**TIPS FOR WALKING FASTER**

1. Use good posture. Walk tall, look forward, (not at the ground) gazing about 20 feet ahead. Your chin should be level and your head up.

2. Keep your chest raised, and shoulders relaxed (shoulders down, back and relaxed).

3. Bend your arms in slightly less than a 90 degree angle. Cup your hands gently. Swing arms front to back (not side to side - arms should not cross your body.) Do not swing elbows higher than your sternum (breast bone). Swing your arms faster and your feet will follow.

4. Tighten your abs and buttocks.. Flatten your back and tilt your pelvis slightly forward.

5. Pretend you are walking along a straight line. Resist the urge to elongate your steps. To go faster -- take smaller, faster steps.

6. Push off with your toes. Concentrate on landing on your heel, rolling through the step and pushing off with your toes. Use the natural spring of your calf muscles to propel you forward.

7. Breathe naturally. As you walk, take deep, rhythmic breaths, to get the maximum amount of oxygen through your system. Walk fast enough that your breathing is increased yet you are not out of breath (Conversation Pace).

**WALKING DON'TS:** Common mistakes made by walkers...

1. Do not over stride
2. Do not use too vigorous arm movements
3. Do not look at the ground
4. Do not hunch your shoulders
5. Do not carry hand weights or place weights on your ankles

**What is the difference in power walking, fitness walking, and racewalking?**

Fitness walking is called by many different names - power walking, fitness walking, health walking. Power walking is commonly used to represent an exaggerated walking style. This style of overstriding and exaggerated arm movements is often linked with injuries. Because of this I don't generally use the term power walking. A better term for a healthful energetic walking pace is "fitness walking".

Fitness walking is much more than a stroll or nature walk. When fitness walking you incorporate the muscles of the upper body making it a GREAT aerobic activity. It burns approximately the same calories as running, yet it is much easier on the body. Because more muscles are used it burns calories much quicker than less aggressive walking. It also tones muscles in the buttocks, thighs, hips, shoulders, upper back and abs. Most fitness walkers average about 12 to 15 minutes per mile.

Unlike **racewalking**; there is no official definition. There are no rules. If you walk at a purposeful fitness walking pace using good technique you are a fitness walker. **Use tips above to insure good walking form and to increase your pace.**