



Start Your Own Walking Group

Walking with a group can be motivating and fun. You can get to know your coworkers better, it can make your routine more exciting, and it is safer than walking alone. Plus, it is free!

If you do not have a group, start one of your own. Use these tips to get started.

1. Define your goals. Do you want to:
 - Begin a physical activity routine or improve your current activity level?
 - Improve your health?
 - Lose weight?
2. Get your coworkers excited about it.
 - Talk to people who may be interested or who have similar health goals.
 - Have your friends invite others.
 - Post flyers around your worksite.
3. Invite people to an initial group meeting.
 - Decide:
 - How many times per week will you meet?
 - Which days and at what times will you walk?
 - Where will you meet and where will you walk?
 - How far or for how long will you walk?
 - Discuss:
 - Will you walk when it's raining or snowing?
 - Do walkers need to call one another if they cannot attend, or do they just show up?
 - Can walkers wear headphones and use cell phones during the walks?

A few tips:

- ✓ Try walking at a mall or in a covered parking lot when it is raining.
- ✓ Bring water to stay hydrated.
- ✓ Stay motivated by keeping your goals in mind, sharing your success, and recognizing group members who have improved their health through walking.



Remember, a short, moderate walk can still help you improve your health and maintain your weight. If you are new to physical activity, talk to your doctor first. Then as a group, start with 15 minute walks once or twice a week. Gradually increase the length of time and the number of times you walk during the week. Don't forget to include a few minutes of stretching before and after the walk!

continued on reverse



Walking Group Checklist

- ✓ Identify co-workers who are interested. Don't worry if there are only a few at first. Others will catch on.
- ✓ Hold meeting for interested walkers.
- ✓ Define your goals as a group.
- ✓ Identify several days/times that are convenient and the amount of time or distance the group would like to walk.
- ✓ Schedule and go on your first walk. If possible, try to create a schedule a few weeks in advance.
- ✓ Identify both indoor and outdoor routes so that the weather will not get in the way.
- ✓ Keep a pair of comfortable walking shoes at work.
- ✓ Send out a reminder note or email the day before your first walk that says the starting time and location.
- ✓ Monitor yourself with pedometers and/or tracking logs. Reward yourselves when you reach your goals, and continue to challenge yourselves by setting new goals.
- ✓ Be flexible. Once your group gets started, you may find that people have different preferences and needs. Try letting different people choose the routes or try breaking into smaller groups to allow everyone to get the most out of the walking group.