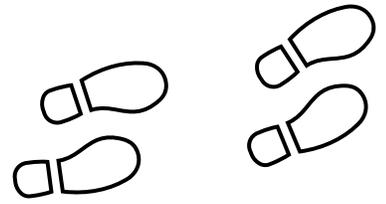


# 5 THINGS YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE STARTING A WALKING PROGRAM



## **FIRST, TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR SHOES.**

For example, are they comfortable and offer good arch support? Make sure they are wide enough to allow your foot to move from side to side but not too loose to rub and cause blisters. They should never be tight.

It's a good idea to try on a few styles and walk around in them if possible, before purchasing. Also, consider a gel or cushion insert to support your arch and protect against impact. It's not a bad idea to have more than one pair of good walking shoes, to change off. Furthermore, at the first sign of wear, you should purchase a new pair.

## **SECOND, CHOOSE LOOSE-FITTING CLOTHING.**

Make sure your clothing is comfortable and appropriate for the weather. For example, wear shorts and a shirt that wicks away moisture, for warm summer days. Wear layers in the winter, that you can peel off as you warm up. Always wear socks to protect your feet, and reduce friction with your shoes.

## **THIRD, REMEMBER TO STAY HYDRATED.**

For example, bring an easy to carry water bottle that you can drink from readily. Take a sip about every 15 minutes.

You should plan on about 4 ounces or one half a cup of water, for every mile you walk. However, increase that amount to 6-8 ounces per mile, in hot weather.

For long-distance hiking, consider an electrolyte replacement drink such as Gatorade.

## **FOURTH, SET A SCHEDULE AND PLAN YOUR ROUTE.**

Make it simple, such as a circular route around the neighborhood. Make a schedule you can stick with. For instance, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, to begin with. Then increase to 7 days per week when you are ready.

Start slowly and work up to a brisk pace. "Brisk walking for 30 minutes per day, totaling 150 minutes per week, is recommended by health authorities to reduce your health risks for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other conditions"

Set a goal of 5 hours of walking per week, or about 45 minutes every day, for weight loss.

## **FIFTH, TRACK YOUR STEPS AND HEART RATE.**

For example, use one of the popular devices such as a Fitbit or any walking app on your smartphone, to track your steps. Over time, as you pick up your speed, the more steps you will achieve. It is recommended that your goal be 10,000 steps each day.

Some of these devices also measure your heart rate and allow you to track your progress in that way.

According to the American Heart Association, “target heart rate (HR) during moderate activity (or brisk walking) is about 50-70% of maximum heart rate” and should be your goal when walking.

When starting, aim for the lower end of your Target HR Zone (50%) and work up to the higher end (70%).

For examples, see the table below:

<b>Age range</b>	<b>Target HR Zone 50-70%</b>	<b>Average Maximum HR, 100%</b>
60 years	80-112 bpm	160 bpm
65 years	78-109 bpm	155 bpm
70 years	75-105 bpm	150 bpm

HR = heart rate; bpm = beats per minute

## **Whenever you start an exercise regiment, always check with your physician first.**

Also, remember to

- Take a phone in case of an emergency.
- Tell someone you are going and what time to expect your return. Ideally, walk with a buddy or your dog.
- Start and end with a slower pace to allow for warming up and cooling down.