

# Walk for Life

**It's almost  
too good  
to be true.**

**Walking  
can help you  
lose weight,**

**improve  
your mood,**

**lower your  
blood pressure,**

**and manage  
diabetes.**

**And it's**

**FREE!**



THIS HEALTHY WEIGHT AWARENESS MESSAGE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY



**Healthy Maine Partnerships**

Bureau of Health, Maine Department of Health and Human Services





# These easy steps can lead your family to better health.

“ If you’re like me, you know being active is good for you and your family. Sometimes it seems hard to find the time. The fact is, many families are already walking. Here are some ideas and tips to help you get started. ”

## Walking is time well-spent, and it’s free.

Walking is a great way to spend “quality” time with your kids or more time with a neighbor or a friend. It is one of the easiest things you can do to become more active and it doesn’t cost a penny.

## Walking improves your health and your mood.

Try walking just ten minutes. The moment you begin walking on a regular basis, you begin to improve your health.

- Walking helps you lose weight.
- Walking helps lower your blood pressure.
- Walking gives you more energy.
- Walking helps you sleep better.
- Walking helps relieve stress.

When you walk, your body thanks you with a feeling of well-being.



## Walking is good for your heart.

Studies show that being a “couch potato” is bad for your heart. Walking two miles a day can reduce your risk of getting heart disease by more than one-third. So start walking, even if you begin by walking only ten minutes a day!

## Walking helps manage diabetes and your weight.

Type 2 diabetes is a disease often associated with being overweight. Getting off the couch and becoming active can help control and perhaps even prevent the disease. Regular daily walking helps with weight loss and improved blood sugar. An important way to prevent or live well with diabetes is to **keep moving**.

# TIPS

## Getting Started

- Commit to taking time for a walk. Start with just ten minutes each day.
- Decide ahead of time which activity or event you and your family are willing to replace with walking, such as watching TV or just sitting around.
- Let the family know ahead of time when you are planning to walk. Kids respond better to change when they know what to expect. Write it on your family calendar, just like other important appointments or activities.
- Start with short, manageable walks. Work your way up to faster or longer walks over time.



## Keep It Fun

- Walk to places that will be interesting to the family such as the playground, a nearby brook, a favorite scenic spot, or to a friend's house.
- Try to walk several days each week. The more days you walk, the better you will feel. On days when you can't walk, try some simple stretching activities for five or six minutes.
- Replace some short driving trips with walking.



## Stay Comfortable and Safe

- Wear a hat for protection from the sun in the summer and the cold in the winter.
- Wear socks with a thicker padded heel, if you have them. Socks made from synthetic materials are better than cotton socks because they won't ball up when damp and cause blisters.
- When walking with kids, wear LOTS of reflective material and bright colors.



- If you're carrying a young child, do not try to walk a dog on a leash at the same time. Dogs can get frisky and trip you or pull you over. Older kids can ride their bikes alongside parents or younger kids can ride in strollers.
- It is safest to walk with a buddy on well-lit roads that have sidewalks or wide shoulders. Choose walking routes that don't have a lot of traffic.

**Walking at a brisk pace more often can help you become more fit. The faster you walk, the more calories you will burn.**

## TEST YOUR WALKING WISDOM

### TRUE OR FALSE

1. Being a “couch potato” is bad for your heart.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

2. To receive the health benefits of walking, you must walk a mile a day.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

3. Even walking ten minutes a day is a good way to start.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

4. Walking lowers your blood pressure.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

5. You should wear a hat for protection from the sun and cold.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

6. You burn more calories by walking slow.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

7. Walking helps you sleep better.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

8. Walking can help control diabetes.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

9. Walking improves your mood.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

10. Walking can help you lose weight.

TRUE (   )      FALSE (   )

ANSWERS: 1. TRUE 2. FALSE 3. TRUE 4. TRUE  
5. TRUE 6. FALSE 7. TRUE 8. TRUE  
9. TRUE 10. TRUE

## Remember, any activity is better than no activity at all.

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To find a walking route near you, click onto

**[www.healthymainewalks.org](http://www.healthymainewalks.org)**

**207-287-5388**

**[www.healthymainepartnerships.org/mcvhp2.html](http://www.healthymainepartnerships.org/mcvhp2.html)**



John Elias Baldacci, Governor  
John R. Nicholas, Commissioner  
Appropriation #013-10A-2627-032-4199

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