



**Mount
Sinai
Health
Partners**

Claudication Walking Program (Treadmill)

Patients who have intermittent claudication can benefit from a regular walking program. Studies have shown that regular exercise, particularly walking, can improve your symptoms of leg pain. In fact, a structured walking program can increase walking distance and speed more than any medication that is currently on the market. Studies have demonstrated that many patients can increase their walking distance 4 to 8 fold if they walk as explained below.

Follow these steps, and call your primary care doctor if you have any questions or concerns.

Step # 1 Warm up by stretching legs, calves, and back for 5 minutes. This is very important to help relieve some of the muscle discomfort that occurs.

Step # 2 Begin walking at **2.0 MPH** with no incline.

Note: Can start with higher walking MPH in Step #2 and increase accordingly to the protocol, exs, increase 0.2 MPH for Step 3, etc. .

Step # 3 Walk until you develop discomfort or tiredness in your legs and continue to walk until the **leg discomfort is a 3-4 on the pain scale**.

Claudication Scale:

1. No pain
2. Onset of claudication (pain, discomfort, tiredness, cramping)
- 3. Mild pain or discomfort**
- 4. Moderate pain or discomfort**
5. Severe pain or discomfort- could not walk any further.

Step # 4 Once you have reached a 3-4 on the pain scale, **stop walking completely** and stand until the discomfort goes away (should not take more than 2-3 minutes).

Step # 5 Once the discomfort is gone, restart the treadmill at **2.0 MPH**. Do not force yourself to walk with severe pain.

Step # 6 Repeat this pattern of walking/resting/walking etc. for a total of 45 minutes. The 45 minutes includes stopping time. Try and do this 5 days a week.

Step # 7 Once you can walk more than 8 minutes without having to stop, increase the speed up to **2.2 MPH** (or by 0.2 MPH if you started at a higher speed).



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Step # 8 Stretch legs, calves and back for 5 minutes.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- **Once you are able to walk for 8 minutes without having to stop, increase the speed by 0.2 MPH (i.e. in this case increase it to 2.4 MPH). Once you can do 3.2 MPH easily for 8 minutes, increase the incline to 0.5% and once you can do that easily go to 1%.**
- **Each time the discomfort occurs, stop at pain level of 3-4.**
- Repeat this cycle for 45 minutes (including the time you are resting), 5 days a week.
- Make sure you stretch before and after walking.
- **GOAL FOR YOU:** To walk at MPH at a **3.2 MPH** at a 1.5% incline for 45 minutes without having to stop.
- Not only will this improve your walking performance, decrease your discomfort, and improve your quality of life, this type of program is also beneficial for your heart, blood pressure and lipid (cholesterol and triglyceride) levels.

THIS WORKS IF YOU DO IT PROPERLY!!!

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