

## **StepWell Walking Program Guidelines**

### **NMCP Wellness Dept**

**(Updated Feb 2011)**

**Walking is one of the body's most natural forms of exercise. It is simple and provides many health benefits.**

#### **Program Description**

The StepWell Walking Program is a self-paced walking program that offers professional guidance from Health Promotion and Wellness Dept, NMCP. Health Promotion works collaboratively with MWR, Command Fitness and Clinical Nutrition to enhance the health of NMCP beneficiaries by improving fitness education and awareness.

#### **Program Mission**

The mission is to disseminate health information that may motivate employees and family members to begin and/or maintain an active lifestyle. According to CDC and Cooper Institute, we have become a sedentary nation with many cardiovascular deaths being associated with inactivity. There is clear evidence that exercise reduces health risks associated with high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and many more.

#### **Join NMCP StepWell Walking Program**

Walking has the lowest dropout rate of all aerobic exercise programs according to Cooper Institute. Walking can be done almost anywhere and time and is probably the best exercise for most people.

Member will have access to the following:

- Walking maps
- Prizes for 100 miles of walking
- StepWell Newsletter via email
- Fitness Education through Right Weigh classes, email group, health fairs
- Periodic Monitoring:
  - Blood pressure check
  - Weight
  - Body Fat Analysis
  - Food log analysis

To Register and get on email group, email [alice.fitzpatrick@med.navy.mil](mailto:alice.fitzpatrick@med.navy.mil).

#### **Benefits of Walking:**

- Reduce risk of heart attack
- Manage high blood pressure
- Reduce risk of developing type 2 diabetes
- Manage diabetes
- Manage weight
- Manage stress and improve your mood
- Stay strong and active as you get older

#### **Getting Started:**

- Make sure you are safe to start a walking program
- Check with your physician before starting a walking program, especially if you have chronic condition, injuries, recent surgeries, or over age 40. If in doubt,

check with your doctor. (Reference ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription)

### Setting Goals:

- Set initial goals and adjust as your fitness improves. If you are not regularly active, just walk as far as you can and progress from there. Try to work towards a goal of a minimum of 30 min on 5 days per week.

### Exercise Safety:

- Comfortable walking shoes and clothing: Wear loose fitting clothes and wear layers appropriate for your environment. If outside, dress appropriately for weather and wear reflective clothing.
- Water bottle
- Walk in a safe environment
- Get a walking buddy

### Warm up:

- Spend at least 5 minutes warming up muscles by walking in place or gradually increasing pace to avoid injury. When muscles are warm, mild stretching can be done.



- **Walking:** © Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. All rights reserved.

- Relax and make your walk enjoyable.
- Monitor your intensity. You should be able to talk in short sentences. If not, your pace needs to come down a notch.
- Keep your posture natural and relaxed.
- Walk with a buddy or two.
- Vary your routine to keep your motivation up

### **Cooling Down:**

- Cooling down is just as important as warming up. Gradually slow your pace so your heart rate will come down slowly. Keep walking until your heart rate comes down below 110.
- Pat yourself on the back. Praise yourself for your accomplishment.

### **Walking E-Resources:**

- America on The Move, <http://aom.americaonthemove.org>
- American Heart Association Walking Program, <http://www.startwalkingnow.org/home.jsp>
- Discover Walking site, <http://www.discoverwalking.com/blog/shake-up-your-walk.php>
- American Council on Exercise (ACE) Exercise Library, <http://www.acefitness.org/getfit/default.aspx>
- Mayo Clinic Fitness site, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/MY00396>

### **Nutrition E-resources:**

- National Institutes of Health (NIH), [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose\\_wt/index.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/index.htm)
- My Pyramid, [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)
- Cooking Light site, [www.cookinglight.com](http://www.cookinglight.com)