

# Argus Orthopaedic Zone

## Walking and Arthritis

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.  
Orthopaedic Surgeon

### ***Transforming patient information into patient understanding.***

This article is a good sequel to last week's "Exercise and Arthritis: Are They Compatible?" I hope all of you were able to read last week's information.

This week we focus specifically on walking. It is something healthy people take for granted. Anyone who has arthritis from the spine to the feet does not take it that way.

### **Walking Benefits**

- Walking is a great way to exercise for persons with arthritis. All kinds of benefits come to you from walking because it is an endurance exercise.
- You gain stamina so you don't tire as easily. It strengthens your heart and helps your lungs work more efficiently.
- Walking is a weight bearing exercise so it helps keep bones strong and reduces the risk of osteoporosis.
- Walking conditions muscles.
- Walking is especially important if you are a postmenopausal female or taking steroids for your arthritis.
- Joint flexibility is improved.
- You will sleep better.
- Walking helps control weight.
- Walking lifts your mood, fights fatigue and decreases stress.

**Key Point:** Everyone knows walking is "good for you". By listing the benefits in one place I'm hoping people's eyes will be opened to how beneficial it really is.

### **Lets Get Going**

Some people don't walk much because it seems so basic they feel it is too simple and won't help fitness. Not true! It's simplicity is part of what makes walking an ideal exercise.

Think about it. You can walk almost anywhere, anytime. (Well, maybe not the inner city after dark!)

You choose the speed and intensity you prefer that day. In the north you can find places to walk indoors in the winter.

Walking requires no special skills and costs nothing.

You may have to begin with short distances and slowly increase how fast you walk and the time you walk.

### **Make A Plan**

You may want to talk to your family doctor, nurse or P.A. to learn the best level of intensity and length of time for your walks.

Think about how far you plan to go.

Think about how often you plan to walk. Have a plan and stick to it.

To be successful, you have to have a plan with reasonable goals.

Gosh, there is too much to cover in one week. I'm out of space. Please join me next week. I want to help you **KEEP MOVING**.

Shepherd Argus readers of Orthopaedic Zone; there is much more information about arthritis and all the things I treat in the hospital and office on our office teaching website [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com), which can take you to Your Orthopaedic Connection. Check it out.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives. I specialize in you.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush