

# Get Active in Nature

## Start a Walking Club & Get Active!

### Getting prepared!

- Set up a contact list
- Name your club
- Promote your club with a flyer, facebook page, twitter, post on your local community website calendar
- Collect optional fees if required (for clothing, refreshments etc.)
- Plan the walks (make an activity calendar- choose a leader for each activity)
- Choose your route:
  - Is it a suitable terrain? distance?
  - Are there toilets, benches, parking available?
  - Know your route and have emergency numbers and phones available?



### Getting going!

- Welcome members when they arrive. Give them a warm greeting. This will make a friendly and relaxed atmosphere as well as will make new members feel welcome.
- Registration: Get contact info for any new members
- Make sure no one feels isolated during the walk, and that members are walking at their own comfortable pace. Know the abilities of each member to help you keep track of how everyone is doing. (see survey)

**Warm up** - walk slowly for the first 5 minutes

**Walk briskly** - use the Talk test to check your intensity

**Cool down** - walk slowly for the last 5 minutes

**Stretches** - do slow long stretches, hold them for 20 seconds each

INTENSITY	TALK TEST
Light	I can talk and sing
Moderate	I can't sing but I can talk
Vigorous	I can't talk

- Complete the walk with refreshments, socializing and/or special guests.
- Have a healthy snack available. Try rotating who will bring the healthy snack. Make it fun. Have them bring recipes and new ideas. Challenge them to include fruit or vegetables in all of your snacks.
- Have water available. Encourage everyone to bring along a water bottle.

### Take a step towards a safe walk!

- Wear reflective clothing
- Walk against traffic
- Use designated sidewalks and paths
- Dress appropriately for the weather
- Bring water and a snack
- Bring a cell phone

## *Dress for success!*

### **WINTER**

- Wear a hat and clothing made of tightly woven fibers. A few light layers protect better than one heavy garment.
- Protect vulnerable areas such as fingers toes, ears and nose.
- Wear comfortable winter boots, sunscreen and sunglasses with SPF UVA & UVB.

### **SUMMER**

- Wear loose fitting, light coloured tightly woven clothes (long sleeves & pants to protect from the sun, mosquitoes and ticks), choose breathable fabrics.
- Wear comfortable shoes.
- Sunscreen, SPF 15+, UVA & UVB sunglasses.
- Wear a hat, to protect face and neck.

## *Motivate to participate!*

- Invite guest speakers
- Offer refreshments
- Invite members to share stories and successes
- If walking indoors, play music
- Award door prizes, or prizes for bringing new members

## *The perfect fit for every fitness!*

- Start slowly! Begin at a slow and easy pace. As you progress, gradually increase your speed and pump your arms. Once you are comfortable with this, progress to more difficult terrain such as more hills. Make sure that the group has a plan of who is at what stage of walking so that they will all meet at the same final destination point. (e.g., some may go a shorter distance but will go for the same amount of time as others)

## *Monitor the changes in your “health”!*

- Increase in energy
- Decrease in stress
- Walking longer or faster
- Improved heart rate, blood pressure, cholesterol level

## *Set goals to work towards!*

- Increase your daily steps, use a pedometer
- Increase time, speed, distance or difficulty of the walk
- Plan to do a community 5k, 10k walk
- Increase your activity to reach the recommended 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week

### **Sources:**

How to start your own walking club, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Heart Health.

Walking the activity of a lifetime, Health Canada

August, 2005-Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit



For more information call  
the **Health ACTION Line** 1-800-660-5853  
or visit [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)



# Survey-Walking Group

Name:

Phone: (H)

(C)

Do you Text? Y/N

Are you on Facebook? Y/N

Do you use Twitter? Y/N

Do you have any health issues that may interfere with your physical activity?

(If yes check with your health care provider before beginning your program.)

What is your current physical activity routine?

(what, how often, for how long e.g., I do yoga for 30 minutes 2x a week and do sit ups for 10 minutes every morning)

How many times a week would you like to walk?

How long a duration would you like to walk for?

What distance would you like to walk for?

What type of surface are you comfortable walking on?

If you walk with a group when would you like to walk?



TIME OF THE DAY	DAY OF THE WEEK							I WOULD PREFER	I WOULD DO
Early Morning (6:30-8:30)	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
Late Morning (8:30-10:30)	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
Noon (10:30 - 1:30)	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
Early Afternoon (1:30-3:30)	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
Late Afternoon (3:30-6:30)	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
Evening (7:30 +)	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		

*Where are your favorite places to walk?*

*Would you be interested in choosing a location and leading one of the walks?*

YES

NO

*What is your objective?*

- To keep fit
- To socialize
- To enjoy nature
- Other

*Would you like to have guest speakers come after the occasional walk?*

YES

NO

*If YES, what topics would you like to hear about?*

*Would you be interested in getting a piece of clothing for your walking group?*

YES

NO

*If YES, What are you willing to spend?*

*What would you prefer?*

- T-shirt
- Jacket
- Hat
- Water bottle
- Reflective vest
- Scarf
- Pants
- Other



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