

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Walking**

### **Why is *walking* as a form of fitness important?**

Walking is one of the easiest and most life enhancing forms of fitness. Walking one mile burns approximately 100 calories. Studies have shown that walking up to 30 minutes a day can add 2.2 years to your life. Taking 10,000 steps over the course of a day is roughly equivalent to 30 minutes of moderately vigorous exercise.

### **What should I look for in a walking shoe?**

GREAT fiit • Low heel • Flexible sole • Lightweight and breathable fabric

### **Why do my legs itch when I walk?**

There are several possible causes of itchy legs while walking. One suggested cause may be due to poor circulation, which normally subsides as your body gets more activity.

### **How many calories do I need to burn to lose one pound?**

One pound of body fat is equal to 3500 calories. A healthy rate of weight loss is approximately one to two pounds per week. If you are losing faster than that, you are losing bone and muscle mass (in addition to fat). In order to average one pound per week it would be necessary to burn an additional 500 calories per day. (7 days a week X 500 calories per day = 3500 calories). If you do not have the time or energy to burn the additional 500 calories per day, you can use a combination of calorie reduction and exercise. One example would be to burn 300 calories a day through exercise and reduce calorie intake by 200 calories.

### **How many steps in a mile?**

One mile is equal to 5280 feet. Most people say it takes about 2000 steps for every mile. Of course everyone's stride is different. An average stride is usually somewhere between 2 and 3 feet in length. So, on average, it takes between 1760 and 2640 steps to complete one mile.

### **How often should I replace my walking shoes?**

Usually, they should be replaced every 300 to 500 miles (every 3 to 6 months). Do not go by appearance of your shoe. Inner support may be worn out, while the outside still looks good. It is suggested that you rotate between 2 pairs of shoes, if walking daily, allowing time for your shoes to refresh between walks.

### **Should I walk when I have a head cold?**

There is not a definite yes or no answer to this question. If all of your symptoms are above the neck (runny nose, sore throat, sneezing, etc), and you are feeling up to it, moderate exercise is generally safe.

**Developing a habit is the toughest part about starting a fitness program. Walking daily, a minimum of 5 days a week will help. Walk fast enough to reach your target heart rate, but not so fast that you are gasping for air.**

- If you are walking for the general health benefits, try to walk 30 minutes a day, most days of the week at a "talking" pace.
- To improve cardiovascular fitness walk 3 to 4 days a week, 20 to 30 minutes at a very fast pace breathing hard, but you should be not gasping for air.
- If you are walking for weight loss you should walk a minimum of 5 days a week, 45 to 60 minutes at a talking" pace.
- If you are new to walking for fitness, start off slow, short sessions and build your way up gradually. If you have any health concerns or medical conditions, be sure to check with your doctor for advice before you begin a routine.