



1-31 May 2023

The Big 5 for Team Captains

Our top 5 tips to help your team reach its true potential!

Organisation. You have a team and a team name. What else needs to be done? Your contacts need to know how to sign up for **Walk Your AS Off**, join your team, participate and convert other forms of activity (e.g. swimming and yoga) into steps, and how and when to log their steps. They also need to know how to communicate with you and with other team members.

Being organised makes it easier to answer questions about your Team and Walk Your AS Off. There are resources available at www.walkasone.org

Motivation. Walk Your AS Off aims to get people living with axial spondyloarthritis (axSpA) more active, to exercise regularly and create awareness of axSpA. It's great to include family, friends and work colleagues in your team – both those who are already active and those who aren't. Every step counts, so if you can motivate people who are not exercising but would benefit by doing so, all the better! Walk Your AS Off is a challenge, not a competition.

How to motivate people? Often, focusing on participation, activity, movement, and enjoyment can be more motivating than talking about 'exercise'. Share the benefits of regular activity – often less pain and stiffness, and better mental health. Highlight the benefits of belonging to a team and feeling part of a community, as well as the satisfaction of setting and achieving personal step goals.

Communication. As a Team Captain, it's important to let your team know what's going on and how they are doing. Creating a team group on social media, ie Facebook or WhatsApp, is probably the best option as it can help create a conversation between members. To avoid missing members not on those platforms, we encourage you to post all team news on your Team News section as well. You can also use email if you have your team's email addresses. Unfortunately, due to data privacy laws Walk AS One cannot provide the email addresses of participants. Give your team members opportunities to communicate with you and with other team members if you can.

Encourage. Some team members may exercise regularly. For the month of May, encourage them to go just that bit further and set increasing but achievable goals each week. For those team members just starting out on being more active, encourage and praise their efforts. Be mindful of their capabilities so encourage goal setting that is comfortable and achievable and is not over-doing it.

You can Make Walk Your AS Off more interactive and fun if you highlight team members who are most improved over a week, greatest number of steps achieved, met or exceeded target, etc. Please avoid comparing team members' achievements as everyone has different capabilities and Walk Your AS Off is not a competition.

Tracking. Tracking steps is all about furthering Walk Your AS Off's journey to Mars. We are only 1% of the way there, but with enough participation we can get there! Team members should log their steps either daily or weekly (preferably by Sunday evening if weekly). Walk AS One tallies team totals weekly. You can use these figures to encourage your team. You can also create a spreadsheet with all team members and their daily/weekly steps on it, and share this with the team. It is now easier to see each participants' weekly totals.

Thank you for being a Team Leader!

