



Safely Navigating an Outdoor Walking Program

A regular walking program has been shown to improve or maintain your overall health. A few benefits of walking just 30 minutes per day are increasing cardiovascular fitness, strengthening bones, helping maintain a healthy weight, improving muscular power and endurance, boosting immune function, improving mood, reducing stress, and easing joint aches and pains. As the seasons change, Spring or Autumn are a great time to start a regular walking program. We can all walk around the house, but comfortable, outdoor temperatures sure make for an easier and more enjoyable walking experience.

Though an outside walking program comes with many benefits, there are certainly some things to be aware of when considering your safety.

Footwear: Ensure you are wearing shoes with non-slip soles to prevent any unfortunate slips or trips on wet surfaces or leaves that you may encounter.

Clothing: In Spring or Autumn, weather can change rapidly. Dress in layers so you can adjust to the temperatures accordingly.

Visibility: In the morning or evening hours with little daylight, make sure to wear reflective or bright colored clothing.

Choose a Route: Sticking to a known route can minimize risks. At the very least make sure to tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.

Walking Buddies: Consider finding a friend or two to walk with you. Not only is it safer, but this also provides a great opportunity to socialize and help you stay committed.

Be Alert: Minimize distractions and make sure you can see and hear other traffic around you such as warnings from other hikers, cars, or bikes nearby.

Stay Hydrated: Even in cooler weather, take a water bottle with you to ensure you are keeping your body well hydrated and healthy, able to enjoy your walk safely!

What if you do not feel safe walking outdoors? There are still a lot of options for walking indoors as well. Find local stores or malls that are large enough for you to walk around. Do you have other concerns or barriers to a regular exercise program that you would like to address with a healthcare professional? Our team of qualified therapists would love to help assist you in your healthcare journey and help you enjoy the great outdoors this season, pain free, comfortable, and safe.

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