

Important Safety Tips for Outdoor Runners & Walkers

Put Your Safety First with These Strategies

Never walk alone

If at all possible, walk with a training partner. Not only does this increase your safety while walking or running; it also makes your training so much more enjoyable. In the absence of a training companion, always tell someone which route you will be walking or running and what time you expect to return.

Vary your routes

Don't establish regular patterns by taking the same route at the same time every day. Keep one step ahead of any would-be muggers by randomly varying your routes and the times that you go out. Not only is it safer, but it's a lot more interesting!

Bring a Cell Phone

In an age where pay phones are rare and businesses are reluctant to let you use their phones, it is always a good idea to carry one with you in case of trouble. This is especially true if you run in a rural setting. Make sure you have an ICE (In Case of Emergency) entry in your cell phone book. EMS and other emergency personnel are trained to look for that listing in cell phones so they know whom to contact on your behalf.

Carry Identification

Whether you carry your driver's license in your pocket or wear a Road ID bracelet, make sure you carry some form of ID just in case you are injured or rendered unconscious. Your identification should include your name, emergency contacts, and other essential information, such as drug allergies or pre-existing medical conditions. You can also simply write your emergency contact information on a piece of paper in your pocket.

Run Against the Flow of Traffic

Facing traffic helps you see when cars are coming. In an age where people do everything in their car except drive sometimes, you must be the defensive if you are running or walking on the street. (On a related note, biking is a different story. Always go with the flow of traffic when cycling.)

Remember, always put your safety first. This will allow you to continue exercising for a long time to come.



Beware of Dogs

The best thing to do if approached by a dog is to stop running or walking. A dog will be able to outrun a walker or runner any time, so it is best to slowly back up away from the dog. Try to put something between you and the dog. If you have access to a stick or rock, that may be a deterrent. (Throw the object away from you – not at the dog – so he or she will chase it instead of you.) And as a last resort, drop to the ground and curl up in a ball, making sure you cover your face and head.

Wear Reflective Gear

Wearing some form of reflective gear, whether a hat, jacket, shirt, or button, especially at night, dusk or dawn, allows others to see you more easily. Any time you can become more visible allows for better safety. At the very least, avoid wearing dark colors like black, blue or brown during these dimly lit times. The brighter you are, the better off you'll be.

Sources: www.sparkpeople.com, www.runnersworld.com

Motivate Your Mind

You know there is no magic way to shed pounds or become fit. The only way to get there is through hard work and eating right. Yet you can give yourself a leg up in the process by changing how you think about food, weight loss and eating healthy. By changing how you think, you'll also change how you act and hopefully impact your health for the better.

Give your mind some motivation with these ideas!

Pick out a motivational photograph. Whether you want to look more like you did 20 years ago or have the physique of someone else you admire, choose a photograph you can look at when you're struggling to help keep yourself motivated.

Set smaller daily goals. While your larger goals are important, focusing on smaller, individual goals will give you more of a sense of accomplishment and change your mindset on a daily basis.

Tell yourself you can do it. Change your mindset about weight loss by constantly reminding yourself that no matter how hard it is that you can and will do it.

WHAT YOU DO TODAY CAN IMPROVE ALL YOUR TOMORROWS

Never stop thinking about your goals. Keeping your goals in mind throughout the day will help motivate you and keep you on the right track.

Look at the bright side. Setbacks don't have to ruin your motivation for weight loss. Instead, think of them as a chance to work harder and prove your commitment to your goals.

To view the full article (50 Tips for Changing Mindset), visit the Motivational Tips blog on inchargefitnesscenter.com.

Healthy Recipe: Grilled Pork Chops (4 servings)

Start preparing this entree the night before you grill it. This is a fabulous marinade with a unique flavor.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup minced fresh parsley
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- ½ tsp pepper
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- 4 boneless pork loin chops (1 in. thick)

Directions:

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the first eight ingredients; add pork chops. Seal bag and turn to coat; refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight. Drain and discard marinade. Grill pork chops, covered, over medium heat for 10-15 minutes on each side or until juices run clear.

Nutrition (per serving - one pork chop)

Calories: 72.2, Total Fat: 6.9 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Sodium: 900.9 mg, Total Carbs: 2.0 g, Dietary Fiber: .5 g, Protein: 1.2 g

