



Stepping Out With My Pedometer

Session plan for group leader

About this session:

This session is designed to promote an exchange of ideas about the benefits of walking or rolling and using a pedometer/odometer. It demonstrates a variety of stretches for the prevention of muscle soreness and injury. By the end of this session participants will have had the opportunity to:

- Discuss walking or wheeling as a physical activity
- Learn how to use a pedometer/odometer
- Develop a walking/wheeling plan
- Practice appropriate stretches for warm-up and cool-down
- Review Food and Activity Diaries
- Set goals for the week

You will need to modify the content of this session to meet the needs of wheelchair bound participants.

To do before this session:

- Review the [Introduction to Group Sessions](#). This provides an overview of facilitating groups and offers guidance on group size, format etc.
- **Clarify your facility's process for ordering pedometers for MOVE! patients. This is normally done through the Prosthetics Service.**
- Organize materials for the session:
 - Order a pedometer for each participant
 - Paper, pens, flip chart/white board
- Review the following website from the American Heart Association for information on the benefits of walking:
 - <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3041198>
- MOVE! handouts:
 - [\(P15\) Walk](#)
 - [\(S03\) A Guide to Using Your Pedometer](#)
 - [\(P28\) Wheelchair Odometers](#)
 - [\(P30\) Sample Stretches](#)
 - [\(P04\) Why Warm-Up, Cool-Down and Stretch?](#)

Introduction (may take 15-20 minutes):

- Conduct individual weigh-in in private (can also be done at the end of the session). Enter weight into the CPRS Vitals Signs package.
- Welcome everyone to the class.
- Revisit ground rules for the session.
- Review food and activity diaries, discuss progress/goals, and facilitate problem-solving for barriers.

- Discuss any homework from the last class.
- Discuss the purpose of today's session.
- Encourage questions and comments.

Exercise 1: Walking (modify as necessary for wheelchair users):

- Ask participants to look at their Food and Activity Diary paying particular attention to the type and amount of physical activity they did over the last week.
- To facilitate a discussion about walking, write "Is walking a good physical activity?" on the board. Ask participants to comment. Provide participants with *MOVE!* handout ([P15](#)) [Walk](#).
- Remind participants of the following:
 - Experts estimate that for every one hour of physical activity you may gain two hours of life expectancy.
 - The Benefits of Walking for as little as 30 minutes a day include the following:
 - Reduces risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation throughout the body
 - Keeps weight under control
 - Improves blood cholesterol levels
 - Prevents and manages high blood pressure
 - Prevents bone loss
 - Boosts energy levels
 - Increases muscle strength, increasing the ability to do other physical activities
 - Manages stress
 - Releases tension
 - Improves the ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well
 - Improves self-image
 - Counters anxiety and depression and increases enthusiasm and optimism
- Using their Food and Activity Diary, ask participants to consider and write a walking goal for each day of the coming week. Suggest that at the end of each day, participants note on the diary whether or not they met their goal.

Exercise 2: Using a Pedometer (modify as necessary for wheelchair users):

- Distribute pedometers to those participants who have not already been provided with one. Use *MOVE!* handout ([S03](#)) [A Guide to Using Your Pedometer](#) to demonstrate correct use of the pedometer. Allow participants to get up and move around). Answer any questions.
- Based on exercise 5 of the orientation session, ask participants if they have established their baseline number of steps for each day.
- Once a baseline has been set, suggest to participants that their pedometer can be used to help set walking goals. Remember the following:
 - A pedometer is a great motivator to help you meet your physical activity goal.
 - For health benefits aim to eventually walk at least 30 minutes per day.

- Walking is an easy, inexpensive physical activity that you can do almost anywhere.
- Ask participants to start logging steps in their Food and Activity Diary.
- Walking as many steps a day as possible is a healthy thing to do.
 - Although the goal of 10,000 steps per day has been widely promoted, there is little scientific basis for this specific goal, especially in patients that have health problems.
 - Also, setting too high a goal can frustrate patients.
 - A good approach is to assist the patient in establishing their normal baseline and then set a goal to increase physical activity. They should periodically (for example, monthly) think about increasing their goal.
 - Consider pooling the number of steps completed by a group of patients and mapping how far the group has walked. For many patients, this will be a very rewarding, and everyone's steps will contribute.

Exercise 3: Warm-up and cool-down (modify as necessary for wheelchair users):

- Use *MOVE!* handout ([P04\) Why Warm-Up, Cool-Down and Stretch?](#)) to explain the importance of warming-up before and cooling-down after physical activity.
- Explain the benefits of stretching and demonstrate some simple stretches using *MOVE!* handout ([P30\) Sample Stretches](#))
- Ask participants to stand and try the stretches. Remind participants to:
 - Stretch only as far as is comfortable.
 - Hold onto a chair or wall for balance.
 - Hold stretches for at least a count of 10.
 - Practice these stretches at home.
- Remember that:
 - Warming-up and cooling-down help prevent muscle soreness and injury.
 - Stretching is a good way to warm-up and cool-down.
 - Warm-up and cool-down could also include simply walking at a low intensity level for 5-10 minutes before increasing the pace to moderate intensity.

Close the session:

- Remind participants to:
 - Maintain their food and activity diaries,
 - Wear their pedometers, and
 - Bring both the diaries and the pedometers to all of the sessions.