

Walking Safely in Urban Areas

Living in a city offers many exciting activities—shopping, dining, work, and entertainment—just a short walk away. Walking also is great exercise, although it can be more challenging on busy streets. Whether you're walking for transportation or fitness, it's important to be careful in urban areas. Serious pedestrian accidents occur more often in urban than in rural areas.

Go4Life has safety tips for enjoying a walk in the city:

- Choose routes that are well used, well lit, and safe, and those with places to sit in case you want to stop and rest.
- Walk on a sidewalk or a path whenever possible.
- Check out city parks. Many parks have walking or jogging trails away from traffic.
- Stay alert at all times. If you're listening to music as you walk, turn down the volume so you can still hear bike bells and warnings from other walkers and runners coming up behind you.
- Carry your ID with emergency contact information, and bring along a phone and a small amount of cash.
- If possible, walk during daylight hours.
- Watch out for uneven sidewalks, which are tripping hazards.
- Cross at crosswalks or intersections. Jaywalking increases your risk of a serious accident.
- Before you start to cross a street, make sure you have plenty of time to get across. Rushing increases your risk of falling.
- Pay attention to the traffic signal. Cross only when you have the pedestrian crossing signal, and look both ways as you cross.
- Never assume a driver sees you crossing the street. Try to make eye contact with drivers as they approach.
- Be seen to be safe. Wear brightly colored clothing during the day, and wear reflective materials or carry a flashlight at night.



Quick Tip

Next time you're stuck at a stoplight, don't just stop or walk in place, do a quick thigh or calf stretch.

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www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life

- Try sample *Go4Life* exercises.
- Read other *Go4Life* tip sheets on walking safely.

