your favorite aspect of exercise (e.g., burning calories, relieving stress, health benefits, etc)? What can you do to maximize this?
5. Do you remember the three reasons you chose to become more physically active? Write them down, and keep them with you!