



Irish Pharmacy Union Promotes 21 Day Walking Challenge



Pictured above is (from left to right):

John Treacy, Chief Executive, Irish Sports Council

Kate O' Flaherty, Director of Health & Wellbeing Programme, Department of Health

Grainne Quinn, Project Manager, Get Ireland Walking

Bernard Duggan, Treasurer of the Irish Pharmacy Union.

A new health initiative involving Get Ireland Walking and the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU), which aims to increase the number of people walking for health and wellbeing, was launched this January. Research has shown that the benefits of walking for at least 30 minutes a day can help improve blood pressure and blood sugar levels, reduce the risk of heart disease and enhance mental health, as well as maintaining body weight and lowering the risk of obesity. To encourage people to get on their walking shoes, Get Ireland Walking and the IPU is calling on people to take the "21 Day Walking Challenge" to encourage the formation of a healthy walking habit into the future. Pharmacists nationwide have come on board to support the initiative and are offering health advice and tips on walking. People can also pick up a "21 Day Walking Challenge" Record Card in their local pharmacy to help keep track of their daily walks and their progress.



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John Treacy, CEO of the Irish Sports Council commented "We encourage people that are not walking on a regular basis to do so and to invest in their own health and well-being. Walking is free, accessible and it works"

Bernard Duggan, Treasurer of the IPU, said, "Exercise to help your physical and mental wellbeing does not need to be complicated and a simple walk every day can help people live a healthier life. By including walking in your daily routine, you can prevent or manage various conditions including heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes. If you need advice on creating a walking habit or if you have any concerns about walking, drop into your local pharmacy and ask your pharmacist."

Grainne Quinn from Get Ireland Walking, said, "Walking is the most accessible and straightforward daily activity for improving health and wellbeing. All people have to do is establish a regular walking habit to discover the many benefits from walking and the 21 Day Walking Challenge aims to kick-start people in to doing just that."

Kate O'Flaherty, Director of Health & Wellbeing Programme, Department of Health, said, "Walking is simple, free and one of the easiest ways to get more physically active, to lose weight and become healthier. We are delighted to be supporting this worthwhile initiative. Get Ireland Walking is calling on communities throughout the country to sign up to reap the benefits of walking and provides advice and support for anyone setting up a walking group."

"A key principle of Healthy Ireland is empowering people to look after their own health and wellbeing, and this initiative is a great example of how people, with the support of family, friends or neighbours, can take action to improve their own health."

Get Ireland Walking is an initiative of the Irish Sports Council, supported by Healthy Ireland and Mountaineering Ireland, the Irish Heart Foundation, HSE Health Promotion and Improvement, Age and Opportunity, Gaelic Athletic Association, Ireland Active, Arthritis Ireland, and others.

