

# LIVING WELL

## Healthy Living Tips

### General Walking Tips

If you have not walked distances for some time, you should start slowly. Increase the length and pace of your walk gradually. Here are some tips on how to get started and how to prepare for walking.

- **Warm-up activities** – start slowly, do a few warm-up exercises and stretches first. Don't walk immediately after a big meal.
- **Build activity slowly** – start with a 20 minute walk then increase gradually. Try to walk at least three times per week.
- **Use the correct technique** – walk at a steady pace, swing your arms freely and stand as straight as you can. Your feet should step in a rolling action from the heel to the toe.
- **Shoes and socks** – wear thick comfortable cotton socks. Sensible, comfortable and lightweight shoes with support are best.
- **Weather** – wear suitable warm, light clothing in the winter and cool, comfortable clothes in the summer. Don't forget your sunscreen and hat!
- **Water** – drink water before and after your walk. Take water with you on your walk, especially in warm weather.
- **Cool down** – make sure you cool down after a long fast walk. Do a few stretching exercises.

#### *Reaching your daily and weekly goals — a little at a time*

Here are four simple ways to help you to put in that distance — almost without feeling it — and also obtain the benefits of 10 minutes of consecutive walking:

1. Park in the space farthest from the door in every parking lot - Whether you're at the mall, the rec center, your workplace or the grocery store, always park as far away from your destination as possible.
2. Take the stairs instead of the elevator - Walking up the stairs will help toward your goal for cardiovascular exercise, too.
3. Use the bathroom farthest from your desk or station at work - If you work in a large building, this makes a big difference. You can even find bathrooms on other floors in a multi-floor office building — and don't forget to take the stairs there and back.
4. Walk during your lunch hour - Take 10 minutes from your allowed lunch time to go for a walk, if you are able.

By the end of the week, you want to achieve, at minimum, a total of 150 minutes of consecutive movement. But you don't have to follow a structured schedule each day.

One day, you may get a 10-minute walk in during lunch and the next day a 45-minute walk in the morning before work. That's 55 minutes toward your goal of 150 minutes. Some days, you may not get in those consecutive steps.

