



Tips for a Comfortable and Safe COPS WALK SOUTHWEST 2019



Early spring weather in this area is normally a beautiful, sunny 65 degrees. However, you may want to layer appropriately for a cool morning.

Clothing

- Wear clothing that you have tested and washed. Do not wear new, unwashed clothing.
- Select clothing with few seams; should have flat seams and flat stitching – less rubbing and skin irritation.
- Choose “wicking” fabrics. No cotton!

Walking Shoes/Running Shoes

Many find that running shoes are more comfortable for long walks due to the cushioned sole. Whatever you wear:

- Break in the shoes ahead of time. Do not wear a brand new shoe for the walk.
- If you wear inserts/orthotics make sure you have them.
- Be sure that you have enough room to wiggle your toes inside the toe box, and your heel does not slip when you walk.
- **Remember to clip your toenails, so they do not rub on your shoes.**
- Choose a mesh or fabric shoe rather than all leather so your foot can breathe.
- Run your hand inside the shoe to check for seams that could cause a blister.

Socks

- Select socks that are a “wicking” sock. Cotton can be rough on the feet.
- Cool max socks such as Thorlo, WigWam, JoxSox, Feetures work great.
- Wash socks before wearing.
- Bring a spare pair of socks for each day. You may want to change halfway through the day.
- **To prevent blisters:** dust the inside of the sock with baby powder/talcum powder.
- If you choose to wear two layers of socks, wear the “wicking” sock next to the skin.

Fuel (Food) Tips

You will be walking a long distance and your body will need proper nutrients to fuel the body. Carbohydrates are the fuel for the body.

Thursday and Friday evenings you will want to have a high-carb dinner: pasta, rice, potatoes with your vegetables and light protein.

Saturday and Sunday mornings carbs are a great idea, however you will also need some protein. Protein satiates and also will be helpful for your body the next day. Some ideas are: eggs, yogurt, milk and milk products, peanut butter. Meats such as bacon and sausage are protein based but have a lot of fat and may be uncomfortable later as you walk.

Hydration

You will need to hydrate to keep your body from becoming overly fatigued and to reduce muscle soreness. Gatorade will be available for the walk. You will be given a water bottle.

If you are a “salty sweater” add more salt to your diet – a dill pickle or salty snacks. Avoid caffeine as caffeinated beverages are a diuretic and will make you thirstier as well as require inconvenient stops along the way.

Alcohol is also a diuretic so go lightly on these beverages the night before walking.

Drink when you are thirsty. Don't force extra water.

Chafing

Some long distance walkers find chafing to be annoying and uncomfortable. Best prevention is clothing with flat seams. To prevent chafing, A & D ointment works very well. It also can help after redness and pain occurs. Cover with a Band-Aid or sterile gauze if possible.

Blisters

Blisters are the bane of walkers and runners. To prevent them, dust socks with talcum or baby powder prior to putting them on. Any time socks are changed, dust them again with the powder. At the end of the day, cool the feet by soaking in cold water. Some use a lubricant on their feet instead of the powder – Body Glide is a common one. Band-Aid Blister Blocks, Spenco Second Skin and Spyroflex Wound Dressing are some options to put on those problem areas where one usually gets a blister.

Packing Tips

- 4-5 pairs of socks
- 2 pairs of running/walking shoes
- Daypack
- Insurance card
- Personal medications
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm with sunscreen
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Comfortable tops and bottoms for walk
- Sweatshirt (just in case!)
- First aid and blister care
- A & D or similar ointment
- Band-aids, moleskin, first aid tape, gauze, scissors, etc. for blisters
- Baby powder or talcum powder
- Insect repellent
- **Rain coat or rain poncho in case of bad weather, but nothing too heavy. GoreTex or similar materials work best.**



What to expect on our walk

- We will walk 4 to 5 hours a day, all on a level concrete and gravel paths.
- You are encouraged to walk at a pace that is comfortable for you. You will enjoy meeting new friends as you find others who walk about the same speed.
- There will be sporadic porta-johns along the path. Plan to provide your own TP just in case there is a shortage.
- We could enjoy sunny 65-degree days, but there is always a possibility of rain. We will persevere through just about any weather except lightning and floods.
- We will be walking approximately 12.5 miles both days.
- We will stop for a catered light lunch each day near the half-way mark.
- On both days of the walk, a van will be available at the lunch stop to pick up anyone who feels they cannot make the second half of the day's walk.

What to pack/bring for evening

- Comfy post-walk clothes and shoes (suitable for a casual dinner)
- Personal items (deodorant, brush, etc.)
- Bedtime stuff (toothbrush, PJs, etc.)
- Pain reliever and any other medications you may need
- Ben-Gay or similar product

Monitor weather reports. In 2017, we had unexpected rain in Scottsdale – it can happen!