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Walking

Hippocrates once said, *“walking is man’s best medicine”*. Thousands of years later this still holds true, with new benefits of walking being discovered daily. There are no tricks to walking nor does it require any special skill, equipment, or clothing. With a good pair of shoes and comfortable clothes you are ready to participate in the worldwide #1 participation sport.

Health Benefits of Walking

- Burns almost as many calories as jogging
- Eases back pains
- Slims your waist
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces levels of bad cholesterol
- Reduces risk of heart attack
- Enhances stamina & energy
- Lessens anxiety & tension
- Improves muscle tone
- Easy on your joints
- Reduces appetite
- Increases aerobic capacity
- Can be done in short bouts
- Slows down osteoporosis bone loss
- Can be done when you are traveling

Helpful Hints on Walking

Posture is the Key – To get the most out of walking good posture is crucial. Keep your head up and your spine straight and look straight ahead (look down occasionally to avoid road obstacles). Keep your arms and shoulders loose.

Take Deep, Regular Breaths – do not hold your breath

Do not Run – Keep a brisk pace, but not fast. If you find it difficult to breathe, slow down.

Listen to Your Body – If you have pain or discomfort, check with your doctor.

Stride – Try to take long, smooth strides. Your motion should be effortless with your arms swinging at your sides for balance.

Start Slowly – Start by walking around the block. Do not start off with a marathon; you will be more likely to keep it up.

Shoes Make the Walker

Shoes are the single most important piece of equipment for a walker. It is important that you get a good pair of walking shoes with the following characteristics.

- Support and comfort to the whole foot

- Firm heel support

- Enough toe room that you can wiggle your toes

- Lightweight

- Flexible cushioned sole to aid in gait and absorb shock

- Made of breathable material