



Life Saving Tips About... Walking for People with P.A.D.

Why walk?

Walking can make a real difference for people with peripheral arterial disease (P.A.D.). Recent studies show that for many people with P.A.D., a structured walking program is one of the best treatments for reducing leg pain or cramps (claudication) when walking. In fact, studies show that over time **a structured walking program is often more effective and can work better than medicine or surgery** in helping people with P.A.D. walk longer and further without having to stop due to pain.

A regular walking program will:

- Let you do more and stay active.
- Reduce stress and help you relax.
- Help you control your blood glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol, and body weight.
- Improve muscle tone.
- Lower your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.
- Give you peace of mind that you are taking care of your health.

How do I start a walking program?

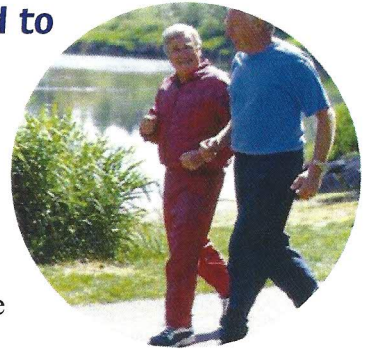
The best way to start is with a special supervised walking program designed for people with P.A.D. In this type of program, you will work closely with health professionals who know about P.A.D. and who will design a treadmill or track walking program for you. Your health care provider can help you find a structured P.A.D. walking program at a local hospital or a cardiac rehabilitation or clinical exercise center.

If you cannot go to a supervised P.A.D. walking program, **you can start walking on your own using the program guidelines below.** You can walk on a treadmill at home or at a gym. You can also walk in a mall or a safe

place outdoors. **Before you start, talk with your health care provider to set up a program that is right for you.**

What do I need to know before I get started?

Whether you go to a special supervised P.A.D. walking program or do it on your own, keep these points in mind.



- **Make time in your schedule to walk at least 3 to 5 times per week.**
- **Set your first goal to build up to 35 minutes of total walking time, not counting the time you take to rest when you start feeling pain in your legs.**
- **Build up slowly to the final goal of 50 minutes of total walking time.** This can take a few months.
- **As you improve and feel less pain, try to add 5 minutes of walking each week.** Most people start to see real changes in two to three months, but it could take longer.
- **Stick with your program** to maintain the improvements you make in walking longer and farther with less pain.
- **Try not to take off more than two days** between sessions so that you keep your muscles working.
- **Take your time.** Although it may hurt at first, over time you will be able to walk longer with less pain.



P.A.D.
Peripheral Arterial Disease
COALITION

**Saving Limbs
and Lives**

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