A Guide to Using Your Pedometer

Walking is a great way to help you lose weight, keep the weight off, and improve your health.

Use a Pedometer to:

• Measure how many steps you take.
• Get feedback about your activity.
• Plan, track, and reach your physical activity goals.

How to wear your Pedometer:

• Clip it to your clothing, or place it in a pocket or a bag that you carry or wear.
• Use the leash and clip to keep from dropping or losing your pedometer.
• Do not get the pedometer wet.

Pedometers do not measure:

• Walking for less than 10 steps or 10 seconds at a time.
• Cycling, swimming, some dancing, basketball, and tennis.
• Distances covered while using a manual wheelchair—this requires an odometer/cyclometer.

Getting started:

• Wear your pedometer every day for 1 week.
• The pedometer will count your steps in a 24-hour period beginning and ending at midnight.
• Record your steps on your Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary.
• At the end of 1 week, add up your daily steps.
• Determine your daily average by dividing total steps by the number of days.

Increasing your steps:

• Starting with the second week, set a goal to increase your steps. (Example: If you average 3,000 steps per day in first week, then set a goal to increase to 3,500 steps per day.)
• Start at a comfortable level and gradually increase steps.
• Create a weekly walking plan/schedule.

Walking is a great way to help you lose weight, keep the weight off, and improve your health.
• Record your steps every day.
• Set goals that you can reach.
• Update your goals every week.
• Start where you are and build up.
• Choose an activity and a setting that you enjoy: outside, at a mall, at a gym, etc.

Ways to add walking to your lifestyle:
• Take a 10-minute walk whenever you can.
• Take the stairs (up or down) instead of the elevator.
• Take 10-minute walks during lunch and breaks at work.
• Park farther away and walk.
• Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
• Step in place while watching television.
• Walk your dog (or borrow a friend’s dog).
• Mow your lawn with a push mower or do other yard work.
• For short distances, walk instead of driving your car.

• Take the long way when walking to meetings.
• Find a regular walking partner.

Other important facts:
• For health benefits and weight maintenance, aim for walking or other physical activity for 150 minutes (2½ hours) per week, in periods of at least 10 minutes.
• To help you lose weight, walk or be physically active more than 2½ hours per week. Weight loss may be achieved with 300 minutes (5 hours) per week of physical activity.
• Walking and wheeling are easy, inexpensive, and you can do them almost anywhere.

10,000 steps per day (about 5 miles) meets the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.