

# Steps for **STARTING** your **FIRST** walk

HOW-TO GUIDE:



**justwalk**  
a WALK with a  
DOC program

## To all new Walk with a Doc **ENLISTEES**

Welcome! I want to thank you for your enthusiasm and willingness to take on an additional commitment. You will see your patients reap the benefits of your time and encouragement.

We have provided some tips, tools and information to get you started. Your toolkit includes a "How-To Guide;" digital files including logos, forms, signs and templates; directions on how to access printing discounts; promotional materials for your office; as well as a pedometer and t-shirt for you – our thank you gift for your willingness to give up your Saturday mornings for the cause of improved public health.

## Build your **TEAM**

- ✓ Reach out to a group of medical leaders (docs, nurses, exercise physiologists, etc.), requesting a commitment of one day, or multiple days. Ideally, there is one coordinator with access to a large group of physicians such as a family practice residency program.
- ✓ Schedule a presentation to the group, demonstrating the success of the program and the benefits of exercise, then pass around a sign-up sheet.
- ✓ In addition to medical leaders willing to attend the walks, gather contact information from subspecialists and subspecialty groups that have volunteered their time to answer questions that come up at the walks and get the responses to you during the week.
- ✓ Approach the Health Supervisor/School Superintendent of the local school system. Share your goals, and enlist their help in getting kids and their parents out to the walks.



## Choose a **LOCATION**

- ✓ Meet with a representative of the park system. They are typically eager to help, as the weekly walks will increase awareness of and traffic through the local parks.
- ✓ Select a safe, centralized location with . . .
  - paved, handicap-accessible paths. There will be participants using wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers.
  - accessible bathrooms
  - a meeting place, such as a park pavilion with picnic tables. It gives the group a place to congregate, and provides seating during the presentation. Also, picnic tables provide a place for exercise participants to rest their arms during blood pressure screenings. Ideally the park can reserve this location, so it is ready at the time of the walk.
  - ample parking. The availability of parking is a consideration when people are deciding whether to come out the morning of a walk.
- ✓ We've found that it is beneficial to have a "home base" for three walks a month, then branch out to a new location the fourth week. This adds interest for your regular participants, and allows people who live further from the home base location to get involved. Discuss potential locations with the park system staff.



## Don't forget to **DELEGATE**

In order for your walks to go smoothly, you will need volunteers to coordinate . . .

- ✓ Blood pressure checks. Use qualified personnel -- nurses, medical students, physicians, EMTs, etc. -- to check blood pressures. An automated cuff would work in addition to the staff, but the personal interaction between exercise participants and the medical staff adds a nice touch.
- ✓ Drinks and snacks. Bring water, coffee, fruit, granola, or other creative healthy foods.
- ✓ Questions that require follow-up from your team of subspecialists.
- ✓ Collecting information from participants – waivers, email info if they'd like to receive the newsletter, etc.
- ✓ Nametags/t-shirts/hats. All volunteering medical experts should wear them, and walk participants should have them as well. Hats or shirts are helpful so walk personnel can be easily identified.
- ✓ Photographs. We encourage multiple photographers that are willing to submit their photos to a site such as Flickr. The participants enjoy this aspect.
- ✓ Waivers. Our legal department has developed a waiver that entrants should sign. Keep these on record somewhere.



## A little **TIP**

- ✓ Be prompt and stick to your starting time. It is a sign of respect to our walkers, who have come to collect information and exercise.



## For **COMMUNICATION**

- ✓ Our email newsletter, Constant Contact, is our primary means of communication with walk participants. They can opt-in online or via a sign-up sheet at a walk, and the newsletter provides encouragement, health tips, and a way to keep people involved between walks.
- ✓ Social media such as Facebook and Twitter offer a quick and easy way to update people about weather cancellations or other interim updates.
- ✓ Our website is our backbone. It is a repository for pictures, blogs, directions, and archived newsletters.
- ✓ Fact sheets that can be displayed at locations around the city are helpful for explaining the program and building interest.



For questions please go to [www.walkwithadoc.org](http://www.walkwithadoc.org)

Sponsored by: **Anthem**    
Health. Join In.