

# How can I get involved in neighbourhood walking?



Eager to stretch your legs close to home? Want to see more familiar faces in your neighbourhood? Heart&Stroke Walkabout™ and Halifax Regional Municipality can help! You'll get all you need to experience the great walking opportunities we enjoy in the HRM.

## Why Walking?

- Walking connects you to your community; the people in it, as well as the natural and built environments.
- Walking builds stronger neighbourhoods. More people walking in a community will make it safer from traffic, safer from crime, and more socially tight-knit.
- Walking is a wonderful social or independent activity.
- Walking is accessible and inexpensive.
- Walking is an all-weather, year-round activity, and it requires minimal organization. The more people walk, the less pollution and traffic is imposed on the places where we live, work, visit and play.
- Walking is a step in the right direction! Regular walking paired with healthy eating helps treat and protect against heart disease, depression, diabetes, osteoporosis and many other diseases. It improves energy levels, brainpower and general well-being!
- Walking is the most popular way Canadians choose to get active.
- If it has been a while since you hit the sidewalk or trail, it's easy to get back on track. Make a pledge to start this week – start out slowly, and you can add more time, or more difficult routes as the weeks go by. Switch it up and bring a friend for company. The most important thing is to take the first step!

## What is Walkabout?

HRM is partnering with Heart&Stroke Walkabout to help bring the benefits of walking to our neighbourhoods. Walkabout aims to help all Nova Scotians discover the benefits of walking within their communities. Their vision is to create and sustain a revitalized culture of walking in Nova Scotia. This comprehensive program includes a media campaign, contests, support for walking groups and walk-friendly workplaces, access to pedometers, and an interactive website to help you discover it all.

Neighbourhood walking is made easier with walking groups. Walking groups can be formal, or informal like a group of friends who agree to walk together and motivate each other while exploring HRM. Some walk outdoors, others indoors or both. Some don't even all walk together but still motivate and challenge each other using the Walkabout website. All walking groups can help create healthy neighbours and healthy neighbourhoods!

## How can I get involved?

- Visit the Walkabout website, [www.walkaboutns.ca](http://www.walkaboutns.ca), and register. Find walking groups and great routes around HRM. Or create your own for others to find!
- Attend a free session to get the tools you need to start, promote and lead a successful walking group for your school, workplace, family, friends or neighbours.
- Register for ongoing challenges, rewards and incentives!
- Borrow a free pedometer from any HRM library or Community Access Programming site, or purchase one at a reduced rate. Log your steps and challenge yourself – and others – to walk a certain distance or to walk further than another neighbourhood group. The website maps your progress and makes it fun. You can even win great prizes.
- Download the free Walkabout toolkit to help make your community more walking-friendly. Walkabout helps you identify needed improvements and work to get them fixed. You can even nominate your neighbourhood for a "Walkable Communities" recognition in coming years!



## Local Resources

Looking for direction for your walking adventures? Aside from the Heart and Stroke Walkabout website, be sure to check out: [www.halifax.ca/recreation](http://www.halifax.ca/recreation) and click 'Walking in HRM' to see the "Get Out Check it Out – Walk – Hike – Bike HRM" resource. It outlines 16 different trails/walking routes throughout the HRM region. For each trail/route there is a map, photos, location and entry points, as well as information on trail uses, bus routes to get you there, and a time estimate of the trail plus distance per trail.

For more information on trails be sure to check out: [www.trails.gov.ns.ca](http://www.trails.gov.ns.ca)

Looking for an adventure or treasure hunt during your walk? Try "Geocaching":  
<http://atlanticgeocaching.com/index.php>

## Contact

[www.walkaboutns.ca](http://www.walkaboutns.ca)

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Information provided in the Good Neighbours Great Neighbourhoods Tool Kit is accurate as of the date of printing. For the most current information on these and many other HRM programs, please visit [www.myhrm.ca](http://www.myhrm.ca) or [www.halifax.ca](http://www.halifax.ca)

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