



Facts about the Prescription Trails Program

What is Prescription Trails?

The *Prescription Trails* program is designed to increase walking and wheelchair rolling on suggested routes in Albuquerque and the South Valley and promotes healthy lifestyles for families. Healthcare providers write prescriptions for walking for their patients based on their current physical condition and to treat and prevent a number of chronic conditions such as diabetes, depression and high blood pressure. A *Prescription Trails* walking guide is available that lists parks and open trails by zip codes in Albuquerque and the South Valley, making it easy for people to see what options exist for walking in different areas of the city.

Health benefits of walking

Adults should strongly consider walking as one good way to get exercise. Many studies show that walking has a low risk of injury and has many health benefits including:

- Lower risk of heart disease
- Lower risk of diabetes
- Lower risk of different types of cancers, including breast and colon cancer
- Lower risk of high blood pressure
- Better moods
- Help with weight loss
- Improved sleep

Walking can be done year round and in many settings, including in parks and trails in the Albuquerque area, many of which are included in the *Prescription Trails* walking guide. Enjoying Albuquerque's parks and trails provides the opportunity to experience nature and be physically active at the same time.

Walking or wheelchair rolling are safe activities and provide benefits to almost everyone, including generally healthy people and those with chronic conditions or disabilities.

Although the Prescription Trails project focuses primarily on walking, other types of exercise can provide additional benefits such as increased muscle and bone strength, flexibility and endurance.



How much walking is recommended?

Most adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (like brisk walking), spread throughout the week. However, if you are new to exercise, it is important to remember to “start low and go slow”. This means starting out with a small amount of walking and slowly building up the time and number of days a week you do it.

You can get even more health benefits by increasing the amount of walking you do. For example, a person who walks 300 minutes a week has an even lower risk of heart disease or diabetes than a person who walks 150 minutes a week.

If a lack of time is preventing you from walking, you can still get health benefits by breaking up exercise sessions into shorter, more frequent intervals at least 10 minutes in length.

How Prescription Trails Promotes Walking

A prescription for walking is a unique feature of the *Prescription Trails* project. To make sure that people engage in appropriate levels of physical activity, healthcare providers assess patient readiness to start or maintain a walking program and then write tailored prescriptions based on this assessment.

Log on to the Prescription Trails website at

prescriptiontrails.org

to view an online walking guide, walking tips and a walking log to track information on the dates, distances and times you walk!

For information about Prescription Trails New Mexico – 505-796-9121