

*100* in motion  
CREATIVE FITNESS

# WALKING

The Activity  
*of a* Lifetime



There are almost as many reasons to walk as there are people who walk. People walk for pleasure, to stay in shape or manage their weight. Families explore the outdoors by walking together. Some people use walking as therapy for injured muscles or troubled feelings. People walk to explore, take a break, find adventure or get from here to there. Some Manitobans, including many who are 65 years of age and over, walk for companionship and improved well-being. Others walk to

raise awareness and money for charities and good causes. There are hundreds of

these kinds of events in Canada each year. The more you walk, the more reasons you'll find to make walking part of your daily routine.

# STEP *it* Up

It's easy to take the first step and to increase the number of steps you take each day.

- Walk partway or all the way home from work or school.
- Walk to the store or to do errands.
- Walk the stairs, instead of using an elevator or escalator.

- Walk a block at break time or lunchtime.
- Walk a dog (borrow your neighbour's if you don't have one).
- At work, use the photocopier on another floor.



# BENEFITS *of* Walking



Any birdwatcher or snowshoe enthusiast knows the inherent pleasures of walking. Walking is more than an enjoyable mode of transportation. It can also improve your fitness, health and mental well-being.

- Walking refreshes the mind, reduces fatigue and increases energy.
- More than half the body's muscles are designed for walking; it is a natural movement that is virtually injury-free.
- Walking provides an enjoyable time for sharing and socializing with friends or family.
- Regular, brisk walking can reduce elevated blood fats or blood pressure and improve digestion and elimination.
- Walking strengthens bones and helps prevent or control osteoporosis (a condition where bones become brittle and fragile).
- Walking relieves stress and tension.
- Regular walking will help you maintain a healthy weight and a positive body image, especially when combined with healthy eating.
- Brisk walking trains your heart, lungs and muscles to work more efficiently.



# STEPPING

In planning your walking program consider the following tips:

# Out

**A LITTLE WALKING EVERY DAY** is far better than an occasional weekend bout of frenzied activity. Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines say:

- To achieve health benefits, adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more.
- It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week.
- More physical activity provides greater health benefits.
- Visit [www.manitobainmotion.ca](http://www.manitobainmotion.ca) to learn more.



alert. At night, walk with a friend, and wear reflective tape on your clothing. Carry identification and a cell phone (or change for a phone call).

**ON SUMMER EVENINGS OR IN THE WOODS**, protect yourself from insect bites by wearing long sleeves and mosquito repellent.



**WHEN IT IS HOT**, choose a shaded route and walk a little slower than usual. Drink some cool water before you leave and bring water with you, especially if there is no water fountain en route. Avoid the hot noonday sun. Wear a hat and sunscreen.

**EXPLORE A VARIETY OF ROUTES** and choose ones that are interesting, safe and convenient. Avoid heavy traffic, loose dogs and rough terrain.



**WHEN IT IS COLD**, avoid icy surfaces and walk in places where you are shielded from the wind. Many Manitobans prefer to “mall” walk at a local shopping centre in cold weather. Look for signs about walking clubs at your local mall.



**WALKING WITH OTHERS** can be more motivating than walking alone. Why not join a walking club (phone your local Y, municipal recreation department, or public health unit to find a group) or ask a neighbour or family member to join you.



**WALK SAFELY.** Don't wear headphones in heavy traffic or in areas where you need to be constantly

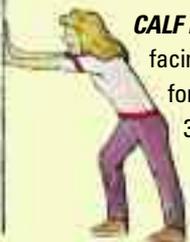
**DRESS** in loose, comfortable clothing made of synthetic fabrics. In cold weather, be aware of the wind-chill factor. Dress in layers so you can peel off or put on according to how warm you feel. Wear mittens and a toque to cover your head and ears.



# GETTING Started

Warm up and cool down with 5 minutes of medium-paced walking, followed by some stretches for your legs. This will prevent stiffness and increase flexibility.

**CALF MUSCLES STRETCH:** Stand facing a wall. Position your forward foot approximately 30 – 38 cm from the wall. Stretch your arms forward, elbows straight and lean against the wall. Place your other foot a few inches behind (and to the side of) the front foot and slowly plant it flat on the floor. Lean forward until you feel a stretch in your back leg. Hold for 15 – 30 seconds. Relax and repeat 2 times with alternate legs.



**THIGH STRETCH SITTING:** Sit on the edge of a chair. Lower your knee toward the floor and press it back under the chair. Hold the stretch for 15 – 20 seconds. Repeat each leg 2 times.



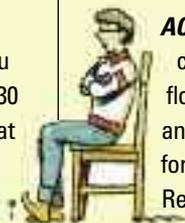
**ALTERNATE THIGH MUSCLES STRETCH:** Stand close to a wall and place one hand on it. With the other hand reach back and hold the same side foot in that hand. When balanced, begin to slowly raise the foot up towards the lower back. Hold for 15 – 30 seconds. Relax and repeat 2 more times with alternate legs.



**HAMSTRING MUSCLES STRETCH:** Sitting on the floor, put one leg straight out and the other leg bent at the knee. Keeping your back straight, lean forward, sliding your hands down the straight leg until you feel a stretch. Hold for 15 – 30 seconds. Relax and repeat 2 more times with alternate legs

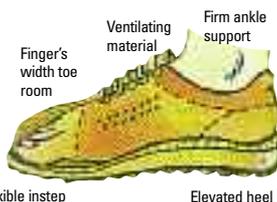


**ACHILLES STRETCH:** Sitting on a chair, plant one heel on the floor and gently lift your toes up and back as far as you can. Hold for a count of 5, then relax. Repeat each foot several times.



## WALKING SHOES

When you walk, your feet hit the ground more than 650 times each kilometre, so comfortable socks and well-designed walking or jogging shoes are a must. Shop for walking shoes at the end of the day, when your feet are larger. Try on both shoes and walk around in the store before buying them.



# COUNT YOUR STEPS to Better Health

How many steps do you take in a day? Most people would have difficulty answering this question. The average sedentary North American accumulates about 3,500 – 5,000 steps during the course of their day. Dr. Catrine Tudor-Locke, a researcher at Arizona State University East suggests that, in general, to improve your health, a person should add 2,000 – 3,000 more steps to their day. Here is a useful guide developed by Dr. Tudor-Locke:

If your total number of steps per day is:

- Under 5,000 you would be categorized as having a sedentary lifestyle.
- Between 5,000 – 7,499 you would be categorized "low active."
- Between 7,500 – 9,999 would indicate you are getting some exercise or walking and would be categorized "somewhat active."
- 10,000 or more steps indicates that you would be categorized an "active" individual.
- More than 12,500 steps/day would classify you as being "highly active".

You can accumulate steps throughout the day. It only takes about 5 minutes to get in 500 steps. Combining this with continuous walking (see the sample program in this booklet) will improve your health and fitness, and help you maintain a healthy weight.

## IT'S AS EASY AS ONE, TWO THREE

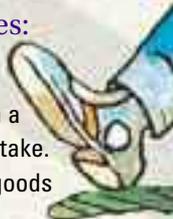
If you would like to try step counting, follow these guidelines:

### **1** CHOOSE YOUR Pedometer AND TEST IT OUT

A pedometer is a small battery-

powered device that displays on a screen the number of steps you take.

They are sold in many sporting goods



and department stores. They can also be ordered online. Good quality basic models cost from \$25 to \$40. High-end versions also estimate calories burned and distance walked.

Clip your pedometer onto your waistband or belt. It should be snug on your hip and lined up above your knee. Set the counter to zero and walk 20 steps. Check to see that it accurately records the number of steps.

## 2 SET YOUR DAILY STEP GOAL

Recommended daily step goals depend on your age and current level of physical activity. They also depend on how active you want to be. You can use the chart below to help you decide



on a personal goal, but the best way to get there is to gradually increase the number of steps you take each day.

- **Find your baseline.** Clip on your pedometer and set it to zero. Go about your daily routine and record the number of steps you have taken at the end of the day. Do this for seven days. At the end of the week, calculate your daily average by dividing the total number of steps for the entire week by seven. This is your baseline.
- **Increase your number of daily steps by 500 steps each week.** For example, if your daily baseline is 3,000 steps in week one, your goal for week two would be 3,500 steps. For week three it would be 4,000 steps etc.
- **Once you reach your goal,** reward yourself and brag to all your friends and family members! Then make a commitment to keep it up.

## 3 KEEP A WEEKLY WALKING LOG

Copy the Weekly Step Log in this booklet. Use it to record your baseline and your progress over the weeks ahead.

### DAILY STEP GOALS

Highly active (children, youth and fit adults)	10,000 – 16,000
Active (adults)	10,000
Somewhat active (older adults)	7,000 – 9,999
Low active (adults with a chronic health condition*)	4,000 – 7,000

\*Check with your doctor before starting this program if you have a chronic health condition such as arthritis, diabetes or heart disease.

If you don't have a pedometer, make a commitment to walk a minimum of 30 minutes every day.

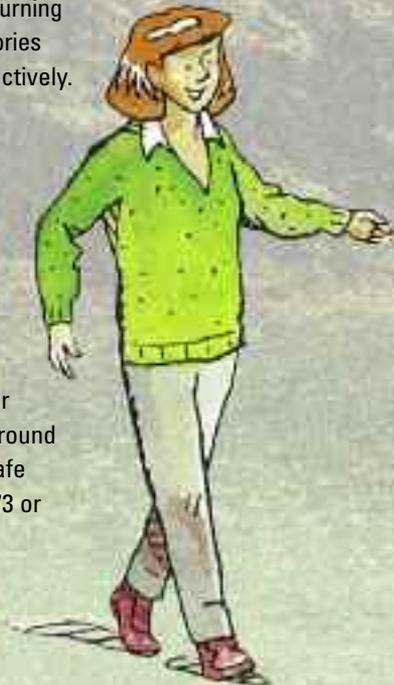
# READY, SET, Walk!

You can design your own walking program by gradually increasing the frequency, time and distance you walk, or you can use the sample program given here.

- If you decide to try the enclosed sample walking program, begin by choosing the level that best matches your current experience with physical activity.
- Walk briskly at a pace you can maintain comfortably for the duration of your walk. Slow down if you are unable to talk and stop if you experience dizziness, pain or shortness of breath.
- Create your own stride style – your body will automatically pick the most effective stride for any given speed. Breathe normally and let your arms swing naturally.
- If weight loss is your goal, aim to progress to 60 minutes of continuous walking at a moderate pace five to seven times each week. Distance and regularity are the keys to burning calories effectively.

## THE WALKING SCHOOL BUS

A Walking School Bus is an active transportation system that involves volunteer parents and caregivers taking turns walking with children to and from school. Everybody wins with this arrangement. Adults and children enjoy a healthy, safe walk in their neighbourhood and there is less traffic congestion around the school. For more information contact Active & Safe Routes to School, Green Action Centre at 204.925.3773 or [www.greenactioncentre.ca](http://www.greenactioncentre.ca).



## SAMPLE WALKING PROGRAM

The following program can be used with or without a pedometer.

<b>LEVEL 1</b>										
<i>This program is for people who are currently inactive:</i>										
<b>Week</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Minutes walking</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Walks per week</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Km</b>	<b><i>Start at Week 1 with about 1 kilometre and work up to about 4 km by Week 10.</i></b>									
<b>Steps per day using a pedometer</b>	<b><i>Establish your baseline. Increase your number of steps by 500 each week until you reach your step goal (see Daily Step Goals chart)</i></b>									

<b>LEVEL 2</b>										
<i>This program is for people who are physically active on a regular basis:</i>										
<b>Week</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Minutes walking</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Walks per week</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6-7</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Km</b>	<b><i>Start at Week 1 with about 2 km and work up to about 8 km by Week 10.</i></b>									
<b>Steps per day using a pedometer</b>	<b><i>Establish your baseline. Increase your number of steps by 500 each week until you reach your step goal (see Daily Step Goals chart)</i></b>									

# WEEKLY WALKING LOG

<b>Week</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Daily Step/ Time Goal</b>										
<b>Sunday</b>										
<b>Monday</b>										
<b>Tuesday</b>										
<b>Wednesday</b>										
<b>Thursday</b>										
<b>Friday</b>										
<b>Saturday</b>										
<b>Daily Average (weekly total divided by seven)</b>										

Your Walking Workout - Join the **in motion** walking club for a personalized walking program and receive motivational tips and encouragement. Visit [www.manitobainmotion.ca](http://www.manitobainmotion.ca) for more information.

# INCREASING *the* Intensity OF YOUR WALK

Here are four ways to further increase the intensity of your walking program.

## 1 **SPEED WALKING:**

Breathe normally and pump your arms vigorously as you speed up your pace.

Practice over short distances until you can walk comfortably at a vigorous pace of seven to nine km per hour.



## 2 **CLIMB WALKING:**

Climbing hills or stairs is the most vigorous form of walking.

Climbing puts extra strain on the stomach, buttocks, lower back and leg muscles, so add some exercises for these muscles and additional stretches to your warm-up. Increase your climbing gradually.



## 3 **WATER WALKING:**

Walking in the water increases the difficulty because you move against the resistance of the water.

Water walking is easy on the joints and refreshingly cool in hot weather.



## 4 **HOLIDAY WALKING:**

Enjoy a walking holiday on the Trans-Canada Trail or explore a different country on a holiday walking tour.



### **THESE FEET WERE MADE FOR WALKING**

With its natural pleasures, its range of benefits and its variety of opportunities, walking occupies a special place in the world of active living. Some 69% of Canadians rank walking at the top of the list of most popular activities. Now it's your turn to put your best foot forward. Enjoy!



***In motion** is a provincial strategy to help all Manitobans make physical activity part of their daily lives for health and enjoyment.*



Call (204) 945-3648  
Toll free 1 866-788-3648  
[www.manitobainmotion.ca](http://www.manitobainmotion.ca)

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