



STEP IT UP!
**The Surgeon General's Call to
Action to Promote Walking and
Walkable Communities**



Physical Activity: Reduces the risk of chronic disease

- 117 million people are living with a chronic disease.
 - >15 million have coronary heart disease.
 - >29 million have diabetes.
 - >13 million are living with cancer.
- Chronic diseases are the leading causes of death and are major contributors to years lived with a disability.
- Chronic diseases rank as 4 of the top 5 most costly conditions in the United States.





Physical Activity:

One of the most important actions people can take to improve their health

- Helps prevent chronic disease.
- Can help people with chronic disease manage their conditions.
- Reduces the risk of premature death.
- Supports positive mental health and healthy aging.
- Could reduce health care costs.





Aerobic Physical Activity Guidelines



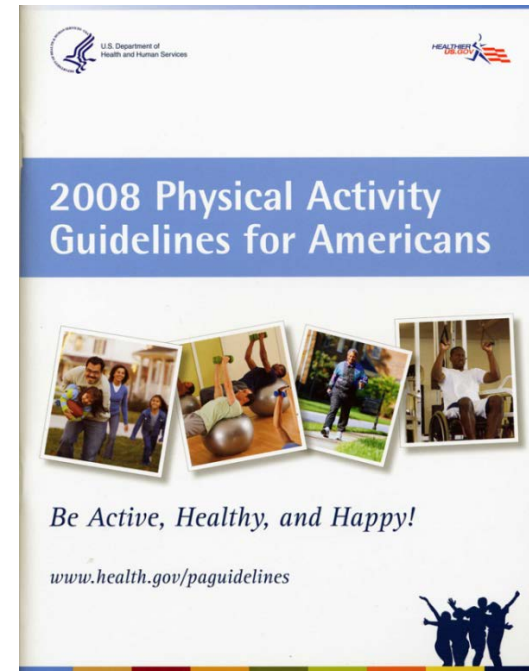
Children and Adolescents (Age 6-17)

- 1 hour (60 minutes) or more of daily physical activity.

Adults

- 2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week; or
- 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) vigorous-intensity aerobic activity per week; or
- An equivalent combination.

www.health.gov/paguidelines





Physical Activity in the United States, 2013

High School Students



- About 1 out of 4 high school students meets the aerobic guideline.

Adults



- 5 out of 10 adults meet the aerobic guideline.
- 3 out of 10 are inactive.



Why Focus on Walking as a Public Health Strategy?

Easy way to start and maintain an active lifestyle

Common form of physical activity

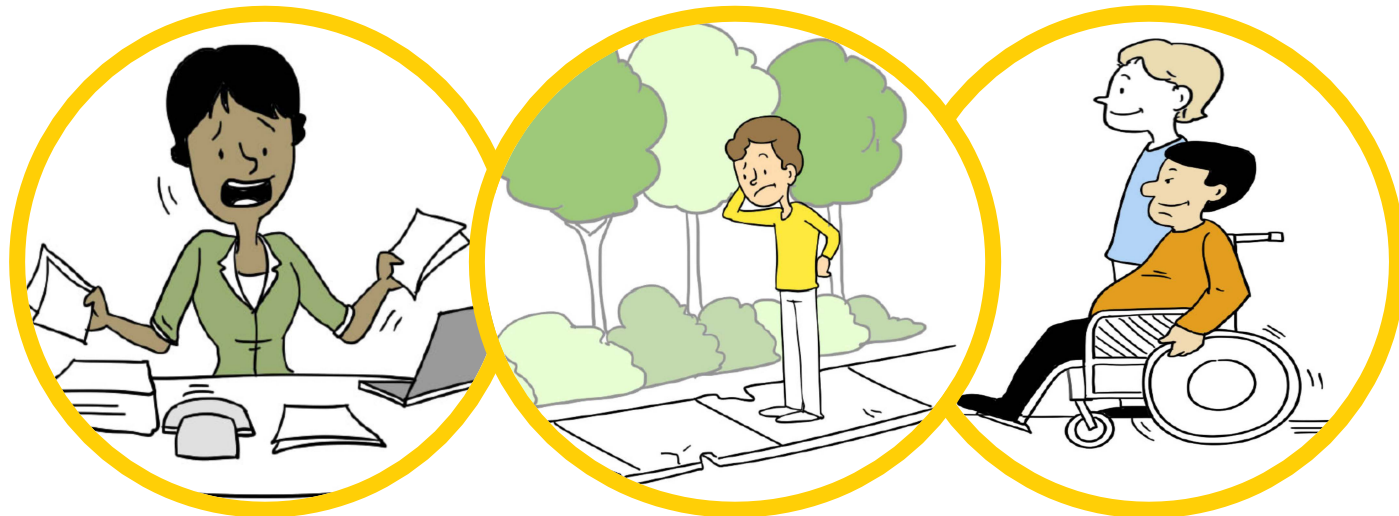
Multipurpose

Benefits communities



Why Don't People Walk More?

- Not enough time.
- Safety concerns.
- Community design.
- Difficulty walking related to disability, chronic conditions, and aging.





How to Increase Walking?

- Design walkable communities.
 - Community design.
 - Street design.
 - Transportation policies and practices.

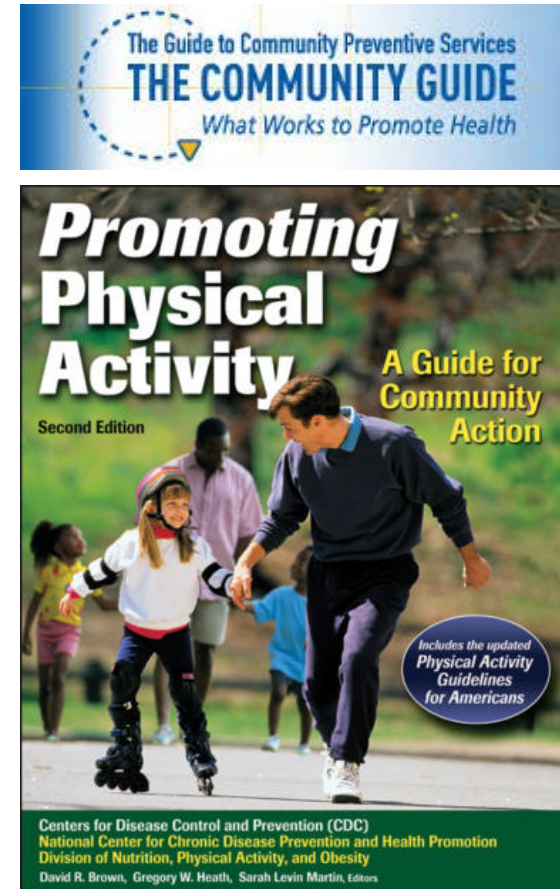


Walkable communities encourage pedestrian activity, expand transportation options, and have safe and inviting streets that serve people with different ranges of mobility.*



How to Increase Walking?

- Promote program and policy approaches that support walking.
 - Improved access to places to walk and informational outreach.
 - Social support.
 - Individually-adapted health behavior change programs.
 - Community-wide campaigns.



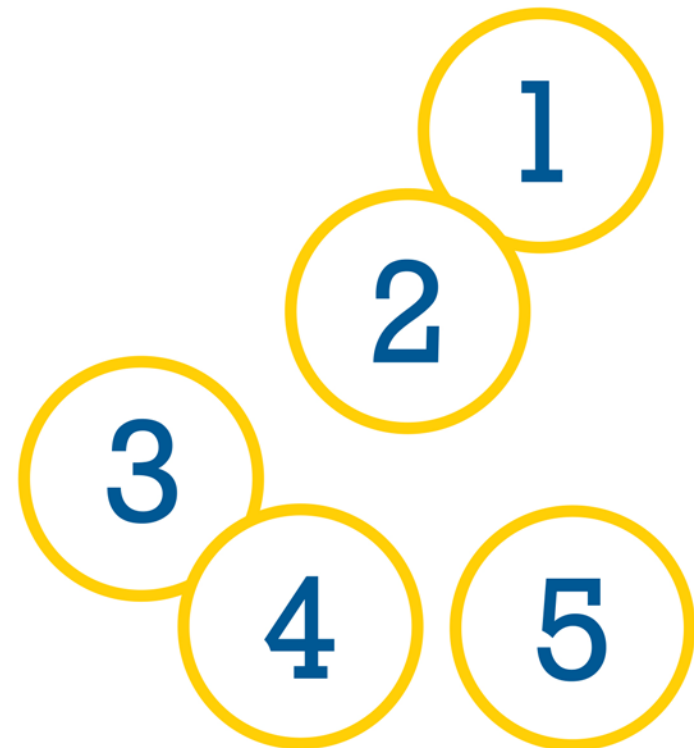
Everyone Can Help

- Transportation, land use, and community design.
- Parks and recreational and fitness facilities.
- Education.
- Business and industry.
- Volunteer and nonprofit groups.
- Health care.
- Media.
- Public health.
- Families and individuals.





Goals of the Call to Action





1

Make walking a national priority

- Encourage people to promote walking and make their communities more walkable.
- Create a walking movement to make walking and walkability a national priority.





2

Design communities that make it safe and easy to walk for people of all ages and abilities

- Design and maintain streets and sidewalks so that walking is safe and easy.
- Design communities that support safe and easy places for people to walk.





3

Promote programs and policies to support walking where people live, learn, work, and play

- Promote programs and policies that make it easy for students to walk before, during, and after school.
- Promote worksite programs and policies that support walking and walkability.
- Promote community programs and policies that make it safe and easy for residents to walk.





4

Provide information to encourage walking and improve walkability

- Educate people about the benefits of safe walking and places to walk.
- Develop effective and consistent messages and engage the media to promote walking and walkability.
- Educate relevant professionals on how to promote walking and walkability through their profession.





5

Fill surveillance, research, and evaluation gaps related to walking and walkability

- Improve the quality and consistency of surveillance data collected about walking and walkability.
- Address research gaps to promote walking and walkability.
- Evaluate community interventions to promote walking and walkability.





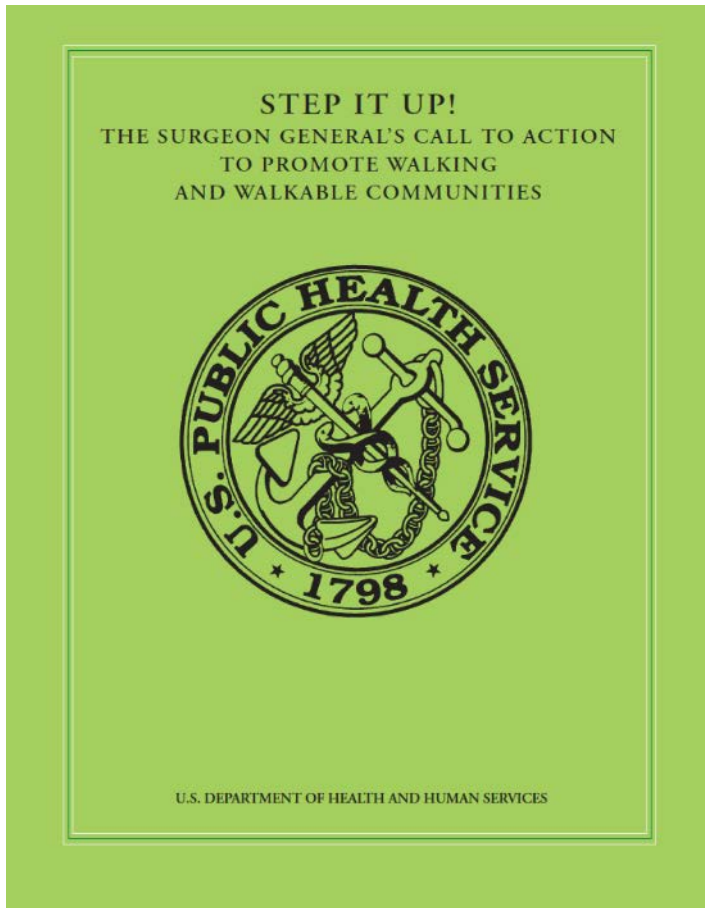
From the Surgeon General U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



“Walking for better health may seem simplistic, but sometimes the most important things we can do are also the easiest and the most obvious. It’s time to step it up, America! The journey to better health begins with a single step.”



For More Information



www.surgeongeneral.gov/stepitup