

When you complete this module, you will be able to . . .

- Get started on a walking program with proper technique
- Perform exercises to warm up, stretch and cool down within your walking plan

With these Top 5 reasons to begin a walking program, it's no surprise that walking is the most popular and most recommended form of activity in the United States:

1. **It's simple to do.** No special skills are required, and minimal equipment is needed (i.e. good shoes, good socks, good support).
2. **It's great for weight-loss.** A study by the National Weight Control Registry showed walking was the primary form of exercise for folks who have lost weight and kept it off.
3. **Time is on your side.** Ten minutes here and ten minutes there will do! You can accumulate walking time over the course of a day and still reap the health benefits.
4. **Live longer; be healthier.** Cooper Institute for Aerobic Research performed a study showing that walking reduced blood pressure and increased HDL (good cholesterol).
5. **Walk off blues.** A Duke University Medical Center study demonstrated that walking was a viable option in the treatment of depression for a group of elderly patients.

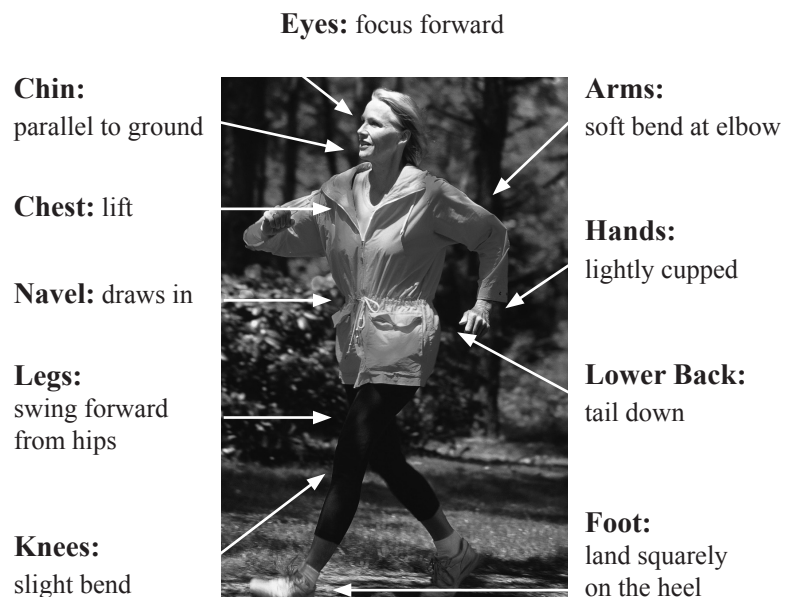
Walk—Which Way?

Lifestyle Walking

A casual walk or a stroll designed for the beginner will help you build endurance without overdoing it. The average pace is 2.5-3.5 miles per hour or one mile every 17-24 minutes.

Fitness Walking

If you've reached a plateau or gained confidence and endurance as a lifestyle walker, you may want to kick it up a notch to fitness walking. Try a brisk pace of 3.5-4.3 miles per hour (one mile in 14-17 minutes).



Wise Walking

Warm Up

All walks should begin with a 5-10 minute warm up to elevate your body temperature slightly. When completed, you should feel warmer! While walking at a moderate pace, roll your shoulders forward and backward, lift them to your ears and pull them down again. Move your head from side to side, and flex your hands as you walk.

New Walkers Rx: Add a few minutes of heel walking to help strengthen the muscles in your shins and ankles.

Stretch Out

Always stretch after the warm up. Your muscles will be more receptive to light stretching then.

Walker's Stretch—to relieve tight or tired calves.



Start: Wedge right foot up against a railing, curb or flat vertical surface.

Finish: Exhale and pull hips toward railing allowing left heel to lift off floor. Hold up to 30 seconds. Switch legs.

Pretzel Stretch—to loosen up muscles in hips, lower back and glutes.



Start: Sit on a step or chair. Place left ankle on right knee. Make sure right knee is directly over right heel.

Finish: Lean forward and exhale. Hold up to 30 seconds.

Work Out

Our sample plan will begin with lifestyle walking for 4 to 6 weeks. Once the walks feel comfortable and manageable, you're ready to add more. (Note: Check with your physician before starting this or any exercise program.)

Easing In	Building a Base	Maintaining a Schedule
Weeks 1 and 2	Weeks 3 and 4	Weeks 5 and 6
3 times/week	4 times/week	5 times/week
10-15 minutes in the morning	10-15 minutes in the morning	15-20 minutes in the morning
10-15 minutes in the afternoon or evening	10-15 minutes in the afternoon	15-20 minutes in the afternoon
	10-15 minutes in the evening	15-20 minutes in the evening

Cool Down

Aim for a 5-minute cool down period after you've reached your goal for time and/or distance. Walk at a moderate pace and repeat the same warm ups and stretches you did prior to your walk. Remember, your body is warmer now and will respond better to stretching.



Your Walking Plan:
