

Let's Get Walking

Part I of a Weekly Series

By Mark Lorenzoni

No other sporting activity has been more popular throughout our country during the pandemic, than walking. Yes, good old fashioned, one foot in front of the other walking. And it's no wonder why, as it's safe-feeling, accessible, inexpensive, efficient and excellent for your health, especially as you hit your senior years. Not only does it help burn calories and strengthen your muscles and joints but it also builds your aerobic engine along the way. In fact, the latest research tells us that if you walk as far as a runner runs and you do it to the point of sweating but not panting, you will gain the same cardiovascular benefits as running that distance! Simply put, making walking an essential part of your daily routine will lead to a longer and healthier life!

But, be aware, that because walking is so good for you, it can also injure you, as it's a weight bearing activity. Aches and pains like shin splints, knees and hips can quickly crop up if you start with too much. So, you still need to take the proper steps in getting yourself going.

Last fall, Cynthia and I experienced the trip of a lifetime, as we fulfilled a twenty year dream by walking across England along the "Coast to Coast" path. The spectacular 195 mile walk takes you from the Irish Sea, over three beautiful National Parks and through countless historic villages, finally to the North Sea.

I'd like to now share that incredible experience with you. So, every Sunday, over the next 10 weeks, I'll cover 20 miles of this magnificent hike with you, in hopes that you will walk your own personal and individual 20 miles for that week, right here along the roads and paths of beautiful Central Virginia. That works out to about 3 miles/day, so in 10 weeks you'll have physically walked the entire 195 mile breadth across England, except you'll have accomplished it all on Virginia soil. Along the way, I'll not only highlight the walk's beautiful scenery, I'll also offer tips to help you safely and comfortably enjoy your daily exercise locally.

If you're currently walking 15-20 miles/week, then you're all set to go but if you aren't, then here's a starter program to get you going. And you can still cover the 195 mile Walk Across England, it will just take a bit longer than the 10 weeks.

WEEK #1

M- 10 minutes

W- 15 minutes

Sat.- 15 minutes

Sun.- 10 minutes

WEEK #2

M- 15 minutes

W- 25 minutes

Th- 15 minutes

Sat.- 25 minutes

Sun-15 minutes

WEEK #3

M- 25 minutes

Tu- 20 minutes

W- 35 minutes

Th- 25 minutes

Sat.-40 minutes

Sun- 25 minutes

WEEK #4

M- 35 minutes

Tu- 25 minutes

W- 45 minutes

Th- 35 minutes

Fri- 15 minutes

Sat.- 55 minutes

Sun.- 35 minutes

WEEK #5

M- 45 minutes

Tu- 30 minutes

W- 55 minutes

Th- 40 minutes

F- 25 minutes

Sat- 60 minutes

Sun- 45 minutes

First tip is to make sure you're never breathing too heavily. The more rapid you're breathing the less efficient you are and the greater the chance of injury or burnout. Effort, not pace, counts...so the hillier the terrain the slower you need to go. Quiet breathing should always be your monitor.

Come join me and let's get started!