



Step Out Safely

Whether you walk alone or with a group, make safety a priority. To stay safe follow these tips:

- **Identify yourself.** In case of an emergency, carry your name, address, and a friend's or relative's phone number on the inside sole of your shoe or tied to a lace.
- **Alert others to health conditions.** Wear a medical alert bracelet or necklace if you have diabetes, an allergy to bee stings or other conditions that could result in an emergency.
- **Buddy up.** When possible, walk with a companion.
- **Stay steady on your feet.** Use proper footwear to help avoid slipping if it's icy or rainy. Examples include shoes with small rubber cleats to increase traction.
- **Stay in touch.** Carry a cell phone or enough change to make an emergency phone call.
- **Protect valuable possessions.** Leave expensive watches and jewelry at home to avoid theft or loss.
- **Tell someone where you're walking.** Make sure your friends or relatives know your favorite walking routes. Consider making a list of them and let your family or friends know where to find this list.
- **Know your route.** Walk in familiar areas and alter your route pattern from time to time. Know the location of telephones, businesses and stores.
- **Avoid unpopulated areas.** Examples include deserted streets and overgrown trails. Especially avoid unlit areas at night. Walk clear of parked cars and bushes, where people may hide. Headphones also might keep you from hearing traffic or someone approaching.
- **Be defensive about traffic.** Walk against oncoming traffic so that you can see approaching vehicles. Don't assume a car will automatically stop for you, even if you have the right of way. Use sidewalks when available.
- **Ignore verbal harassment.** Use discretion in acknowledging strangers. Walk confidently and be observant. Keep your distance and keep moving.

- **Be visible.** Wear reflective materials. If you must walk after dark, consider wearing sportswear made of reflective fabric or with reflective stripes that glow in the dark. You can also purchase reflective tape to attach to your clothing or shoes.
- **Carry a whistle or noisemaker.** These devices may help ward off potential attackers. You might also consider carrying pepper spray or electronic devices that emit high-frequency sound to ward off malicious dogs. These may be available at large retail or sporting goods stores that carry self-defense items.

Protecting Yourself: A step in the right direction

Walking is a great form of exercise. Help reap the rewards of walking for fitness by taking steps to protect yourself. Stay on the path to good health by staying safe.