



**WALKER'S
TRAINING MANUAL**

GREATER TORONTO AREA

2007

GETTING PREPARED

Well, here we are, getting prepared to take on a great walking challenge.

I want to get to you start thinking about your walking. How do you walk? How much of a workout are you getting from it? What is your fitness level now and where would you like to be at the end of this adventure?

People will wonder why you need a walking coach. After all, we all know how to walk. However, walking for fitness or walking for competition are not the same as your everyday walking from point A to point B. It is our challenge to get you all thinking of walking in a different light and to take your fitness walking to a new level.

Going for a walk with the dog or the kids, walking through the mall, walking to the grocery store... this is very different from walking for training, or at least it should be. This is what we might consider transportative walking. (ok, we made that word up) It gets us from one place to another and it's the walking that most people do on a daily basis.

Don't confuse this daily walking with your training. Set aside training time for purposeful, fitness walking. You can fit it into your schedule by preparing a route then leaving early and walking to a meeting or errand, or if you are meeting a friend for lunch or coffee, walk there instead of driving.

Getting off the couch and walking at any pace, for any reason is better than sitting around. But the real benefits of walking come from picking up your pace a little and walking at a steady pace for a prolonged time without breaks. You'll learn more about the different types of walking techniques and styles throughout this manual and during your training sessions.

Begin to prepare yourself for the training to come. It is necessary to plan for 1 long walk each week to build your endurance. Also, prepare for 2-5 additional walks during the week depending on your personal goals.

Expect to learn about walking styles, training techniques, heart rate, nutrition, various methods of monitoring your progress, stretching and more as the weeks go by. See... **walking** is not simply just *walking*.

We are a diverse group of walkers various levels of fitness, experience, and physical or health challenges, but we will all learn something from each other. Don't feel that you need to keep up or that you have anything to prove to any other team members. We are all here for our own reasons, with our own distinct starting point. Set your own personal goals and we will all work together to achieve them. No matter where you are starting you will face a great sense of achievement once you have completed this journey. Everyone's accomplishment here is of equal importance whether you come in first, last or anywhere in between, because we are a **TEAM**.

Keep in mind that we are a small group which means that there is always a chance that there may not be anyone at the same pace, fitness level, or distance at each training day. Don't be discouraged. Be prepared to sometimes walk alone for part of the walk. This can be a great opportunity for some personal downtime and thinking time - very therapeutic. We will all start out as a team together and will end as a team together, with coffee and social time afterwards at a local coffee shop where you will also have the opportunity to meet the other coaches and members of the running team. Your mentors will also often be out there on the course with you. As your coaches, we will be there at the end until everyone has come in from their walk.

We can be contacted at any time for advice, support, encouragement, or to answer your questions. Email will always be the most efficient means of communication, but if you do call we will return your call ASAP.

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GO TEAM!!

GETTING STARTED

Get ready walkers! Our training is about to begin. We've prepared a few tips and ideas for you to get yourself ready to jump right into your training schedules.

Your official training start date will be the Saturday following the Kick Off Party. In order to prepare for the longer distance walk that day we've put together some informal pre-training tips for you to get your feet moving and your muscles warmed up for what's ahead. Please bring your Health Card or ID, your cell phone if you have one, and a small amount of emergency cash to each training walk. Always come with water and/or sport drink for hydration.

Start walking. That's the first step.

Beginners: If you are coming into this with little or no walking fitness, simply start by getting moving. Try to get out 3-5 times each week before your training begins. Test out your feet and see where they take you. Aim for no less than 30 minutes or up to 1 hour of walking at whatever pace is comfortable for you.

Intermediate: You may be classed as intermediate if you are already walking 3-5 times a week for fitness and/or feel very comfortable walking 1-1½ hours at a stretch. Get yourself out there 3-5 times each week before training and begin to think about your walking. Are you putting an effort into it? Are you getting your heart rate up a little, sweating, and breathing a bit heavy? Do your walks feel like a workout? Begin thinking about how you walk and how it feels to push yourself a little harder than usual.

Advanced: You may be classified as advanced if you have already completed one or more half or full marathons and are ready to take it to the next level. If you feel that you fit into this category then let your coach know so that we can accommodate you appropriately. If you fit here, prepare for the next few weeks just at the intermediate and we'll take it from there.

We are headed for great things!

GEARING UP

Getting serious about walking means getting to know the tools of the trade that will help you get to your goal stronger and faster. Here is a list of items for you to get familiar with or to consider purchasing over the course of your training. By the end of all of this you will never want to stop walking and will have your next half marathon or marathon goal in mind so these purchases will be a worthwhile buy.

Shoes: Your coach will discuss shoes in a bit of detail early on in the training so we won't go into much detail here. Walking for fitness or competition is much different than strolling around. Your feet hit the ground differently and with a higher impact or force and at a different angle. Also, endurance is a factor. Long distance walking requires proper supporting footwear. Wearing a comfortable shoe that you have worn for a few years may not be the best shoe for this type of walking. Think of it this way, you may have a pair of sandals that are as comfortable as any shoe can get, but can you imagine trying to walk a marathon in them? Comfort is not the only deciding factor. Sometimes the shoe itself may feel comfy, but you find that you have ankle, knee, hip or back strain when you increase your distances. Often these problems are related to the type of shoe you are wearing. Talk to your coach about your shoes.

Clothing: We will talk about clothing as we go along too, but here is a primer. Have you heard of the word "wicking fabric"? These technical fabrics draw the sweat and moisture away from your body and dry quickly. If you have worn cotton then switch to these fabrics you will notice the difference immediately. Cotton holds onto the moisture, gets heavy, and clings to you when wet. Wicking fabrics dry almost immediately and you will never feel them weighing you down. This makes for a more comfortable walk and less chance of your skin chafing and getting irritated. This is especially true for tops, but for bottoms you also will find yourself more comfortable in a technical, synthetic material rather than a pair of cotton track pants. If you are not familiar with these types of clothing let us help you. Great walking clothes can be found at Running Room / Walking Room stores, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Sport Check, Nike stores or other running, sport or outdoor stores. For those who are budget conscious you can even find decent versions of these items at Wal Mart and Costco.

Socks: Toss out those cotton socks in favour of specialized running (walking) socks made of synthetic blends that draw moisture away from your feet and keep your tootsies dry and comfortable. Go to any running, sport or outdoor store to find the right socks for you.

Sport Bra: Ladies, this is important for comfort. Long-distance walking can cause uncomfortable chafing, especially if you are wearing a bra with thinner straps. Finding a comfortable, snug, sport bra with soft edges and wide straps will leave you feeling happy.

Map Art: This can usually be purchased on the map rack at Business Depot or other stores that sell Map Art products. It costs about \$20.00 for the CD and is a worthwhile investment for mapping customized distance maps for your training and future walking. For more information check out www.mapart.com You can also be order online.

Head Gear: In the spring and summer consider bringing along a mesh cap with a visor (baseball cap type) that will keep the rain off of your head and face and make for a pleasant rainy walk. It's also a good idea for keeping the sun off on those sunny days. In the winter you'll want a synthetic (not cotton) toque or hat, or a headband or earmuffs. Once again, running stores carry these items in wicking materials that help keep the sweat away from your skin therefore keeping you warm and dry.

Pedometer: A handy tool for measuring steps, distance, and time to help keep you on track. Many running or sport stores carry a variety of these.

Water Packs: Be sure to purchase a water belt of some sort. It gets uncomfortable to carry a bottle in hand for the longer distances. The belt will come in handy for carrying other items like your ID or cell phone too.

Heart Rate Monitor: We will talk about heart rate training as we go through the season. Having a heart rate monitor can help to keep you on track and make sure that you are getting the most out of your walking workout without overdoing it. There are many types with many different features so get a sales rep to help you pick one that suits your needs.

Stop Watch or Sport Watch: Another handy tool for timing yourself or monitoring your progress and time intervals. A proper sport or stop watch can be better than the one found on your pedometer because it will have beepers and alarms to help you keep track of times.

PRACTICAL SHOE TIPS

As your training goes on you may be finding that your shoes are just not holding up, or that you are experiencing some pain, burning, or other discomfort on your walks. Here are some practical considerations regarding shoes.

If you need more details, talk to your coach.

There is a formal shoe talk during each training season so if you are thinking of getting into new shoes soon then be sure to attend this upcoming session. If you don't have appropriate shoes now, get them ASAP, but still attend the shoe session as you will get valuable information for your next purchase.

The Right Shoe

The right shoe depends entirely on you and your foot and your body alignment. Do not go by what your friend says is a great shoe because it may be perfect for them, but entirely wrong for you. The most appropriate shoe is going to be a running shoe or a special walking shoe made for distance walking. Many so called "walking" shoes are solid leather or have sturdy soles which are perfect for nurses or people working on their feet, but will NOT be suitable for long distance walking. Be sure that you are getting a shoe that is lightweight, flexible, and well ventilated with mesh tops and sides for air circulation just as you would expect to find in a running shoe.

A walker's shoe should be flexible across the forefoot to allow for the natural heel to toe rolling motion that your foot goes through. Stiff soles across the forefoot can lead to a lot of pain and can be the cause of shin splints, foot pain, or other problems. The best way to find the right shoe is to attend the TNT shoe clinic talk, but also to go to a store where they know how to fit shoes based on your individual feet characteristics such as Running Room, Running Free or other similar stores. Most "sport" or athletic shoe stores do not have staff that can do this. You should expect to be asked to walk barefoot and have your gait and walk pattern analyzed to help you choose the correct shoe for your foot structure.

If you wear orthotics, wear them the day you buy your shoes. It is also advised to wear the socks that you usually wear. These factors are important in ensuring that the shoe fits properly. Be sure you have "wobble room" around your toes as your feet will swell over the long distances and your toes will want room to breathe.

As for socks... avoid cotton! Get yourself some proper athletic socks made of synthetic materials that wick the moisture away from your feet. Dry feet are happy feet. Excess moisture will lead to chafing and blisters.

Allow yourself time; time to try on many pairs and time to walk around the store a lot. Wear them around the house for a few days, and try them on a treadmill. It is best to buy shoes from a store that won't give you a hassle if you try to return a shoe you have not worn outdoors.

My Feet Hurt!

If you are experiencing foot pain, ankle pain, shin pain, knee pain, hip pain, or back pain and this is not going away or gets worse with your long distance walks, then you are probably in the wrong shoe. Now is the time to think about getting into the right shoe. If the wrong shoe is causing pain now, it can lead to chronic pain or problems if you keep on pushing yourself. If you suspect that you have an injury, or any permanent problem, don't hesitate to discuss it with your physician and get it looked at by a specialist.

How Do I Know if it is time for New Shoes?

Shoes that are well-trained in will last for approximately 600-800 km. That is equal to about 6000-8000 minutes for most walkers. This means that you can expect to need new shoes about every 3-4 months on average. If a comfortable shoe begins to feel uncomfortable then you know it's time. Don't wait until you are in pain to move on to a new shoe, and definitely don't head into your big day event with the same shoes you have trained in from the start. You should be considering new shoes within a month of your race day and breaking them in a bit on your short walks so that you know they are comfortable for the race. It is highly recommended that you have two pairs to train in; one for your shorter distances, one for the longer distances. Or alternate wearing each pair from one training day to the next. This will allow for the shoes to "bounce back" after training and to breathe and air out before you step into them again.

If you are within 6 weeks of your event start thinking about whether you are ready for a new shoe. If you have been wearing the same pair since the start, then you ARE ready. Good shoes make happy feet and happy feet make for smiles at the finish line.

There is a lot to be said about shoes and foot comfort. If you have any further questions please contact your coach to discuss it.

WALKING ETIQUETTE AND SAFETY

Just as you would follow certain rules and etiquette of the road while driving a car or riding a bike, so should you when walking, especially in groups. Here are a few things to keep in mind for your safety and the safety of others on the roads or paths we walk on.

Walking on Roads

Under certain conditions it becomes necessary to walk on the road rather than the sidewalk. In particular in the winter months walking on the road can be a necessity as the sidewalks can be treacherous. In these instances you should always be walking facing the oncoming cars. When walking in groups we should never be taking up the road and getting in the way of cars. Line up single file when a car is coming along and pull as close to the curb as possible. Always give the car the right of way when walking on the roads.

Walking on Multi-Use Trails

Multi-use trails can get busy with bikes, walkers, strollers and rollerblades all using the same small pathway. Try not to walk in groups more than two – taking up the whole path, and always be aware of those around you. Safety is also an issue as cyclists or in-line skaters may come up quickly behind you.

As a rule, think like a car. When trails are busy stay to the right as you would when driving a car. Keep to the far right side of the path and stay there allowing faster bikes and rollerblades to pass you on the left. Don't make sudden moves to get out of the way since you don't know where the bike is planning to go. Assume that the bike sees you in front of them and that they will pass you accordingly. I have seen walkers step out of the way suddenly only to find themselves in the direct path of an oncoming cyclist or runner.

On less busy trails... Sometimes the trails are not busy and many walkers will prefer to move to the left side of the trail in order to see the oncoming bikes and to not be in the path of bikes coming up from behind. This is perfectly acceptable, however, you should move back to your lane (the right side) when you see an oncoming bike or other trail user. They have the right of way in their lane so you should not be forcing them aside. And at the risk of sounding like your mother, we remind you to always look behind you for oncoming traffic before moving back to your side of the path.

When walking in groups on multi-use trails just try to use common sense and courtesy. Pass others in front of you on the right or left depending on what is the safest or most appropriate, but try not to split up and pass on both sides. This can be particularly intimidating for elderly people on the trails who may feel as if they are being swarmed. If you are sprawling across the path and bikes or others are coming from in front or behind, please move to the right and move quickly, don't wait until the last minute. Again, if you split up to the left and the right the oncoming traffic may not know where you are going and may be forced to squeeze between or may make a sudden move that could lead in a collision. And don't laugh, I have seen this happen more times than you might imagine.

Walking on Sidewalks

When walking on sidewalks the main thing is simply to be courteous. Don't walk in pairs or threes and take over the whole sidewalk while forcing others off their path and pull to the right side to let others pass.

We are often quite visible as a group when we are wearing our **Team in Training** t-shirts. We don't want to be seen in the community as a nuisance. Sometimes we hear complaints about other high-profile walking/running groups because of their aggressiveness on the roads and paths. Let's try to develop and maintain a reputation in the community for being safe and courteous walkers!

WALKING STYLES

Walking can be so much more than **JUST** walking. After all, almost anyone can simply walk. Our purpose here is to take walking to a new level; to make walking a workout and to become an accomplishment we can be proud of. Here you will find definitions of various walking styles that may be incorporated into your day to day life and into your training. How you choose to walk your marathon or half marathon distance is ultimately up to you, but never be afraid to kick it up a notch and push yourself beyond your comfort zone. You will be surprised what you will be able to accomplish.

While reading through these definitions realize that there is no definitive speed associated with each style. How fast you need to walk to get your heart rate up will depend on your own fitness level. Evaluate where you are now and strive towards reaching the next level of walking to improve your fitness. Keep in mind that as your fitness improves, what once felt like brisk walking will in time feel like a slow warm up pace and walking faster will become naturally easier.

Transportative walking is not a real technical walking term; we just made it up. Think of this as the walking you do daily to get you to your car, the subway, the store, or when you are strolling around the mall. It is walking that places little or no stress on your body, makes no demands, does not make you breathe heavy or sweat, and does not raise your heart rate. Although any form of walking is preferential to sitting around on the couch, this type of walking will not improve your fitness level to any significant degree.

Walking the dog can be a beneficial exercise; however, it usually is not. Most of us walk our dogs at a slow pace with many stops and starts. Dogs tend to meander and sniff and get distracted by the pleasant properties of grass and pools of rain water. If walking your dog is your only regular opportunity to walk then take some time to analyze the workout you are or are not getting from this. It may be time to inform the pooch that walk time is about to get serious and that he has to learn to pick up the pace to keep up with you.

Brisk walking is what might be considered a pace you would walk when you are late for an appointment or in a hurry to catch a bus. It is the pace that many of us might use when walking for fitness where we allow ourselves to sweat a little bit, our breathing may become a slight bit noticeable, and our heart rate may elevate slightly. This level of walking will allow for slight improvements in fitness when done often. Eventually this pace will become easier and you will find that you naturally walk faster when you need to move briskly.

Fitness walking would be the next level and is the style of walking that we would recommend as the least amount of effort used for training for an endurance event. This is the type of walking you might do when you want to get out for some serious walking exercise. At this pace your heart rate should rise noticeably, you should be sweating enough to get the sense that you have had a workout, and your heart rate should be elevated somewhat. Fitness walking should start with a warm up period at a slower pace, and then end with a cool down at the same slower pace. Fitness walking would typically be done with straight arms, swinging naturally at your side as you pick up your pace. How fast you go will depend on your current fitness level and this will improve over time. If you choose to walk your event with a straight arm, fitness walking approach you will want to be monitoring your posture, stride or cadence, and pace. Keep erect and hold your abs somewhat firm to protect your back. Breathe evenly and steadily to allow for good flow of oxygen to your muscles and lungs. Don't over swing your arms as you will use up too much energy over the long haul. And finally, be relaxed. Let your body move naturally. Don't try to force a longer stride to speed up. Getting quicker comes from propelling yourself forward when your foot hits the ground so a shorter stride will actually improve your speed more than a longer stride. We will work on this over our weeks of training together.

Power walking is one level higher yet in the walking continuum. Power walking involves a little bit more technique and form. Power walking allows for increased speed and fitness. When you power walk you should raise your arms to a bent position at your side; elbows at a 90 degree angle. Hold your hands in a comfortable, light fist. Never grip too hard or squeeze your fists as this creates tension all the way up your arm. Your arms should swing forward like a shelf, with your hands driving out in front of you rather than across your chest or up high enough to cross your face. This arm movement is economical in that it is a natural movement from the shoulder socket that does not require a significant amount of energy. At the same time, this movement allows for a faster arm swing than a straight arm does. As you may notice, your feet move at the same pace as your arms. You can only swing a straight arm so fast; so when

you want to pick up your pace you need to move your arms faster, and this is how to do it. When moving your arms faster your feet will follow. As for feet... your stride should shorten as you get faster. Short quick strides allow you to be constantly propelling yourself forward. We will practice this method together at track training days set aside on various weeknights. Practice this method on your weekday evening walks.

Race Walking is specific walking technique that allows for a considerable increase in speed. This is the method used by competitive walkers. There are two principal elements to race walking: unbroken contact with the ground or otherwise noted that one foot is always touching the ground, and the supporting leg must stay straight at the knee when the foot hits the ground. In competition, judges watch carefully for these techniques. You will notice a race walker by the exaggerated form. Bent arms swing powerfully and hips appear to sway notably. You might also recognize them as they drift seemingly effortlessly past many runners. As you venture forward into your walking lifestyle and find that you cannot seem to improve your speed, race walking may be in store for you. Your TNT coaches are trained in race walking technique so can guide you if you think this is the style for you.

So whatever style of walking is for you, take it on with pride and gusto. Commit to making your walking a workout and watch your fitness improve as you work through your training schedule. You never know what you are capable of unless you try.

In the great wise words of John “the penguin” Bingham...

The miracle is not that I crossed the finish line
But that I had
THE COURAGE TO START

TRAINING SCHEDULES

Your training schedules will vary depending on your goal race and your current level of walking fitness. We will help you adjust them to fit your own schedule and needs. There are 3 possible levels: Beginner or Novice, Intermediate and Advanced.

We all are coming to this challenge with different goals, lifestyles and physical limitations. Let your schedule guide you, but don't hesitate to ask your coach for assistance in making adjustments that suit your needs.

Beginner or Novice schedules are for those who have limited walking experience and will focus on getting the mileage onto your feet and get you comfortable with walking. You will focus on proper walking form and getting your heart rate up to maximize your workout and build your cardiovascular strength. The main goal will be to slowly build your endurance so that you can comfortably walk the goal distance. There will be some introduction to training techniques such as hill training and Tempo which will be explained later.

Intermediate schedules are for those of you who have been walking for some time and are already comfortable walking 1 hour (for half marathon goal) or 1½ hours (for marathon goal). It will be assumed that you already have some endurance and this schedule will build on that by focusing on introducing some advanced training techniques such as hills, tempo, fartlek and economy interval training. These schedules are also suitable for those of you who have completed a half marathon or other distance event, but have not really followed any formal training schedule.

Advanced schedules are for those of you who have completed a half or full marathon already and are ready to take it up a notch by improving your form, strength, and speed. You will learn to incorporate the above mentioned techniques as well as lactate threshold intervals and possibly introduce race walking technique if you feel ready. These schedules are based on proven training techniques used by competitive walkers and coaches.

How many walks per week should I be getting? Depending on your current walking experience and goals we suggest 4–6 walks per week. At a bare minimum, if you really find you are pressed for time, aim for no less than 3 walks per week. Even walking for 15 minutes in the morning then 15 minutes later in the day would be better than not walking at all.

How does the training schedule work? The schedule is broken into 3 or 4 phases. First, you will begin building **endurance** to get your body feeling comfortable with walking and to begin experimenting with how powerful your walking is. The second phase is to build **strength** with some hill training, building muscle groups and hip flexibility. *(Some schedules do not include hill training.)* In the third phase you begin to push yourself to increase your **speed** with speed drills such as tempo or intervals. Finally, the fourth phase is called tapering, where you ease off on your training to leave you sharp and strong for your big event.

(Some training terms may vary between schedules)

Long Walks: This is your Saturday (or Sunday) walk for building distance endurance. Try at all costs to get this walk in each week as it is the cornerstone to meeting your long-distance goal. These walks will vary from easy to steady to occasionally testing your goal race pace.

Easy: Easy walks are just that. A walk for the purpose of getting some mileage on your feet. At the same time, you will want to get a decent work out from it so try to keep a pace that would be somewhat brisk but not pushing too hard. These walks tend to fall when you have a big increase in distance for a long walk, or after a hard workout. If you were using your heart rate as a goal this would fall at the lower end of your target heart rate or just below. *(more on target heart rate to come)*

Steady: We use this term to describe a walk that is a brisk walk at a constant pace, pushing yourself a little bit harder than usual but not to the point of a race pace. If using your heart rate as a goal you should be falling at a steady rate about mid-target range. You should be breathing a bit heavy.

Tempo 10-20-10 *(or otherwise noted time blocks):* This includes a warm up time, a segment of time at tempo pace, then a set time for cool down. The times for each segment vary as your training progresses. The tempo segment is at a pace that might be comparable to your 5km or 10km race pace where you would tend to hold a faster pace than you would for a longer distance. Push yourself to the upper limit of your heart rate target. The tempo segment gets longer and longer as you progress, building your endurance for walking at a faster pace as well as building cardio strength.

Economy is a type of **interval training**. Intervals are form of training meant to give your heart rate a boost and improve your speed and/or intensity. Intervals provide periods of hard effort with recovery periods in between. Economy intervals are short, fast bursts of speed with relatively long recoveries.

The goal of intervals is to walk at a very fast pace, as fast as you can sustain while still maintaining good technique and form. You will notice that you are asked to walk for 20 minutes first as a warm up. This may be equivalent to approximately 2 km. Then you will notice a notation such as 6x1, 8x1, or 6x2. The first number is the number of times you will repeat the interval, so 6, 8, 10 or more times. The second number is the duration of the fast burst, or in these examples 1 or 2 minutes (this part may also be noted in distance such as 4x200m or 4x400m). So, in essence you will walk very fast for the designated time, then take a 2 minute recovery by walking back at your usual comfortable pace, then very fast again for the designated time, then rest, and so on until you have repeated the set number of repetitions. Finally you will end with the walk back to your starting point for a 20 minute cool down.

Fartlek is another type of interval training with a less structured approach. Translated, fartlek is a Swedish word for “speed play”. These intervals are unstructured intervals of varying distances and intensities. As with all intervals they involve periods of high intensity with periods of rest. You may use trees, lamp posts, or other landmarks to mark your goal ahead, then hold the very fast pace until you reach that marker. Alternatively you may just start up and hold a very fast pace until you can’t hold it any longer then allow yourself to recover until you are ready to do it again.

Accelerated Tempo is a variation on the split time tempo that has already been introduced. This variation allows for a complete warm up period; say 10–20 minutes of steady walking. Following this warm up you will begin to gradually build up to your goal marathon or half marathon pace, thus getting faster and faster throughout the workout. Allow for some cool down time by walking at a slower pace again at the end.

And finally, **Hill Repeats**...

Coach Crystal from the Toronto Chapter *LOVES* hill training, so next are a few tips from her about adding hill training to your schedule...

COACH CRYSTAL'S HILL TRAINING TIPS

Good work walkers! You are ready for HILLS! You have completed the BASE building segment where your body begins to get used to walking, is becoming more toned and is beginning to prepare for what lies ahead. Here are just a few quick tips to help you out.

Hills are a form of what is known as interval training. What this means is that are doing periods of very high intensity walking with periods of rest in between. This type of workout gives your heart rate a boost, allowing your cardiovascular system to adapt and improve in fitness level. This type of workout can improve your walking fitness and form immensely. Improved cardiac fitness will translate into being able to walk faster, longer without tiring as quickly.

The other benefits of hills are strength building and hip flexibility. Your legs swing at the hips at a different and wider range of motion on hills than when you walk on flat surface. This can contribute to improved hip flexibility which translates into smoother walking form and less pain and fatigue at the hip flexors. Well, less pain down the road in your training anyway. I can't promise less pain after doing hills. ☺ Also, you will build strength in various muscle groups as you use your legs to propel your body weight upwards. This improved muscle strength will also benefit you in the later stages of training. It's all part of improving overall fitness, and preparing you for any hills that you may encounter on future races.

First, find a hill. It is difficult for me to explain in regular language what sort of hill you should be looking for, but I hope this helps. A hill should take you 1-2 minutes to walk up from the base to the top. It should be steep enough to raise your heart rate when you climb it, but also not so steep that you have to struggle to get up it. You should be able to maintain your usual walking pace, or at least you should aim to do this. And you should be able to complete the hill without stopping.

Warm up first, this is imperative. You should aim for 15-20 minutes warm up walking first. Then, start at the top of the hill and walk slowly down, then take a deep breath and head back up to the top. Walk past the crest and take a few steps on the flat before heading back down. Don't stop between repeats, keep this going for the number of repeats suggested. Each week during the hill training segment of training you should be adding an additional hill repeat to the routine. Take time to cool down too by walking for 10-20 minutes afterward.

Keep an eye on your posture. You should be walking fairly upright, not slouched as we have a tendency to do on hills, especially when we are exerting ourselves. Hold your abs in firmly (without sucking in your gut) to protect your back, and don't forget to breathe rhythmically as you are walking. Going downhill should be slow and easy. Don't pound your feet or trudge down, let them roll from the heel to the toe.

Remember the Mantra: Hills are our Friends!

If for any reason you cannot incorporate hills into your schedule (i.e. knee problems, heart condition, etc...) do not despair. Talk to your coach about adjusting your schedule accordingly.

This outline should cover all of the various training techniques that are mentioned in your training schedules. As always, we are here to help you adjust your schedule if needed. Here are a few quick principles to guide you when altering your own schedule.

Allow for one LONG WALK weekly, this is your endurance walk and is the cornerstone to your training. Always aim to get your long walk in weekly, it is imperative to enduring the long distance.

When you have a “hard” workout during the week you should allow for a rest day, cross training, easy walking, yoga, stretching, or other easy non-walking activity for the following day. Your “hard” training may be your long walk, hill repeats, or intervals. These workouts are meant to stress your body so be sure to allow for appropriate recovery before taking on the next stint of training days.

Incorporate at least one higher intensity workout each week. Set one day aside to work on pushing yourself that little bit harder to help improve your fitness and speed.

Walk Strong! Walk Proud! Your goal is only a step away.

PRACTICAL NUTRITION TIPS

We go on and on and on and on about nutrition because this is important business. Good nutrition can and will make a world of difference not only in your performance, but also in how you feel physically and mentally during your race and as you cross the finish line. Here are some practical tips, put into real every-day language and with actual food examples that will hopefully encourage you to heed our advice.

Every Day Nutrition and Hydration

One important part of good race and training nutrition is your everyday eating and diet patterns. We won't go into this in detail, but in brief... a healthy diet and good hydration habits on a daily basis will contribute to better overall health and therefore better overall training and race performance.

Before Training

It was once believed that exercising on an empty stomach was the best idea because your body would be forced to burn fat as a fuel. It is true that when there is no carbohydrate, your body's preferred energy source, it will turn to fat for energy. Unfortunately this process of turning fat into usable energy is not terribly efficient and your body will have difficulty keeping up with the energy demands your body is calling for over a long duration or high intensity workout. Your body can only metabolize a limited amount of fat at a time and will turn to body protein stores, including muscle, for the remainder of energy needed. This is not a good thing. You definitely do not want to be using precious protein stores for energy. Having a little carbohydrate on board provides your body with an efficient energy source for immediate use. At the same time your body will be required to burn some fat as fuel, and this is done far more efficiently when there is some carbohydrate around too.

As a rule you should not have a full meal within 2 hours of training and for some people not within 4 hours. This will depend on your own personal tolerance and the intensity of your workout. You should aim to have a snack that includes carbohydrate and a little protein within about 1-2 hours of your workout. The food will be digested so it won't be sitting in your belly and the fuel will be in your bloodstream ready to power you up as your workout begins. Some examples can be found at the end of the notes.

During Training

The same discussion as above regarding the necessity of having carbohydrate energy available is repeated here. Your body stores carbohydrate in your muscles and liver in a form called glycogen. There is a limited storage capacity for glycogen and this may only last for 45 minutes to 1½ hours for most people. What this means is that you need to continually provide carbohydrate energy throughout your workout in order to be sure that your energy level doesn't drop, or as it is often called... Hitting the Wall. This is easily prevented and by following this advice we guarantee you will feel better longer through your training periods and your race event.

As a general rule an athlete needs about 30–60 grams of carbohydrate per hour to keep going strong. How much depends on the intensity of the workout and the fitness level of the person. For most walkers who are not power walking or race walking we tend to recommend closer to the lower end, say 30–40 grams per hour. This will come from a combination of food, gels, and sports drinks. Look at the chart on the last page for ideas. As a rule, don't wait until you feel drained before you fuel up, just as you should never wait until you feel thirsty before drinking. Get that carbohydrate into you at every half hour or every hour and trust that it is doing its job before you really need it or before it's too late.

After Training

Rehydrate and refuel following your workout. Within the first 20–60 minutes of a workout is the best time to rebuild your glycogen stores and refuel with protein for muscle tissue repair and building. A snack will suffice in this time frame but aim to have a full meal within 2 hours of your workout. Where carbohydrate is most important before and during training, both carbohydrate and protein are important after a workout. A ham sandwich for example.

Try different things out on long training days to discover what works best for you. Some examples of things you may feel if you are under-hydrated, under-fueled, or if your sodium/potassium – fluid/electrolyte balance is off include: light headed or dizzy, nausea, exhaustion, lack of sweating, muscle stiffness and fatigue, general overall fatigue, elevated heart rate, low blood pressure (dizzy or light-headed), fainting, vomiting, and more...

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WORKOUT NUTRITION IDEAS

Pre-Workout: *have something within 1-2 hours before your workout, aiming to include a serving of “carbs” and possibly a little protein*

Individual yogurt and a piece of fruit	1/2 pita with peanut butter
Granola bar (i.e. Nature Valley or other all natural brand is preferable)	½ bagel with sliced ham or cheese
Small muffin – preferably home made	Hard boiled egg and a slice of toast
Piece of fruit with a few almonds	1 cup cooked oatmeal with berries

During the Workout: *aim for at least 30-40 grams of carbohydrate each hour by using sports drinks, gels, or food options provided below. Don't skimp on the electrolytes, they're important too and can be provided by sport gels, sport drinks or by adding a little salt to your own fluid mixture. Some walkers can tolerate more solid foods while walking so I've added a few ideas to try out. For anything other than gels it is best to eat a little bit every 20-30 minutes rather than all at once. Take gels in one shot with plenty of water.*

1 sport gel = about 25-30 grams carbs	1 dried fruit bar = 25 grams carbs
1 medium banana = 30 grams carbs	<i>(I refer to the thicker bars that resemble fruit to go, called fruit source by SunRype or any comparable product)</i>
1 granola bar = 30 grams carbs	
3-4 fig bar cookies (Fig Newton type)	
1 package of Sport Beans by Jelly Belly	

Gatorade or Eload = 15 grams in 250ml <i>You want this for electrolyte replacement too and even if you don't like it for your training, be prepared to drink it at the race in small amounts at aid stations. Don't go without electrolytes replacement!</i>	125 ml orange juice diluted with 125 ml water, with 1/8 tablespoon salt added. <i>Provides about 15 grams carbs plus some potassium and the sodium from the added salt. Try this if you really cannot tolerate sports drinks, but don't go with only water.</i>
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Here is what you should plan to carry on training lasting 4 hours: 1 bottle of Gatorade (or the juice concoction mentioned above) to be refilled with water along the way; one package of Eload or 1-2 salt packages just in case you need more electrolytes; 1 sport gel for every hour you are out there, or one each of the other 30 gram carb choices for EVERY HOUR you are out there; money to stop for food/drinks in case of emergency. If you ever feel lightheaded or dizzy, stop, sit down and figure out what you were missing – water, carbs or salt!

On race day expect to carry similar to above except you can carry just water and drink sports drinks at stations, or bring your juice concoction and rely on aid stations for water.

In general, one gel or 30 gram carb snack, plus 1 cup of Gatorade or other sport drink **each hour** will provide you with what you need. Add in additional water when you can get it from a water fountain, bathroom, or aid station at a race.

TIMING AND KNOWING YOUR WALKING PACE

Timing yourself and knowing your walking pace are two of the many skills or tools that you will find helpful in monitoring your progress, ensuring that you are training at a optimum level for improving fitness, and will be helpful in setting your final pace or finish time goal.

First off you will need equipment:

A **pedometer** that measures distance and has a stopwatch is the simplest piece of equipment. You have to make sure that you have your pace distance set accurately so look at the instructions that come with your pedometer, or ask your coach if you're not sure how to do this. Now that your pace distance is set your pedometer will be able to measure the distance you have walked, and the time it took you. Use the calculation below to determine your pace for that walk.

A **stopwatch and map software**. Map software such as Map Art on CD can be purchased anywhere that Map Art maps are sold; however, there has been some difficulty as many stores are selling out of this item. You can find it online at www.mapart.com and order it that way. This is HIGHLY recommend for anyone who is considering walking from now and forever as you can make maps anywhere in the GTA and know the distance you are traveling. Once you have a set distance, time your walk and calculate your pace based on the calculation below.

GPS devices such as the Garmin Forerunner. For the serious walker with goal setting in mind. These devices track distance through a satellite so are just about the most accurate measure you can get. They also have other gadgets built in such as heart rate monitor, pace monitor, interval workout alerts and much much more. Go to www.runningroom.com and click on "shop" for product reviews and you will find the Garmin Forerunner listed there if you want to know more.

Second, you need to calculate:

- Calculate the time it took you to walk in minutes
- Divide the total minutes by the distance in km
- This will give you the minutes in decimals
- To calculate minutes and seconds per km...
 - Take the decimal value and multiply it by 60 (as in 60 seconds) to find out how many seconds the decimal calculates into

- Eg. 2 hours and 50 minutes for a half marathon (21km)
 - $(2 \times 60 \text{ minutes}) + 50 \text{ minutes} = 170 \text{ minutes}$
 - $170 \text{ min} / 21 \text{ km} = 8.10 \text{ min/km}$ (decimal value)
 - $.10 \times 60 \text{ seconds} = 6 \text{ seconds}$, therefore your pace was 8 minutes and 6 seconds per km or 8:06 min:sec / km

Understanding and using your pace time:

This value, minutes and seconds per km, is the way that paces are displayed in timed walking/running events. It is very useful in your training as you can monitor how your pace is improving, and you can set goals for training to improve your pace.

Long walks: the weekly long walk should be geared at hitting the distance at a comfortable steady pace and not be focused yet on speed, but you will notice that you get faster as the training goes on and your fitness improves. Time your long walks and keep track of your progress and set goals for future long walks.

Weekday walks: on “steady walk” training days you should be aiming for a goal pace, that is to say, this should be a good strong steady pace that is the fastest pace you can hold but still be comfortable for the duration of the walk. This may be viewed as your goal race pace as you stand currently. Expect this pace to improve over training as you become fitter and more accomplished at walking. The pace on these shorter walks will most likely be faster than your long walks. Monitor your pace on these shorter walks and you will begin to see improvement over time, and be able to set goals for upcoming training sessions.

Setting your finishing time goal:

This comes later on in training. We will be discussing the use of pace bands, setting and holding a steady pace, and being economical by pacing to conserve energy for the long haul. In the meantime continue to monitor your pace times intermittently and by the time we are ready to set goal finish times you will have a good idea of what pace you can hold comfortably.

On your training schedule you will notice that every so often a long walk is identified as being walked at “goal pace”. These are the times where you can evaluate your pace and aim for a time goal to meet on these training days. This will be a chance to test your current pace and see if you can hold it for a longer distance.

How Long Does it Take to Walk a Marathon?

Half Marathon 21.1 km 13 miles	Full Marathon 42.2 km 26 miles	Average Pace	
4 hours	8 hours	18 minute mile (3.33 mph)	11 minute km (5.28 kph)
3 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours	7 hours	16 minute mile (3.75 mph)	10 minute km (6.03 kph)
3 hours	6 hours	14 minute mile (4.28 mph)	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ minute km (7.03 kph)
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours	5 hours	12 minute mile (5.00 mph)	7 minute km (8.44 kph)

THE BIG DAY RACE DAY PREPARATION

Approaching race day feeling ready is not only about training, but about being prepared both physically and psychologically. Whether this is your first walking event or your 100th, the following tips will get you from the Start to the Finish feeling your best.

Weeks Leading up to Race Day

A few weeks before race day you will be reaching your peak distances. On these long distances you should be doing trial runs (or is that trial walks?) or dress rehearsals. What this means is going on your long walks wearing the clothing and shoes that you will wear on race day, drinking and eating in a pattern that you plan to on race day. It is important to have confidence that your routine works for you as you step up to the start line.

During the last few weeks before race day your schedule will guide you into what is called a taper period. During this period you will reduce the distances traveled on your feet and you will allow your body a chance to rest and recover in order to be strong and injury free in time for the BIG DAY.

The Day Before

1. Hydrate well – be certain to get enough fluids in on the days prior to the race
2. Eat your carbs – be sure to include a carbohydrate rich meal at dinner the night before the race to ensure that you have a good store of glycogen in your muscles. Glycogen is your body's way of storing carbohydrate energy, the first and foremost form of energy that your muscles will be depending on in the early part of your event. Your best bet is a pasta, rice, or noodle dish. This is why there are pasta parties at these big events.
3. Don't eat anything different or try anything new. It is not a good day to try raw oysters for the first time. You don't know how your body is going to react. Best to stick with foods that you know and are familiar with. On a similar note, don't try out any new ideas that you may have heard will help you on race day unless you have done it before and know that it works for you. For example, if you heard that drinking a bottle of red wine before bed will knock you out and guarantee a great night's sleep... um... probably not a good idea on any given day, but especially not the night before your race.
4. Set out your gear and clothing. Nothing is worse than running around in the morning with that feeling that you forgot something. Make sure your timing chip is attached to your shoe. (the timing chip will be given to you in your race kit and it will be explained how to attach it)
5. Go over your plan in your mind and psyche yourself up with positive thoughts.
6. Relax. Read a book, watch a movie or go for a swim and sauna in the hotel pool. Do whatever you find relaxes you best.
7. Get a good night's sleep.

Race Day Morning

1. Get up early. Allow your self a good 2-3 hours before race start to wake up, freshen up, go to the bathroom and eat a little breakfast.
2. Eat breakfast about 1-2 hours prior to start time. Follow what has worked for you during training. Some good ideas are yogurt and fruit, bagel or pita with peanut butter, a muffin with a piece of fruit. Don't go for anything too high in fibre or protein because these foods tend to digest slower and you won't want anything sitting heavy in your stomach when you hit the start line.
3. Plan to arrive at the start line area about 30-40 minutes prior to start time. This gives you time to get oriented, use the washroom, or whatever else you need to do to feel prepared and not rushed.

4. Walk around and warm up for 15 minutes. Do a little light stretching after you are warmed up.
5. Make sure your bib is pinned on the front of your shirt and is visible. There are cameras out there taking pictures so you will want your bib number showing so that the photo company can identify you when your pictures are ready. Ok, the real reason for the bib is so that the officials know who you are and that you are in fact supposed to be there on the route.
6. Find your spot in line. Many larger races will have a corralled start. What this means is that you will be expected to get in line at the location marked by your pace time. This is one reason it is important to know your pace time. Alternatively, you should be closer to the front if you are an elite competing walker or runner, and closer to the back if you know you will be on the slower side.
7. What to wear? If it feels cold, then shiver a little, but don't bundle up. Remember to keep a few things in mind. First, the day will warm up as the hours pass, so in 1 or 2 hours it will not be as cold as it is at the starting time. Second, you will be moving and warming up very quickly so that extra layer of clothing will be a burden before very long. Look ahead at the temperature forecast and dress according to what you know is comfortable at that temperature, not the temperature at start time. If it is really cold you can always take along an old, discardable shirt and toss it on the side of the road at an aide station when you get too hot, but you won't get it back. Some events will take these discarded items and donate them to charity.
8. Finally, don't do anything different than what worked for you in training. Race day is not the time to experiment.

During the Race

1. Aide stations will be found frequently along the route and will provide Gatorade or something similar, water, and cheering volunteers. Sometimes they have food or gels too. Use these stations wisely, and conserve your own fluid for times of need between stations.
2. Walkers and slower runners should always stick close to the right or left hand side, or the "inside" depending on the route. This allows others to pass you without being hindered. Port-a-potty stops will be available along the route. This varies with each event, but they are usually found at the aide stations.

End of the Race

1. Smile as you cross the finish line. Revel in your accomplishment! Celebrate your Success!
2. Don't stop immediately if you were moving quickly. You need to walk it out a little and let your heart rate slow gradually. If you feel dizzy or faint let an official know right away.
3. People will be just inside the finish line to remove your chip. Don't bend over; let them do it for you. You don't want the blood rushing to your head.
4. Once you have cooled down a bit give your muscles a gentle stretch. If you have been injured or are in particular pain, there are massage stations available at most races as well as medical tents.
5. Get yourself some food! There will be fruit, juice, water, bagels, cookies and/or other goodies.
6. Sign in at the **TNT TEAM TENT**. This is very important because we will not leave the course until we know that we have seen our entire team to the finish. Plus, there will be goodies there for you.

Participating in a competitive event can be intimidating but it is also very exciting and exhilarating. Let us know if there is anything we can do to make sure that your experience is the best it can be.

KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK
SET YOUR GOALS HIGH
AND LET YOUR FEET TAKE YOU THERE

GO TEAM!