



# TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL WALKING PROGRAM

Walking in supportive shoes with flexible soles can be one of the best forms of aerobic exercise. According to Mark Bricklin, editor of *Prevention* magazine, "No other activity bestows the blessings of exercise as easily, enjoyably, or safely as the simple act of going for a walk."

If you can only manage a short five or ten-minute walk in the beginning, remember that any fitness program begins with one small step. The goal is to do some exercise while minimizing the chances of injury or discouragement. If you feel successful, you can increase your walk, one to three minutes at a time. Work your way up to 20 or 30 minutes gradually. Take at least a month to do that if you like. It's creating the habit that's most important.

## Here are some tips for a successful walking routine:

Warm up. For the first few minutes, go at about half your normal walking speed.

Set frequency goals. Two to three times a week is good for starters. If you find you enjoy it, gradually increase to 4 or 5 times weekly.

Pay attention to the age of your shoes, and replace them when necessary. If the heels or soles are unevenly worn, they can accentuate any imbalances in your gait. You may need to replace them as often as every 6 months.

## Staying Motivated

Build slowly

\* Avoid burn-out or injury

Look for excuses to move

\* Walk during TV commercials

\* Take the stairs

\* Park in the back of the lot

\* Take a friend, co-worker, or dog

Reward your self when you reach a goal

\* See a movie

\* Buy a new outfit

\* Get a massage

## Did you know that walking can:

Reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke

Lower blood pressure

Reduce high cholesterol

Reduce body fat / help control body weight

Enhance mental well-being

Reduce nicotine cravings

Increase bone density

Reduce risk of colon cancer

Reduce risk of non-insulin dependant diabetes

Help osteoarthritis

Help co-ordination and flexibility

RESOURCE: *Too Busy to Exercise* by Porter Shimer, Storey Communications, Inc.1996.

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