

## Walking Safely in Rural Areas

**Walking is great exercise and can be particularly enjoyable away from the hustle and bustle of city streets. But walking in rural areas requires special care.**

Unpaved surfaces may provide uneven footing. Often the vehicles on rural roads travel at much higher speeds than walkers are used to, and drivers won't expect to see someone walking on or near the side of the road.

**Go4Life has the following safety tips for those who want to enjoy a walk in the country:**

- Always walk facing oncoming traffic.
- Look for a smooth, stable surface alongside the road.
- If there are guardrails, see if there's a smooth, flat surface behind the barrier where you can walk. If you need to walk on a paved shoulder, stay as far away from traffic as possible.
- Watch for bridges and narrow shoulders.
- Be sure drivers can see you. Wear light or brightly colored clothing.
- If you walk during low-light hours—at dusk or dawn—be sure you have reflective material on your jacket or walking shoes and carry a flashlight.
- Be careful when crossing the road. Look left, right, and left again before crossing. Don't assume drivers will stop.
- Look across ALL lanes you must cross and make sure each lane is clear before proceeding. Just because one driver stops, don't presume drivers in other lanes will stop for you.
- Take along a cell phone and an ID, especially if walking alone.



### Quick Tip

Be sure to wear sturdy shoes that give you proper footing. For more information, see the *Go4Life* tip sheet *Fitness Clothes and Shoes*.  
[www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life](http://www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life)

### VISIT

[www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life](http://www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life)

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