

## Walk This Way

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The last Carnival beads have been thrown and the last king cake is just a memory. It's time to get back on track with that New Year's resolution about starting an exercise program. Tulane fitness and wellness expert Sarah Grunblatt knows how to get you moving toward your goal: walking.



Some walkers prefer the air-conditioned comfort of walking indoors, such as on the indoor track at the Reily Student Recreation Center. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

A walking routine works for anyone, anywhere, at any age. Of course, it might be a good idea to get a health checkup first before you tie on those comfortable walking shoes. The next step is to plan your routine.

“Some people prefer to join a facility, make friends and walk around an indoor track,” says Grunblatt, who is the assistant director of fitness and wellness at Tulane. At the [Reily Student Recreation Center](#), where Grunblatt's office is located, a corps of walkers joined the center just to take advantage of the its indoor track.

Other walkers may prefer the outdoors, in a park or around the neighborhood. Having company on your walk may help you stick to it.

“A big part of the walking thing is the social aspect,” Grunblatt says. “Definitely find someone or a couple of people to walk with and enjoy that time. Most people won't stick to something if they don't have another external motivator.”

Ultimately, Grunblatt recommends a program of 30 minutes of walking at a time, four to five days a week. That fits the most recent guidelines of the American College of Sports Medicine. Anyone who hasn't exercised in a while will need to start out slowly and build up to the 30-minute walk.

Regular walking has real benefits, especially for senior adults.

“There is definitely a positive effect,” says Michal Jazwinski, director of the [Tulane Center for Aging](#). “It does improve blood flow to the brain.” Some studies even show that regular walking could improve memory for the those in the over-55 group.

What have you got to lose? Start walking!