

WALKING TOWARDS WELLNESS



Participant Guidelines

Step 1—You made the decision to take the *first step* towards a healthier you by choosing to participate in the *Walking Towards Wellness* program!

Step 2—You are attending orientation! Way to go!

Step 3—Let's get started! This is the “how to” of the *Walking Towards Wellness* program.

- **With any exercise program, you should always consult your doctor if you have a sedentary lifestyle or have a health condition that requires special consideration.**
- As with any physical activity, it is best to begin exercise gradually, especially if you have a sedentary lifestyle. Start off slowly and for the first week or two, set modest goals. Slowly work up to a more vigorous program. It is better to progress slowly than to push yourself too hard and be forced to abandon your program because of pain, injury or just being discouraged.
- Walking can be divided into multiple sessions and added up at the end of the day—i.e. a 30-minute walk, two 15-minute walks or three 10-minute walks. However, to develop a baseline, each session should be scheduled for a minimum of 10 minutes.
- The *Walking Towards Wellness* program tracks how many minutes you have walked over a 12-week period. As the participant, you are responsible to record your minutes in your Tracking Log.
- Walking sessions are considered to be a scheduled time period that has been designated to perform the specific exercise. Normal daily activity is not eligible to be counted as a walking session—i.e. around the office, house or grocery shopping.
- For this program, a brisk walk should include walking at a constant pace, being able to talk while walking, but finishing slightly out of breath and have your heart rate increase during your walk.
- You don't have to limit yourself to just 30 minutes a day. If you are able to walk more than 30 minutes on any given day, go for it!
- Five minutes of warm-up and stretching before and after exercise is essential to help avoid muscle strain or injury. Please refer to Frequently Asked Questions for stretching exercises.

¹Center for Disease Control, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General