



# *Strides*

LIONS WALK FOR DIABETES AWARENESS

An Activity Guide

## ***Introduction***

Lions Clubs International is committed to helping communities become aware of diabetes and its serious complications. Many people do not realize that they have the disease and they may not understand the serious threats that it poses to their health. Type 2 diabetes accounts for the vast majority of cases of the disease. More than 250 million people suffer from diabetes globally. The international health community expects that diabetes will affect 380 million by 2025.

Studies have shown that lifestyle changes including regular physical activity and a healthy body weight can reduce the risks of diabetic retinopathy and foot amputations. These potential health benefits are just some of the important reasons to begin planning a **STRIDES** walk in your district or club. Through **STRIDES**, Lions increase diabetes awareness in their communities. Please use this helpful guide and information packet to start walking today!

### ***About “Strides”***

Lions clubs and districts everywhere can build awareness of diabetes by organizing **STRIDES: Lions Walk for Diabetes Awareness**. Through the **STRIDES** walk, Lions can mobilize the community to join the effort to prevent, control and eventually overcome the risks of diabetes.

### ***Your Strides Information Packet***

This packet includes essential information to help you organize a **STRIDES** walk:

- This **STRIDES** Activity Guide
- Event Day Timeline
- Top Ten Tips for Organizing a Strides Walk
- Sample Participant Waiver Form/Registration Form
- Strides Materials Order Form
- Sample News Release
- Sample Public Service Announcement (PSA)
- Sample Local Government Proclamation
- **WE STRIDE** Pin

The cost of the **STRIDES** information packet is US\$5 and can be ordered from the Health and Children’s Services Department. More information about the kit is on the Association’s Web site at [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org)

## ***Why Organize a STRIDES Walk?***

Diabetes awareness is an important activity for Lions. There are many outstanding health benefits to walking, the world's most popular sport. By joining a ***STRIDES*** walk, participants can:

- Take steps towards better health
- Build a community network of support of neighbors who have diabetes
- Lead the way towards a cure
- Spend quality time with family and friends
- Meet new people.

The benefits of a ***STRIDES*** walk for community members who have, or are at risk of, diabetes include:

- Lower blood glucose levels
- Delay or prevention of heart disease
- Reduction of body weight
- Maintenance of weight loss
- Contribution to an overall feeling of well-being.

## ***The Planning Committee***

The planning committee will be the backbone of the ***STRIDES*** event. Be certain to include a variety of people on the planning committee. Community leaders, diabetes specialists, medical professionals, local pharmacists or fitness professionals can be valuable in helping plan the walk.

Consider asking Leos, businesses or other organizations to join the ***STRIDES*** committee.

Here are a few suggested members of a planning committee:

1. ***STRIDES*** Chairperson
2. On-site Operations Coordinator
3. Local Sponsorship and Festivities Coordinator
4. Promotion and Media Coordinator
5. Volunteer Coordinator
6. Participant Services Coordinator
7. Treasurer

## ***How To Organize Your STRIDES Walk***

Consider organizing your **STRIDES** walk at a time of year when there is a high probability of good walking weather. Your **STRIDES** information packet has several helpful planning sheets; please refer to them as you organize your **STRIDES** walk. Other considerations are as follows:

- Establish your district/club planning committees
- Determine the length of your walk. A two (3K) to three mile (5K) walk is suggested
- Select your site (see information included in this guide)
- Meet with local authorities to obtain required permits
- Arrange to block off all traffic and make sure the walk area is safe
- Have all participants sign a waiver before the walk (see sample provided in your information packet)
- Clearly mark the route and provide maps
- Have a rest station, with water provided, along the walking route
- Post information on your district Web site
- Set up the “finish line” with a banner or other item. Contact banner or sign companies for production schedules and price information. Be sure to include the Strides and Lions logos
- Form a greeting area for walkers crossing the finish line. Distribute diabetes-related information, items, healthy snacks and beverages.

## ***Selecting a Site***

Your **STRIDES** walk location should be acceptable for walkers of all ages and abilities. The walking path should be in a safe area and have a relatively flat, smooth-surface.

An ideal site could also include:

- Parking
- Washrooms with wheelchair access
- Access to running water
- Picnic tables
- Shelter from inclement weather (for pre- and post- walk gathering)
- Safe access to electricity
- A gathering or staging area
- Visibility in the community
- Access to public transit, where appropriate
- Scenery

## ***Site layout Checklist***

The On-Site Operations Coordinator will prepare a map of the site that will indicate the approximate placement of:

- Registration/pledge tables and chairs
- Volunteer check-in
- Signage
- Items to be given away
- Refreshments and snacks
- First-aid
- Staging area (for pre- and post-walk activities)
- Power source (for music, loudspeaker, etc)
- Sponsor booths
- Garbage containers

## *Needed Supplies and Equipment*

Some of these items may be available for loan or donation through the network of Lions and community sponsors.

- Van or delivery truck (for tables, refreshments, signage, incentive prizes, etc.)
- Cones or other route markers
- Several 6 to 8 foot folding tables (if picnic tables are not available)
- Chairs for volunteers and dignitaries
- Garbage bags/boxes
- Sound equipment (this may include amplifier, microphone, or simply a loudspeaker)
- Generator if power source is unavailable
- Battery-powered boom box
- Telecommunication aids (Cellular telephones or walkie talkies)
- Decorations
- Signage (from sponsors & organizers)
- Tape and tacks (to hang signs and banners)
- Instructions, maps, etc. (for participants)
- Paper and pens
- Pledge Sheets
- Cash Box
- Refreshments and snacks (be sure to have water available)

Refer to your Lions Clubs Supplies Catalog for additional items with the Lions logo, such as:

- Balloons
- Water bottles
- Lions emblem
- Pennants
- Tote bags

Allow extra time if your district/club plans to order commemorative t-shirts through local vendors.

## ***WE STRIDE Pin and Crossing the Finish Line***

**WE STRIDE** pins can be ordered from the Health and Children's Services Department. Please refer to the materials order form that is included with the information packet. Distribute these pins to **STRIDES** participants who complete the walk. The finish line area presents a great opportunity to have tables set up so Lions and relevant businesses and organizations can distribute diabetes awareness information.

Diabetes and health companies may want to promote health-related product samples. Screenings can also be set up to test vision and blood pressure. Refer to the Lions Board Policy for diabetes screening guidelines. Be sure to have a table set up for Lions diabetes publications and Lions membership information. A **STRIDES** walk can be a great way to raise the visibility of Lions clubs in the community.

## ***Distributing Diabetes Publications***

There are several diabetes publications available to order in quantities for distribution at your **STRIDES** walk. They range from informational brochures to convenient tip sheets for teens (see the **STRIDES** materials order form included in the information packet). You may also download them from the LCI Web site, or have them printed by a local vendor. Further resources can be obtained from one of LCI's partners for diabetes awareness, the National Diabetes Education Program, [www.yourdiabetesinfo.org](http://www.yourdiabetesinfo.org). We encourage Lions outside the USA to work with your local diabetes association to obtain appropriate educational materials for your **STRIDES** walk. Information can be found at [www.idf.org](http://www.idf.org)

Consider distributing Lions membership information and Lions Eye Health Program (LEHP) materials at your walk. For more information on LEHP, go to the Lions Web site ([www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org)). You may also want to invite local health-related organizations to distribute diabetes materials.

## ***Obtaining Support from the Community***

An important part of your **STRIDES** walk is the involvement of local businesses. These businesses, especially those with an interest in diabetes awareness, can provide valuable support to your **STRIDES** walk. They can set up tables at the end of the walk to provide information, refreshments and healthy snacks to walkers after they pass the finish line. Listed below are businesses you might consider to solicit for support of your **STRIDES** walk. Be sure to send thank you letters to those who participate:

- Health providers
- Pharmacies
- Senior Centers
- Grocery stores
- Large wholesale stores
- Sports stores
- Government diabetes office
- Walking equipment stores
- Health stores
- Organizations that your district/club has worked with in the past

## ***Fundraising (optional)***

Organizing a **STRIDES** walk can be a way for districts and clubs to raise funds. The utilization of earned funds is at the discretion of the participating district or club. **STRIDES** funds may benefit local projects, such as:

- Lions diabetes programs
- Lions diabetes camps
- Lions diabetes foundations
- Support of diabetes research
- Designated schools, sports teams or other organizations.

Participants can be asked to pay a fee to register and/or collect pledges from families and friends. These pledges are submitted on the day of the walk. Set pledge goals per person and for the overall event. Consider asking local businesses to donate prizes, such as t-shirts, hats, water bottles, pedometers, etc.

These items can be awarded for specified pledge amounts (for example: A participant who raises \$100 receives a free t-shirt). Businesses may also be able to donate funds or materials to help with **STRIDES** event costs.

**Note:** When publicizing fundraising for **STRIDES** include in your message how and where funds raised will be used. Upon completion of the activity, be certain to follow up reporting the amount of funds raised.

## ***Publicizing Your Walk***

Your **STRIDES** chairperson and club/district public relations chairperson should work closely together to plan the **STRIDES** walk. The Club Public Relations Chairperson's Guide (PR- 710) or District Public Relations Chairperson Guide (PR-730) contains valuable information for implementing your public relations plans. You should also consider the following:

- Invite local media to your walk
- Send press releases at least three weeks in advance. Contact the news editors or directors again the week before the event
- Prepare a news release for the media (a sample is provided in the **STRIDES** information packet)
- Have a Lions information booth as a way to inform the community about the Lions organization
- Enlist the help of a local celebrity or sports personality
- Ask Public Service Directors at local radio stations for assistance with promoting the walk (a sample news release is in the **STRIDES** information packet)
- Contact your cable station's public access television station. This channel may feature interviews with local residents.
- Your message should include how and where funds raised will be used
- Report funds raised after the event
- Publicize your event in local newspapers, your community's newsletter, your club or district's Web site, other social networking sites (such as *Facebook*) or local cable television.
- Send thank you letters to all organizations that participated
- Present certificates of appreciation where appropriate. (Refer to the Club Supplies Catalog.)

## ***Walkers to Join Your Event***

Encourage groups in the community who will benefit from learning more about diabetes to participate. You may consider sending event flyers to:

- neighboring Lions clubs
- neighboring Leo clubs
- family members
- friends
- co-workers
- schools
- libraries
- recreation center
- park district
- Scout troops
- medical facilities
- fitness facilities
- walking clubs
- local businesses

To increase your participant numbers, encourage walkers to form teams. Have special incentives for teams, such as prizes for the largest team or most pledges collected. Contact local businesses for their involvement and team sponsorship.

## ***Diabetes Awareness Month***

November is Lions Diabetes Awareness Month. Lions are encouraged to work with healthcare professionals to implement diabetes awareness projects in their communities. Lions clubs, districts or multiple districts can sponsor Strides Walks either outdoors or indoors (fitness track, shopping mall or local recreation center). Walks can also be held at Lions district or multiple district conventions to build awareness and increase Lions participation in the program.

## ***World Diabetes Day***

World Diabetes Day is November 14. This special day originated in a joint effort by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in response to the growing incidence of diabetes worldwide. The purpose of World Diabetes Day is to raise global awareness of diabetes. Refer to the World Diabetes Day Web site for more information and additional materials ([www.worlddiabetesday.org](http://www.worlddiabetesday.org)).

## ***Insurance***

Lions district or clubs can request a copy of the Association's liability insurance from the Legal Division at International Headquarters, 300 W. 22nd Street, Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842, USA. Information is also available on the Association's Web site.

## ***STRIDES Logo***



The ***STRIDES*** logo is available from the Lions Web site. The logo can be used to create a Strides banner to be carried during the walk, signage with directional arrows and a finish line. The ***STRIDES*** logo and Lions emblem should be used with all publicity, including stationery, flyers and posters.

## ***Related Sites***

- WHO diabetes program [www.who.int/diabetes](http://www.who.int/diabetes)
- International Diabetes Federation [www.idf.org](http://www.idf.org)
- World Diabetes Day [www.worlddiabetesday.org](http://www.worlddiabetesday.org)
- National Diabetes Education Program [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov)
- Diabetes Education and Camping Association ([www.diabetescamps.org](http://www.diabetescamps.org))

## ***For More Information***

Visit the Lions Clubs International Web site. The ***STRIDES*** walk Web page features the contents of the Lions ***STRIDES*** Information Packet. Note that materials can be downloaded.

Or, contact:

Health & Children's Services Department

Lions Clubs International

300 West 22nd Street

Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842

Telephone: 630.468.6867

Fax: 630.571.1692

E-mail: [programs@lionsclubs.org](mailto:programs@lionsclubs.org)

Web: [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org)



LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL  
300 W 22ND ST  
OAK BROOK IL 60523-8842 USA  
[www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org)