

# Walk Your Way to Health

By PacMed Medical Staff

Walking is something most of us do every day without thinking about it. But regular walking exercise can have huge health benefits. Walking 30 to 60 minutes every day at a moderate pace burns fat, lowers blood pressure and strengthens bones, muscles and joints. It may help reduce the risk for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers, and osteoporosis.

If motivation is a problem, consider finding a walking buddy. Many people will walk longer when it is combined with an interesting chat or some friendly competition with a friend. Dog owners have a live-in walking partner.

## Here are some tips to get started on a walking program:

- Contact your doctor for a consultation or a checkup if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, don't currently exercise or are over 65.
- Get fitted for a good pair of shoes. Many walkers find running shoes work well for them.
- Dress in layers so you can remove a layer if you become warm and put it back on if you cool off.
- Carry water if you plan to walk in warm weather or walk for more than an hour. Don't forget water for the dog!
- Start with reasonable goals. Slowly build up to a longer distance.

If you do experience pain in your feet, ankles, knees or back, ease up for a day to see if that helps. If you see swelling or bruising, you can treat it yourself with rest, ice, compression and elevation (RICE), but if the condition persists after 48 hours, make an appointment with a specialist. PacMed podiatrists can treat your foot and ankle issues, and our sports medicine and orthopedic providers can provide expert opinions about leg, knee and hip pain.

## Avoid these walking mistakes:

- Looking down at your feet while walking. This can lead to back, neck and shoulder problems. Instead, keep your chin up and your eyes focused 10-20 feet ahead.
- Leaning forward or backward. Stand up straight and tall with relaxed shoulders, pull in your abdominal muscles and tilt your pelvis slightly forward.
- Taking extra-long steps (overstriding). Take shorter, quicker steps and push off with your back foot to help prevent shin splints.
- Not moving your arms. Swing your arms to add power and speed to your walk. Bend the arms at 90 degree angles.

Congratulations on taking steps to a healthier you!

## PacMed™ Clinic Locations

### Beacon Hill

1200 12th Ave S  
Seattle, WA 98144

### Canyon Park

1909 214th St SE, #300  
Bothell, WA 98021

### Diagnostic Center for Sleep Health

10416 5th Ave NE  
Seattle, WA 98125

### Diagnostic & Wellness Center for Women

1200 12th Ave S  
Seattle, WA 98144

### Federal Way

33501 First Way S, #200  
Federal Way, WA 98003

### First Hill

1101 Madison St, #301  
Seattle, WA 98104

### Lynnwood

19401 40th Ave W, #230  
Lynnwood, WA 98036

### Northgate

10416 5th Ave NE  
Seattle, WA 98125

### Puyallup

220 15th Ave SE, Suite C  
Puyallup, WA 98372

### Renton

601 S Carr Rd, #100  
Renton, WA 98055

### Totem Lake

12910 Totem Lake Blvd NE, #101  
Kirkland, WA 98034



FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

PacMed is a trademark of Pacific Medical Centers.

[www.LivingWellAlliance.org](http://www.LivingWellAlliance.org) | 855.550.8799