



Wild West MS
WALKABOUT

August 20 -22, 2010

Fort Collins, Colorado
3 Days, 50 Miles
The Journey of A Lifetime

TRAINING MANUAL

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In Support of Those Living With MS

Training is the key to your success and enjoyment of the Walkabout. 50 miles over the course of three days is a serious endeavor, one that shouldn't be undertaken lightly or without adequate preparation.

The training process will not only strengthen you physically, but it will strengthen you mentally. Training will reward you with a better quality of life through better health and fitness. And, if you are properly prepared, you'll have a lot more fun on your 50-mile journey!

Initial Fitness Assessment

The training process is different for everyone. Age, general health and current physical fitness are all factors to consider. It's important that you assess your present state of health and fitness and begin with a level of training that is appropriate.

It's always a good idea to consult a physician before beginning any new exercise program, but it's essential if you have a medical condition like diabetes, high blood pressure, a heart condition, an injury, or you are overweight or pregnant. You should also consult with a doctor if you are older, sedentary, or have any other conditions that could be aggravated with extensive walking.

Essential Gear

Shoes

On average, you will take nearly a half a million steps for this cause, and approximately 100,000 on the event weekend alone. It is very important to have the right shoes. Look for these characteristics when shopping for walking shoes:

Flexibility: your shoe should allow you to comfortably "roll" your foot from heel to toe.

A low heel: a low heel will help prevent tipping or tripping.

Comfortable toe box: make sure your toes have plenty of wiggle room to help prevent blistering, but shoes that are *too* wide can increase your risk of tripping. Ask an expert at a boutique athletic shoe store if you have questions on shoe fit. The good ones will put you on a treadmill and measure your gait while observing the position of your feet as you walk.

Fit: the key to a good shoe is the way it fits *your* foot. Different brands fit differently so try on several. Walk around the store and outside if the store will allow it. Also, remember that your feet swell as the day wears on; try on shoes late in the day when your feet are tired and swollen.

It is a good idea to buy a second pair (of the same brand) and alternate between shoes. A second pair will also help conserve the life of your shoes, and will help decrease wear on

your body as shoes need to “spring” back between workouts. Also, if your shoes get wet or overly sweaty during the walk, you’ll have a second pair to wear while the first pair is drying.

Socks

Even with a great fit, cheap socks can cause blisters. Look for thin socks made of a wicking material and try them out before the big event! As with shoes, it’s a good idea to have several pairs of good socks.

Inserts

If you have pain when you walk (especially in the shin, knee or lower back), you might want to consider purchasing inserts. They are designed to keep your feet in the proper position when you walk and give you added support and cushioning. If you really want to treat your feet, consider buying a pair of high quality inserts available at specialty running and walking stores.

Workout Clothes

A few things to consider:

- Dress in layers so you can add or remove clothing to keep you comfortable. The bottom layer should be made of lightweight, wicking material. A long-sleeve T-shirt, a wind/rain jacket, running shorts and a pair of tights should prepare you for most weather conditions.
- Try different styles of exercise clothing. Different problems, such as chaffing or “riding” may occur. Testing your attire beforehand will minimize discomfort.
- Colorado sun can be brutal! Don’t forget to bring plenty of sun protection: a hat/visor, sunglasses, an SPF of 30 or greater, and a light, long-sleeve T-shirt in case you need additional coverage on your arms.
- Many walkers have found that carrying a “fanny pack” is useful for things like lip balm, cell phones, keys, food, and spending money. A hydration belt or “camel-back” will prove extremely useful in helping you stay properly hydrated.

GETTING STARTED

Training should begin as soon as you register for the 2008 Wild West MS Walkabout. Choose a program based on your fitness assessment. Form a habit quickly and build endurance by walking three to five days a week, even if it is only for a short duration. Remember, your body will eventually need to be able to walk 15 to 20 miles a day, but initially your walks can be very short. In addition to helping others, this walk is also about your fitness, overall health and personal goals—and having fun while you are doing all those things!

Building Fitness

The most effective way to train for an event like the 2008 Wild West MS Walkabout is to follow a plan that gradually increases walking duration and distance.

Some find that keeping a walking journal can be a very effective and motivating part of a regular fitness plan. It will help you reach your walking goals, but more importantly, it can be a valuable resource if you experience any glitches during your training. And, if you ever become uninspired, you can look back over your accomplishments to propel you forward.

In your journal, you'll want to track week number, dates, distance, time, weather, and make general notes about how you felt during your walk.

Training for Long-Distances

Training for long-distances requires the practice of what is known as "progressive overload". The idea of progressive overload is to make your body do a little more work, one step at a time, than it is used to doing. Continuing this practice week after week will enable your body to gradually become stronger and more fit, eventually preparing you to complete 50miles in just 3 days!

WALKING PROGRAM

Program (12 Weeks)

Week	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	Miles
1	OFF	1	0.5	1	OFF	0.5	1	4
2	OFF	1	1	1	OFF	1	2	6
3	OFF	1.5	1	1.5	OFF	1	2	7
4	OFF	2	1	2	OFF	2	3	10
5	OFF	3	OFF	3	OFF	3	6	15
6	OFF	4	OFF	3	OFF	3	8	18
7	OFF	4	OFF	4	OFF	3	10	21
8	OFF	4	OFF	4	OFF	4	12	24
9	OFF	4	3	OFF	3	6	10	26
10	OFF	4	OFF	4	OFF	4	15	27
11	OFF	4	OFF	4	OFF	8	10	26
12	OFF	3	3	OFF	MS	CHALLENGE	WALK	56

If you are a beginning walker, try this 12-week program. It will enable you to complete the walk safely and have an enjoyable experience over the weekend of the event.

If you are an experienced walker, you can still use the 12-week program, but start at about week 6 and repeat the final weeks of the training program until the race. Additional 6 and 8 week training programs are posted on our website.

Cross Training

Cross training is an important element in your training program. It will help you build muscle and endurance quickly; it will also help prevent injury as you are strengthening muscles that support the ones you use for walking. There are three types of cross training: stretching, strength training and cardiovascular training. Stretching is essential; strength training is strongly recommended, and cardiovascular cross training is optional, except in cases of injury.

*If you have had any recent surgeries, injuries or muscle problems, consult your health care professional before beginning stretching or cross-training programs.

Stretching

Stretching should be done slowly and without bouncing. Stretch to the point you feel a slight, easy tension; hold this for 5 to 10 seconds. Once the feeling of tension diminishes, stretch just a little deeper. If the feeling does not diminish, ease back on the tension.

Stretching should not be painful; it should be relaxed. Don't worry about how far you can stretch, but simply that you are incorporating a technique into your routine that will help prevent injuries in your training and your daily life.

Please find reference material if you are unsure about good stretches. A good Web site is www.nia.nih.gov/health/fitness. There have also been numerous books written on stretches. Your health care provider can also give you good stretches to keep your muscles in good shape!

Strength training

Especially for walkers, strength training is another excellent means of preventing injuries. You can get a complete secondary workout with two or three 20-minute sessions per week.

The most important muscles to strengthen are the core muscles (abdomen and lower back), the hips, gluts, thighs, and shin muscles.

Cardiovascular cross training

The main benefit of adding cardio to your workout program is injury prevention. Incorporating additional exercises such as swimming or biking can help you gain fitness quickly with less risk of the overuse injuries that are common, especially among beginning walkers.

Fueling Your Muscles

Muscles in motion need fluid and energy to perform at their best. Dehydration and depletion of stored energy are the most common causes of muscle fatigue.

Hydration

Sweat contains water and minerals called electrolytes. It is important to drink energy drinks in addition to water. Water will replace the lost fluid from sweat in your body. Energy drinks will replace lost mineral such as sodium, which helps slow the rate of lost fluid in the body. Sports drinks will also add minor amounts of carbohydrates to your intake, a very necessary element for moving bodies.

Dehydration is a serious condition that can become life threatening. Having plenty of water and sports drinks handy will help keep you healthy and your hard-working muscles happy.

For more information on hydration needs visit www.powerupfitness.com.

Nutrition for Recovery

The right nutrients in the right amounts at the right time will allow for significantly increased muscle recovery after workouts.

Replacing food intake is important. Energy bars will help replace the minerals used by your body while walking.

INJURIES: PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Old shoes are the most common culprits of walking injuries. Be sure to log the miles you walk in each pair and pay attention to wear. Replace shoes frequently. Remember, you want broken-in shoes for the big weekend, not broken-down shoes.

Don't try to push through pain that may be related to muscle or joint problems. It could be an indicator of a larger problem. Consult a health care provider if pain persists.

Other common walking injuries

Blisters:

These can be diminished by paying attention to "hot spots", or places you feel rubbing. Stop and put petroleum jelly on these areas to help slow or prevent blisters.

Once you have a blister, products such as "moleskin" can help ease discomfort.

Shin Splints:

This is pain in the outer frontal area of the shin; it is a natural part of the conditioning process. The pain should disappear within one or two weeks. If it does not, consult your health care provider.

Knee Pain:

Knee pain is often caused by problems related to weak quadriceps or gluteus muscles. Cross training can greatly help relieve the workload placed on the knees.

Incorporating cross training in your workout schedule from the beginning will greatly reduce your risk of injury.

STAYING MOTIVATED

Physical fitness is as much a mental game as it is a physical one. Most likely, your biggest challenge will be in your head. Here are some tips for staying motivated:

Remember Your Purpose

While you are gaining health benefits from this walk, your original goal was to raise money to help those suffering from MS. On days you feel uninspired, you may need to remember that you are doing this as a gesture of kindness for those you care about.

Train With Fun People

Training with others will help you be accountable to others who are also working toward goals. You will want to encourage them on their journey. Plus, you'll make new friends and hear interesting stories along the way and the time will go faster!

Get Feedback

Tracking your progress by timing your walks and tracking your distance will inspire you. You will see how your physical strength has increased. Few things feel as good as becoming stronger.

Get Creative

Changing your workouts, cross-training or mapping out new routes will help keep your workouts interesting, your visual stimulation new and your thoughts inspired.

Just Get Out and Walk

You will have days when you are unmotivated or feeling tired. On these days, your goal is not so much to beat your time or push your limits. On these days, your goal is simply to get out and walk. Just remember that a short walk is better than no walk at all.

Contact Information

For more training tips and information, please visit our website at

www.mshike.com or e-mail Kris Clagett, Walker Coordinator, @
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