

Safe Walking Guidelines

Walking itself poses little risk, but follow these guidelines to improve your safety and get the most out of each walking session.

• Sneakers

Sneakers should be supportive with a thick sole, not too constricting or loose, have a padded tongue and heel pad, and flexible. Comfort and fit are more important than style! If you notice your sneakers are losing their shape or the bottoms are visibly worn, it may be time to purchase a new pair of sneakers. Typically sneakers should be purchased yearly to ensure they support your feet and absorb each step.

• Clothing

Clothing is personal choice based on comfort but should be breathable, loose and non-restrictive, allow for repetitive movements, and suitable for the weather conditions i.e windy, increased temperatures, cold conditions. If walking at night, wear reflective and bright colored clothing to ensure drivers can see you from a distance.

• Environmental Factors

Traffic:

Choose a walking area with minimal traffic. If unavoidable, be sure the area has outlined walking lanes, even sidewalks, visible cross walks to safely cross the street, and are well lit (if walking after dusk).

Parks and Tracks:

If available, parks and walking tracks should be chosen for your daily activity regimen. Typically parks and tracks have outlined paths that are well lit and free of cracks, debris, and other obstacles that can make walking challenging.

Weather:

Extreme weather conditions can greatly impact your safety. During the summer months and extreme heat it is important to wear light-weight and light colored clothing that lets heat escape, a sun visor or hat to protect your head, sunglasses to avoid sun glare, use sun block to avoid sun burn, and stay hydrated. The more you sweat, the more fluid your body is losing. Staying hydrated replaces the fluid lost while sweating and decreases the risk for heat exhaustion, dizziness, and fainting. During winter months and extreme cold, it is important to wear layered clothing that keeps heat in, sunglasses to avoid sun glare, a wool hat that covers ears to keep heat in (heat escapes through your head), and to stay hydrated. Sweating still occurs during colder temperatures and dehydration can occur. Avoid walking altogether in extreme heat and cold conditions, and surfaces that are icy or wet.

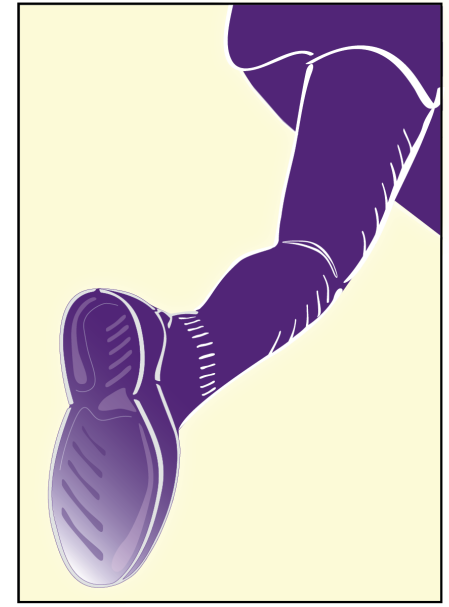
• Gait & Stride

Walking doesn't require much skill but there are a few tips to keep in mind. Maintain good posture keeping your chin up, eyes forward, shoulders squared, and stomach tight. Arms should be close to your body, bent at the elbow, and pump slightly during walking. Avoid hanging your arms at your sides, as fluid can pool in your hands. Strides should be natural landing on your heels then rolling forward to push off with your toes. Keep up a steady rhythm to increase your heart rate to provide maximum health benefits.

• Warm-Up & Cool-Down

To avoid injury a five minute stretching routine is recommended before and after walking. By stretching, your muscles are able to loosen and become more flexible which can ultimately avoid injuries and strain. Think of a total body stretching routine from head to toe, both left and right sides.

Walk This Way!



For more information, check out our website at

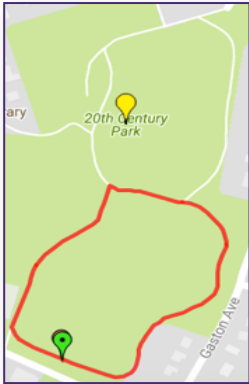
www.generations4garfield.org



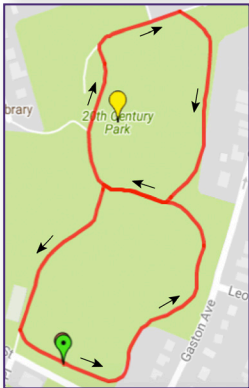
A Community for All Ages
An Age-Friendly Initiative

There is a Route for You!

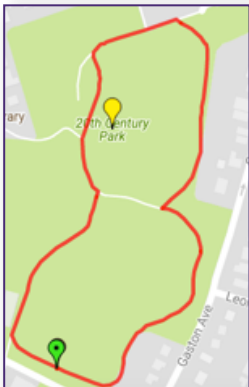
The maps listed below outline the track of 20th Century Park located along Gaston Avenue between Elizabeth Street and Krakow Street. You can choose which route is best for you based on your goals and activity level. Each map starts at the green icon located at the Elizabeth Street entrance (across from the Health Department) and outlines in red the estimated mileage and steps for 1 lap.



1x around the $\frac{1}{2}$ circle
= 0.35 miles
3x around = Approximately
1 mi. or 2,000 steps



1x around the figure eight
= 0.67 miles
1.5x around = Approximately
1 mi. or 2,000 steps



1 x around the perimeter
= 0.60 miles
2x around = Approximately
1 mile or 2,000 steps

Walking Recommendations

Walking can be modified to meet your goals and activity level. Whether you are just starting a walking regimen or are a daily walker, there are always ways to adjust your route and technique to suit your goals and level of fitness. The American Heart Association recommends adults get a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity 5 days a week or 150 minutes weekly. Don't let 30 minutes overwhelm you, starting with just 10 minutes 2 – 3x a day can be just as beneficial as a full 30 minutes. Beginners are encouraged to start with less time and work toward a goal of 30 continuous minutes. As always, talk to your physician first before engaging in a regular walking or exercise program.

Health Benefits

Walking is an inexpensive exercise known to have many positive health effects. If you have a supportive pair of sneakers, you are ready to reap the benefits! According to the American Heart Association walking just 30 minutes a day can reduce your risk for heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis, some cancers, and type II diabetes; improve your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and mental well-being including depression; decrease stress; and maintain a healthy weight or aid in weight loss. Did you know walking can improve your memory? According to the AARP researchers followed 300 older adults for 13 years and found those who had walked 6 – 9 miles a week lowered their risk of memory problems (including forgetfulness and dementia) by 50%. Those who walked 40 minutes 3x a week slowed age-related declines in brain function and improved their performance on cognitive tasks.

Hydration

Staying hydrated is very important for your body to carry out basic functions and maintain optimal

health. To avoid dehydration the daily recommendation is 8 – 10 cups of water a day. However, increased exercise or activity calls for more water to be consumed to replace the fluid lost during sweating. The American Council on Exercise recommends drinking at least 8 fluid oz. the hour before you plan to walk or exercise, 8 oz. of water every 10 – 20 minutes during exercise, and 8 oz. within 30 minutes after exercising. Avoid the sports drinks that pack on extra calories and sugar, and drink plain water to replenish the fluids lost.

Walking Off the Calories

Weight gain occurs as we age as a result of sedentary lifestyle, decreased metabolism, loss of muscle, and unbalanced diet. A daily walking routine can ward off those extra pounds. Although intensity plays a major role in calorie expenditure, included below is a basic guide to show how many miles are needed to burn calories based on your weight. A 120 lb. person can burn roughly 85 calories per mile, a 160 lb. person can burn 100 calories per mile, a 200 lb. person can burn roughly 125 calories per mile, and a 220 lb. person can burn roughly 135 calories per mile.

Interested in the Garfield Walking Club?

Fill out the information below and bring to the
Garfield Health Department,
60 Elizabeth St, Garfield, NJ

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Emergency Contact _____