

Walking

Walking is one of the best natural ways to manage pain and promote healing. It's an excellent aerobic exercise. And, very importantly, walking is a great way to relieve pain.

PLAN AHEAD

If you are new to walking, start with a slow progressive walking program. Progressive here refers to slowly increasing your walk time.

Break up daily walks into shorter walks. Your goal is to walk 30 minutes a day. Increase your walking speed and time as you are able.

You may want to create a daily walking schedule. Below is an example of a physical activity calendar. Consider setting a reminder on your cell phone, tablet or computer. Or use an activity tracker, such as a FitBit™ or Apple Watch™.

The American Heart Association recommends 150 minutes of aerobic exercise per week. This can be accomplished over a series of days, example: walking 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week would equate to a total of 150 minutes of aerobic exercise over the course of a week. Visit heart.org for more information about the benefits of walking.



CAUTION

If you feel unsteady or you worry about falling, tell a member of your care team. And when you walk, consider one or both of these suggestions:

- Have someone walk with you.
- Ask your health care provider or physical therapist whether a gait device (cane or walker) would be indicated.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Remember that you will have good days and bad days, but overall your goal is a gradual increase in the distance you walk.

Walking can be done alone, but many people prefer to walk with someone. This might be a family member or a friend initially. However, as you increase your distances, you may find others who are also walking for exercise and would like to have a partner. Posting your name at the local YMCA or recreation center might result in you making new friends!

EXAMPLE OF A PROGRESSIVE WALKING SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Early Morning							
Mid-Morning	5 minutes	6 minutes	7 minutes	7 minutes	8 minutes	9 minutes	10 minutes
Noon				7 minutes	8 minutes	9 minutes	10 minutes
Early Afternoon	5 minutes	6 minutes	7 minutes				
Late Afternoon				6 minutes	6 minutes	6 minutes	
Evening	5 minutes	5 minutes	6 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	10 minutes
Total walk time	15 minutes	17 minutes	20 minutes	25 minutes	27 minutes	29 minutes	30 minutes

Based on recommendations from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

