



**Greater Meriden
Chamber of Commerce
Health and Wellness Council**

Walking for Wellness: Pedometer Challenge!

Your challenge, if you choose to accept it:

Increase your daily steps for better health. Encourage your co-workers to join you on your challenge, maybe even engage them in a little friendly competition to see who can take the most steps throughout the week.

Why should I walk for better health?

There are many reasons to walk for better health. Besides helping to control weight, participating in regular physical activity has been shown to lower blood pressure, lower high blood cholesterol, prevent and/or control diabetes, and improve muscle mass and endurance. Regular physical activity helps one increase their resistance to fatigue, relax and feel less tense, and improve their ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well. It has also been shown that regular physical activity makes one more productive when at work.

OK, my company is interested. Can you help me set up a pedometer challenge program at work?

YES! A representative from the Health & Wellness Council can come to your business to help you set up your program. We can even provide a “brown bag lunch” educational program on walking for better health at no charge to you.

Will you provide pedometers?

The Health & Wellness Committee has a limited number of pedometers available to businesses interested in the program. They will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis.

What if we are unable to obtain pedometers?

Pedometers are relatively inexpensive to purchase. If you choose not to wear a pedometer, you can count 30 minutes of activity as 3,000 steps.

What are the guidelines, if any, to the program?

The Chamber would like to create some friendly competition between members, so we've set up a couple of guidelines for the pedometer challenge program.

1. Each business should have a “point person”. The point person is more than welcome to have a co-coordinator.

2. This point person will be responsible for collecting participant's total step tally for the week and emailing it to the Chamber.
3. The Chamber will post the total amount of steps on their website; you can post individual successes at your work site.
4. The length of the program will be up to you. We recommend running the program for at least 3 months.

How can I motivate my co-workers to stick with the program?

People are motivated by different things. Here are some ideas to keep people involved in your program:

1. Have co-workers form teams of 3 or 4. They can give their team a name or theme. The "buddy-system" has been shown to be highly successful.
2. Post each persons or teams' weekly total step count in a central location for all to see. There is truth in numbers!
3. Create a bi-weekly theme – ie. "we are walking to New York, it takes "X" amount of steps to get there". Get a map of the U.S., post it on the wall. Take photos of teams and advance them on the map as they get closer to their final destination. The Chamber can help you convert miles into steps.
4. Money talks - have co-workers pay a certain amount of money up front for the program. If they reach their goal, they get the money back. Or, the top 3 walkers get the pool of money or a prize. You can also award prizes on a weekly basis, such as a special parking lot or a small gift certificate to the local lunch spot.

Will the Health and Wellness Council provide ongoing support?

While the goal is to have the company take ownership of their program (while trying to follow the easy guidelines listed above), the Health & Wellness Council can provide some ongoing support. We can meet with the point person to discuss challenges and successes that can be applied to current and future health and wellness programs. We can also provide a list on of online resources for further program planning and evaluation.