

# WELLNESS WALKING

## GETTING INTO THE STRIDE THAT PROMOTES FITNESS

What's the simplest, safest, and least expensive exercise? Of course, it's walking, also called striding, is not just a slower version of running. It calls for a unique set of easy-to-learn movements that turn walking into a rigorous exercise, which can give most people as good an aerobic workout as running, cycling, or swimming.

Walking has the lowest drop-out rate of all forms of exercise—and for good reason. It can be easily integrated into any life-style, requires no previous training or special equipment (except a comfortable pair of shoes), and can be done with family and friends of all ages.

When done regularly and briskly, Walking can strengthen the cardiovascular system. It helps improve circulation and lung capacity, and can lower elevated blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Here are some other health benefits:

- 8 Walking strengthen bone composition, thus slowing down osteoporosis (bone thinning).
- Walking help relieve psychological stress.
- Walking is a safe, low-impact activity. Unlike running, It puts little stain on knees and legs.
- A long-term program of walking may help you live longer. According to a recent study that followed the exercise habits and morality rates of 17,000 hundred alumni for over 12 years, men who walked a lot and were otherwise physically active lived longer.

Besides strengthening your heart muscle, brisk walking increases your overall muscle mass and muscle endurance. In particular, It shapes and tones muscles in the legs, hips, buttocks, and abdomen. Your posture can also benefit, since walking, alone properly, helps balance anti coordinate major muscle groups, thus bringing your body into proper alignment.



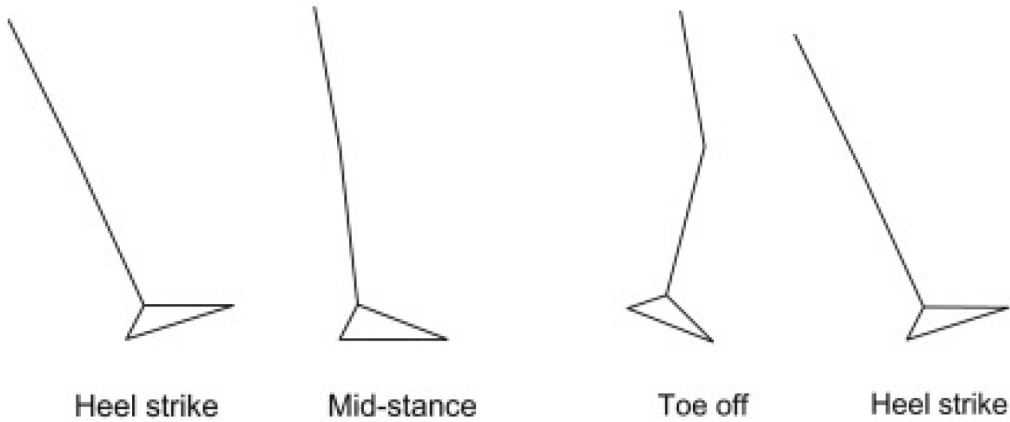
Your arms should just brush your sides and then swing slightly inward in front of your chest

If you are concerned about losing weight or merely maintaining your weight, walking may be your answer. Walk just one extra mile at a brisk pace each day and you'll lose about a pound a month, provided you don't increase your calorie intake. That adds up to 10 to 12 pounds a year.

### Getting It Right:

Striding (wellness Walking) calls for coordinated movements of feet, legs, hips, and arms. Poor walking posture can shorten your stride, tire you out, and cause back pain. Keep your shoulders back but not stiff; don't lean over. Keep your head up and breathe deeply. Think tall and stand tall: Imagine a string tied to your head pulling you upward and straighten your spine. —Planting your foot. Swing your leg forward and plant the heel so that it is at a 90-degree angle to your leg and a 45-degree angle to the ground. With each step, the planted-heel position of the lead will pull you forward as your trailing foot pushes you ahead. As you push off with the toes of your trailing foot, make sure you push straight off the ground, since crooked push-off wastes energy and slows you down.

—Arm swings. By swinging your arms, you'll burn 5% to 10%, more calories and get an upper-body workout as well. Move your arms in opposition to your legs: When your left foot-moves forward, your right arm swings with it. Your arms should just brush your sides and then swing inward in front of your chest.



Stretching before and after walking serves many purposes. By promoting flexibility, it decreases the risk of injury and soreness. It also enhances physical performance. In other words, if you don't stretch before you walk, you're unlikely to hit your stride. While stretching itself should always be preceded by a brief warm-up, such as jogging, in place, to get your blood flowing and to raise muscle temperature. For total fitness you want to condition your musculoskeletal and cardiovascular systems. And you want to develop strength, endurance, flexibility, and peripheral circulation.

If you have any further questions concerning the above article please call or write to either my office or to The Winged Foot magazine. All questions will be answered.

### Note About the Author:

Dr. Joseph Kansao has practiced for over 30 years as a chiropractic physician and has offices at 1120 Park Avenue in New York and in Greenwich, CT. Dr. Kansao specializes in Sports Medicine, athletic injuries and Pain Management and has served as Team Chiropractor at the Olympic and for numerous athletic teams and International/Professional events. Dr. Kansao is one of the nation's first chiropractors to be awarded the distinguished Diplomate of the American Board of Chiropractic Practitioners as well as Diplomate of the American Academy of Pain Management.