



# **Get Healthy Walk 'n Talk Toolkit**

[www.GetHealthyCT.org](http://www.GetHealthyCT.org)



## **Get Healthy CT Overview**

Get Healthy CT (GHCT) is a coalition dedicated to preventing and reducing obesity by removing the barriers to healthy eating and physical activity through collaboration with community partners. Our community-wide coalition aims to “make the healthy choice the easy choice.”

Get Healthy CT began in the Greater Bridgeport Region and has since expanded to include two additional chapters: Greater New Haven and Greater Greenwich Regions. This entire coalition has grown to over 200 member organizations which includes health care providers, health departments and health districts, social service providers, colleges and universities, businesses, town and legislative leaders, researchers, and faith-based organizations. Our approach is to identify existing resources and programs and to use our website, [www.GetHealthyCT.org](http://www.GetHealthyCT.org) as the central connecting point for health and wellness information.



## **Get Healthy Walk ‘n Talk History**

The idea for Get Healthy Walk ‘n Talk from our Greater Bridgeport GHCT Healthy Lifestyles Task Force. This is a group that consists of many partners from around the six town region that collaborates on ways to increase physical activity and healthy eating in the community. In 2015, one of our task force members suggested that we work with our healthcare partners to host walks that could not only help people increase their physical activity, but could also help build relationships between local doctors and community residents.

We decided to start small and worked with the Bridgeport Department of Health and Social Services to host four walks in the spring of 2016 at Seaside Park. The walks were such a huge success that we decided to share the idea with surrounding towns and plan even more walks. In the fall of 2016, walks were held once again in Bridgeport with the addition of walks in New Haven and Trumbull. By word of mouth, these walking events began to spread and many other CT towns were showing interest in learning how to plan their own Get Healthy Walk ‘n Talks.

## **What happens at a walk?**

A walk consists of community residents walking with local healthcare professionals. During the walks, the healthcare professionals answer general health questions, while creating a safe, informal way to educate and connect with the community. The top question we always get about these walks is, “how much money will this cost?” The answer is simple, these walks can be done for **FREE**. On the next few pages, we will outline the steps to planning a walk in your own community. We hope the creation of this “Toolkit” helps spread this idea even further. Together, we can all start helping our communities move toward improved health!

## **8 Simple Steps to Planning Your Own Get Healthy Walk ‘n Talk Event**

### **1. Plan early so you have plenty of time to identify walk leaders, recruit healthcare professionals and advertise.**

- A walk leader is someone that is the contact person for each walk date and is in charge of keeping track of which providers are signed up to help on each date. If you have multiple walk dates you may want to have multiple walk leaders so that the responsibility doesn't always fall on one person.
- We have found that the more time you allow for planning and advertising, the better the turnout.

### **2. Choose your date(s) and start time.**

- Determine whether you want to host 1 walk or a series of walks over several weeks/months.
- We have found that having 1 walk per week for several weeks helps build momentum in the community around your effort and gives you a chance to reach more people over time.
- Thus far, all walks have taken place on Saturday mornings with start times varying from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM and lasting for 60-90 minutes. You can even try a weekday afternoon or evening walk in a location conveniently located near businesses in your town. This may encourage employees to walk during lunch or after work.

### **3. Choose a location and a walking route. These items are important to consider when choosing your location:**

- Easily accessible as well as handicap accessible.
- Plenty of free parking.
- A location to meet up with easy access to begin your walk, like a landmark or park entrance.
- Flat surface to ensure people of all fitness levels can participate.

### **4. Recruit a planning team**

- Identify a walk coordinator or someone to lead your team.
- Consider recruiting local partners for your team (YMCA, health department, FQHCs, schools, etc.) to share in responsibilities.
- Select a contact person for each walk.

### **5. Recruit healthcare professionals**

- Contact your local hospital, health department or medical association for assistance.
- Reach out to the local provider groups in your area.
- Think outside the healthcare box. Your healthcare professionals can also include Registered Dietitians, City Health Directors, Chiropractors, Naturopaths, Professors and students from local colleges and universities and many more!
- Email [moreinfo@getthehealthycity.org](mailto:moreinfo@getthehealthycity.org) for further assistance.

## 6. Design a flyer and be sure to include the following:

- Meeting date, time and location.
- Mention that your walks are free and open to all ages and activity levels.
- Contact person for more information and details as well as telephone number and email.
- Information about rain date/plans. (*Note: You can still walk in the rain, encourage people to bring an umbrella. This worked well for us in the past.*)
- See flyer samples included in this “Toolkit” for some inspiration

## 7. Promote your walk(s)

- Physically handing the flyer out worked the best (door-to-door, at other events, post in local stores, etc.)
- Create a free Facebook event page. Facebook advertising is another relatively inexpensive option and you can choose a specific target audience for your ads.
- Share flyer with local news outlets, local libraries, community organizations, community groups, participating provider offices, etc.
- Email flyers to [moreinfo@getthehealthyct.org](mailto:moreinfo@getthehealthyct.org) for promotion on the GHCT website and in our monthly newsletter,
- Consider using a service like Eventbrite to advertise and gauge sign-ups, you can even communicate with participants before the walk
  - Create a FREE account at <https://www.eventbrite.com>. This service will allow you to advertise your event for free, collect registrations and email people that have signed up to remind them of the walk, start time and location.

## 8. Have fun!

- These walks have been an enjoyable experience for all those involved. So be sure to have fun while knowing you are helping to increase access to physical activity opportunities in your community.
- Invite friends, family members and colleagues to the walk, the more the merrier.

## The Day of the Walk

- Plan to arrive about 20-30 minutes early. People will be late so start with some group stretching to allow time for people to arrive.
- Have a sign-in sheet to collect contact information (name, email address, phone number) to notify walkers of upcoming walks.
- Make introductions before walk begins, particularly the healthcare providers. We have found that people will tend to walk with the provider they are most interested in talking to.
- Bring a participant evaluation (*see example provided in this Toolkit*). *Don't forget pens and clipboards!*
- Optional: Distribute health information like flyers and handouts on different health topics. If allowed by your location, you can set up a table display and this can help mark your meeting location.
- Collect anecdotes/stories from walkers. You can encourage them to write the stories on their evaluation forms and ask them to mention why they decided to attend your walk.

- Take a group photo at the end of your walk. Please send your walk stories and photos to us at [moreinfo@getthehealthyct.org](mailto:moreinfo@getthehealthyct.org) so we can post them to our website.

### **After the Get Healthy Walk ‘n Talk Events**

- Send a thank you to all providers involved and your planning team.
- Send out a provider evaluation. Try using [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com), which is a free service and works well for this (see *example questions provided in this “Toolkit”*).
- Review your evaluation results and decide if you want to make changes prior to planning another walk.

### **Recommendations/Lessons Learned**

- Partner with parks and recreational departments in your town in order to find a good location for your walks. They may also be able to assist in getting any city parking fees waived.
- Plan for alternative site (mall or indoor track) for inclement weather and a way to communicate the alternate plans.
- Promote your event as much as you can. Advertise the walks to city health departments, community centers, community organizations, churches, senior centers, YMCAs and local fitness centers. Also, ask your partners to promote in their facilities and through their social media and distribution lists.
- Initially, we planned to walk for 60 minutes and then talk for 30 minutes. However, at our first walk, we found that participants ended up walking with their preferred healthcare professional and they talked while they walked. A 60-minute long event worked in most cases.
- Try to set-up a table for information/registration, depending on your walk location. At the end of the walk, provide brochures and handouts on health information. Perhaps pick a different topic to cover each week. This is something participants asked for at some of our walks.
- Recruit a lead volunteer to be the contact person and leader for each walk. Since most walks have occurred on the weekend, we found it important to have different volunteers each week so the responsibility doesn't fall on one single person. You can try working with local colleges and universities to recruit students to assist. This could be a great student intern project!
- Lastly, remember that it takes time to start any new program. We have found that our first walks in a new town may have had fewer participants than anticipated. Don't give up! Remember that even if you start with only a handful of people, you still got people out and walking which is an accomplishment. If needed, just keep promoting and eventually you will pick-up some momentum and have a good turnout. You can also try to partner with local organizations around your walk location to help advertise to a group of individuals, then word will spread from there. Examples include: faith based organizations, schools, local fitness centers, community organizations, health departments, etc.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. How did you get providers to attend?** We have received an overwhelming response from interested healthcare professionals and have ended up with between 2-8 healthcare professionals at each walk. However, even just 1 per walk is fine. Those healthcare professionals who have attended so far include the following specialty areas:

- Cardiologist
- Pediatrician
- Registered Dietitian
- Naturopath
- Midwife
- Internist
- Endocrinologist
- Medical Residents
- Urgent Care Physician
- Local fitness instructors

**2. Does this cost money?** No. We have been able to host 16 walks without any formal budget for this program. This will take some staff time to plan, promote and execute but there are no additional costs necessary to have a successful walk. Incentive items are nice to hand out to participants, but are not required. We were able to get items donated that were leftover from other events. Again, this is not a requirement. If you are able to seek donations, bottled water is one item that is nice to have on hand for people at the completion of the walk. You can also email us at [moreinfo@gethealthyct.org](mailto:moreinfo@gethealthyct.org) and we can provide you with Get Healthy CT materials for your walk participants.

**3. What about those that cannot walk as fast as others?** We have found that the entire group will not all walk at the same pace and this is completely fine. People will walk fast or slow at whatever pace they can. You can make sure your providers and volunteers rotate around the group throughout the route to talk to everyone.

**4. What does everyone talk about?** Anything and everything! Participants have asked general health questions or just talked about the weather. There is no need to force a health conversation. Just let the conversations happen naturally. We did mention at the beginning that the providers can answer general health questions and would not be able to diagnose in anyway. You can also start the walk by having a provider talk for a few minutes about a specific health topic (benefits of physical activity, nutrition, etc.).

**5. Are there any liability issues to be concerned with?** We let the providers and participants know at the beginning of the event that the intent was not to talk about any specific health concerns and these events are not to take the place of an actual office visit.



## **Stories from Past Participants**

- During our fall walks in New Haven, two women joined us every weekend for 5 straight weeks. At the end of the 5 week walking series, they continued to meet and walk together. Eventually, they were able to complete a 6-mile walk on their own. They credited our walks to getting them up and motivated.
- During those same walks in New Haven, a man also joined us every week. He decided to keep walking after the walking series was completed and he went on to participate in a 5K, which he had never done before.
- One woman came out to a walk in a city park. She stated that she had lived near that park all her life but never felt comfortable walking there. After coming out to one of the walks on a Saturday morning, she saw that the park was much better than she expected it to be and she decided she would start walking in that park more often.
- One participant happened to join us for a walk on their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. She stated that she knew she had to get active and decided her birthday was a great day to start.
- Two participants at one walk, who did not previously know each other, decided they would continue to meet at the same park and walk after our walks were completed.
- After our walk had ended one morning, several participants decided to stay and try to run/jog the route again.

## **For more information and to contact us:**

Please let us know if you decide to plan your own Get Healthy Walk 'n Talk series. We would love to hear about all of the walks taking place in different communities around our state. We can also answer any questions you may have, as well as help advertise your event for free. Email us at [moreinfo@gethealthyct.org](mailto:moreinfo@gethealthyct.org).

To learn more about Get Healthy CT, go to [www.GetHealthyCT.org](http://www.GetHealthyCT.org) or like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ghctnow/](http://www.facebook.com/ghctnow/).



# **Get Healthy Walk 'n Talk Toolkit**

## **Supporting Documents:**

Sample Flyers

Participant Evaluation Form

Provider Evaluation Questions





# Get Healthy Walk 'n Talk



## DID YOU KNOW?

Walking can help aid in weight loss, improve breathing, improve circulation, strengthen bones, reduce stress, improve sleep, and prevent or manage chronic diseases.

## ***Come walk with us!***

***Get Healthy Walk 'n Talk*** is a 4-week community walking series where the community is invited to take a walk with local health care professionals on Saturday mornings at Seaside Park. Each week will include:

- **1 hour walk with local health care professionals**
- **30 minute health question and answer session**
- **Giveaways and refreshments**

Date & Time	Participating Health Care Professionals <small>*Subject to change*</small>
Saturday, April 30th 10-11:30 am	Endocrinologist, Nutritionist, Internist
Saturday, May 7th 10-11:30 am	Cardiologist, Pediatrician, Nutritionist, Midwife
Saturday, May 14th 10-11:30 am	Nutritionist, Internist, Naturopath
Saturday, May 21st 10-11:30 am	Nutritionist, Internist, Urgent Care Physician

## **Interested in walking?**

- Register for the walks at [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com) and search for *Get Healthy Walk 'n Talk*.
- All walks will start at Casino Beach, located in the middle of Seaside Park, near the horse stables. Just look for the Get Healthy CT table.
- Please arrive by 9:45 am on each walk day.
- You are welcome to attend as many of the walks as you can.
- Free parking!

**For questions, please contact Jonathan James at (203) 576-7680**

**To find out more about Get Healthy CT, visit  
[www.gethealthyct.org](http://www.gethealthyct.org)**



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# GET HEALTHY WALK 'N TALK

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**Come walk with local health care providers!**



**Get Healthy Walk N' Talk is a group walk created to encourage community members to get physical exercise while talking to local health professionals.**

**When:**

September 10th  
October 1st

**Time:**

10:00 am

**Where:**

Seaside Park  
Near Horse Stables

**Register for the walks at [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com) and search for Get Healthy Walk n' Talk.**



For more information, contact Jonathan James at  
(203) 576-7680 or email at [jonathan.james@bridgeportct.gov](mailto:jonathan.james@bridgeportct.gov)







# GET HEALTHY WALK N' TALK

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 17, 2016 \*

10 AM-11:30 AM

Location: Old Mine Park

Walk will start inside Old Mine Park and continue to  
Whitney Ave. 3.2 Miles Round Trip



## *Come walk with us!*

We invite the Trumbull community to take a walk with local healthcare professionals on Saturday morning at Old Mine Park.

Walk will include:

- ♦ **1 hour walk with local health care professionals, a Historian and Trumbull's First Selectman**
- ♦ **Giveaways and refreshments**

### **Participating Health Care Professionals:**

Endocrinologist, Trauma and General Surgeon,  
Internal Medicine

## DID YOU KNOW?

Walking can help aid in weight loss, improve breathing, improve circulation, strengthen bones, reduce stress, improve sleep, and prevent or manage chronic diseases.

\*Rain date Sunday September 18th



**TRUMBULL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

335 WHITE PLAINS ROAD

TRUMBULL, CT 06611

(203) 452-1030

[WWW.TRUMBULL-CT.GOV/THD](http://WWW.TRUMBULL-CT.GOV/THD)



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# Get Healthy Walk 'N Talk

Take a walk with local doctors.



**Saturday, Oct. 8, 15, 22 and 29**  
**9 am - 10:30 am**

**Farmington Canal Trail, Thompson Street**  
**between Newhall and Shelton Streets**

Walk will begin at entrance on Thompson and walk north towards Hamden, returning back along the same route (approx. 2 miles)

**Interested in walking?**

Register at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)  
(search for Get Healthy Walk 'N Talk)  
Please arrive by 8:45 am on each walk day.  
Attend as many walks as you can!

For more information, contact Andy Orefice  
at 203-688-5671 or [andrew.orefice@ynhh.org](mailto:andrew.orefice@ynhh.org).

**Join us on Saturday mornings at**  
**Farmington Canal Trail to:**

- Discuss different health topics each week
- Walk for 1 hour with local healthcare professionals
- Receive a free giveaway for all walkers

To find out more about Get Healthy CT,  
visit [gethealthyct.org](https://gethealthyct.org).



Office Use Only

Walk Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## GET HEALTHY WALK 'N TALK PARTICIPANT EVALUATION

Thank you for participating in today's event. Please take a moment to let us know about your experience to help us improve this program.

1. Including today's walk, how many Walk 'n Talk events have you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

2. For each statement below, please circle your response.

I am more motivated to walk regularly after today's walk.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
This walk helped me to feel comfortable speaking with healthcare professionals in the future.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I learned valuable information about health and wellness on today's walk.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I would attend another walk in the future.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I would recommend one of these walks to family and friends.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

3. Do you have any comments or suggestions for future walks?

**Thank you for your feedback!**

**Get Healthy Walk 'n Talk  
Healthcare Professional Survey**



Please indicate your response and provide any comments to any of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Comments
The start time of the walks worked well						
The length of the walks were appropriate						
The day of the week worked well for me						
There was clear communication from the planning team about where to arrive, when to arrive, etc.						
Participation was worth my time						
I made valuable connections to community members						
I would be interested in participating in future walks/events						

Please provide any additional feedback or suggestions to help us plan future walks.

**Thank you!**