

# Walk, Ride, Share for Cleaner Air

2021 Gundersen Health  
System Employee  
Challenge Participant  
Manual

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## **Walk, Ride, Share for Cleaner Air – the challenge**

Walk, Ride, Share for Cleaner Air will begin June 1 and continue through August 31<sup>st</sup>. The purpose of the challenge is to encourage participants to commute to work as well as commuting for other purposes as a way of being physically active on a regular basis. Active commuting also helps reduce greenhouse emissions, traffic congestion, and parking congestion. Also, money can be saved through active commuting by purchasing less gas. In this challenge, active/alternative commuting will be considered walking, bicycle riding, carpooling, using mass transit transportation, or any other way to travel without driving yourself. Work commuting and commuting for other purposes is counted! Ideas include but are not limited to rollerblading, skateboarding, etc. Have fun and get creative! 😊

Any Gundersen Health System employee is eligible to participate in the challenge. Participants track their active/alternative commuting to work and commuting for other purposes each month.

This challenge offers open enrollment. Participants can join any time May through August. Participants will track active/alternative commuting activity each month. Tracked activity must be submitted by the first week of the following month to be eligible for prize drawings.

June commute activity due **Friday, July 9**. July commute activity due **Friday, August 6**. August commute activity due **Friday, September 10**.

## **Commuting Considerations**

Follow the rules of the road - obey all traffic signs, use signals and watch for traffic at intersections, cross at crosswalks, do not exceed the speed limit, wear a seatbelt at all times, ride with traffic (bike, car), walk against traffic or use a sidewalk when available, use proper lane position, etc.

Be visible and safe - wear a helmet and protective equipment (bike, rollerblade), bright or reflective clothing, lights on person or bike, comfortable shoes, a seatbelt (car, bus if applicable), rain gear (poncho, umbrella), use fenders, etc.

Be alert and aware - do not use ear buds or listen to loud radio, do not talk or text on cell phone, monitor surroundings for potential dangers (environmental lighting, uneven terrain, road conditions, weather), etc.

Safety inspection - secure cargo, ensure proper tire inflation, mechanical items in good working condition – brakes, chains, belts, lights, turn signals, etc. Shoes should be in good working condition (not excessively worn, protecting feet from hazards), laces secured, etc.

### **Feel good about actively commuting:**

Active commuting is good for you, and good for the environment!

- ✓ Transportation accounts for approximately one-third of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).
- ✓ Just three hours of bicycling per week can reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke by 50 percent (League of American Bicyclists).

Save money – gas is expensive!

- ✓ The Research and Innovative Technology Administration Bureau of Transportation Statistics provides the following information
  - Average miles per gallon (mpg) for a light duty vehicle with a short wheel base was 23.5.
    - Gas = \$2.00 per gallon, driving 15 miles one way to work and 15 miles back, one would spend \$2.55 a day, \$12.77 a week or \$638.30 a year on gas (Dollar Times, 2016).
  - Average mpg for light duty vehicle with a long wheel base was 17.2.
    - Gas = \$2.00 per gallon, driving 15 miles one way to work, and 15 miles back, one would spend \$3.49 a day, \$17.44 a week, or \$872.09 a year on gas (Dollar Times, 2016).
  - To see how much you're spending on gas, check out this website: [Dollar times](#). Compare that to the cost of riding a bike (free or close to it), or a monthly bus pass (\$8 for Gundersen Health System employees).

Be more productive and alert at work

- ✓ Research has shown time and time again that those who actively commute to work are more productive and alert at work.

Enjoy the scenery of the beautiful area we live in

- ✓ We are very fortunate in our region to have such beautiful surroundings. Start and end your work day appreciating our great outdoors!

Perfect way to fit in exercise

- ✓ Sometimes it seems difficult to find time for exercise in our busy lives. Actively commuting to work is a perfect way to fit it in!

Reduce traffic congestion

- ✓ This has become a problem in our area; help be part of the solution!

Less stressful than dealing with traffic and finding a parking space

- ✓ Breathing fresh air provides a relaxing start to your day, rather than the stress of dealing with traffic and finding a parking spot.

### **Active commuting tips and ideas**

Ways to actively/alternatively commute: walk, ride a bicycle, carpool, take mass transit, rollerblade, skateboard, skip, or do a combination of any of these!

Anyone can actively commute! If you feel distance is too great for you, try driving part of the way to your destination and actively commuting the rest of the way.

### **Walk to Work Tips**

1. Plan your route
  - a. It may be different from the typical driving route
  - b. Stay away from major roads or heavy traffic streets
  - c. Look for local parks for more green paths
2. Predict walking time
  - a. Be prepared for setbacks and be sure you get to work on time
3. Wear the right shoes and socks
  - a. Make sure your shoes are appropriate for the type of weather conditions
4. Wear the right walking clothes
  - a. For walks more than 20 minutes, you might want to consider wearing walking clothes and changing into work clothes when you get to work
5. Protect your head and skin
  - a. Hats and sunscreen are a good idea
6. Carry your stuff

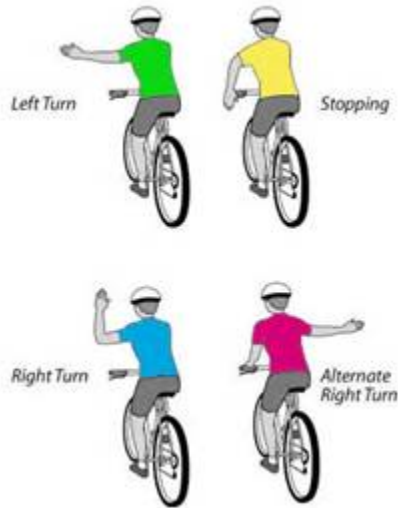
- a. A backpack or messenger bag will help you carry your stuff and still be able to walk with good form
7. Be prepared for bad weather
    - a. Dress in layers for heat/cold
    - b. Bring along an umbrella or a small foldable poncho
  8. Freshen up at work
    - a. Give yourself a little extra time when you get to work to cool off
    - b. Bring a washcloth to cool your body and change shirts when you get to work
  9. Replenish your body
    - a. Drink a cup of water every 20 minutes; bring a water bottle along with if you need it
    - b. After you get to work, drink a glass of water
    - c. If walking longer than 30 minutes, bring a small post-walk snack with protein and carbs
  10. Plan B
    - a. Learn bus routes between home and work
    - b. Do you have any co-workers who would give you a ride if needed?

### **Bike to Work Tips**

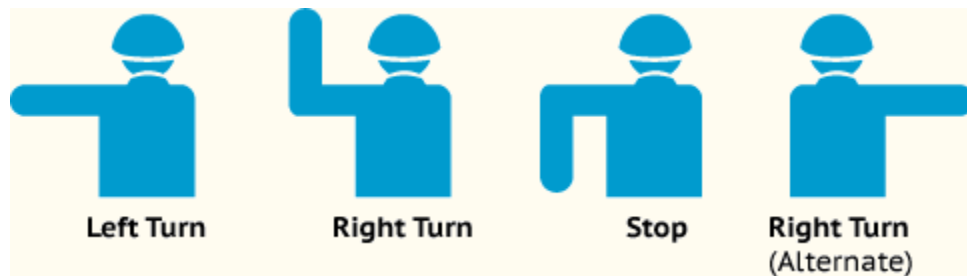
1. Plan your route
  - a. It may be different from the typical driving route
  - b. Be sure you are familiar with time, distance, terrain and traffic flow
  - c. Try out the route beforehand
  - d. Stay away from major roads or heavy traffic streets
2. Predict biking time
  - a. Be prepared for setbacks and be sure you get to work on time
3. Wear the right shoes and socks

- a. Make sure your shoes are appropriate for biking; don't wear sandals or open-toed shoes and be sure your shoe strings are tucked in
4. Wear the right biking clothes
  - a. Don't wear clothing that is too baggy or loosely hanging down
  - b. Wear your helmet!
5. Be Visible!
  - a. Use a headlight for night riding, wear reflective clothing, and have a horn on your bike
6. Carry your stuff
  - a. Wear a backpack or use a carry rack with a clip-in system or bungee cords if you need to carry things with you
  - b. Carry a bike air pump for longer trips
7. Be prepared for bad weather
  - a. Dress in layers for heat/cold
  - b. Have a backup plan in case you can't bike in bad weather
8. Freshen up at work
  - a. Have a change of clothes, deodorant, hair brush, towel and other necessities once you get to work
9. Replenish your body
  - a. Drink a cup of water every 20 minutes; bring a water bottle along with if you need it
  - b. After you get to work, drink a glass of water
  - c. If biking longer than 30 minutes, bring a small post-bike snack with protein and carbs
10. Follow the Rules
  - a. Ride with traffic in the same direction
  - b. Ride on the street or road, not on the sidewalk; motorists can see you better on the street than on the sidewalk
  - c. Don't stop or ride in a car's blind spot; instead, stop or ride behind the car

- d. Slow down at intersections so you will be able to completely stop if necessary
- e. Signal when turning – use hand signals



*Photo courtesy of [www.againstthegrind.com](http://www.againstthegrind.com)*



*Photo courtesy of [bikesafety.caa.ca/cyclists/images/hand-signals.png](http://bikesafety.caa.ca/cyclists/images/hand-signals.png)*

- f. Obey all traffic signs

#### 11. Plan B

- a. Learn bus routes between home and work
- b. Do you have any co-workers who would give you a ride if needed?

### **Bus To Work Tips**

#### *Be Prepared*

1. Plan your route



- c. Be sure you know where all the bus stops are and which specific bus to take
  - d. Use a stop that's well lit and near a business that's open
  - e. You may have to plan out a route B in case the bus you want doesn't come in time
2. Predict travel time
    - a. Be prepared for setbacks and be sure you get to work on time
  3. Be prepared for bad weather
    - a. Bring along an umbrella or a small foldable poncho
    - b. You may have to wait a bit for the bus or have to walk from a stop to your destination; always be prepared
  4. Plan B
    - a. Learn alternative bus routes between home and work
    - b. Do you have any co-workers who would give you a ride if needed?
    - c. Could you possibly walk to or from work? If so, be prepared with walking shoes and clothes

#### *Where to sit*

- Sit near the bus driver
- Sit near the aisle so you can get up quickly if you need to
- Don't sit near the exit door. When the door opens at stops, someone can reach in and snatch your purse or briefcase
- Move away from people who appear intoxicated

#### *What to do*

- Have your money, pass or token ready to give to the driver
- Move quickly to your seat and hang onto the hand or guard rails
- Travel with a friend or co-worker
- Stay alert and aware – don't get too involved with another task (reading the paper)

- Don't sleep on the bus
- Don't engage in unnecessary conversation with strangers
- Never give out any personal information; others can overhear
- Keep your purse or briefcase tightly tucked in your lap or between your feet
- Try to remove jewelry/ hide it under your clothes

### **Carpool to Work Tips**

- If you live near co-workers, take turns and carpool to work
- Be sure that you know and trust who you are carpooling with
- Be prepared in case someone gets sick or they don't show – can you bike, ride the bus, or walk to work?
- Try to figure out a schedule of when you will get to work and when you will leave

Resources:

[http://www.luc.edu/safety/public\\_transportation\\_tips.html](http://www.luc.edu/safety/public_transportation_tips.html)

<https://www.comoconnect.org/riding-the-bus/ride-bus/safety/>

<http://walking.about.com/od/pedestrians/a/walktoworktips.htm>

### **Google Maps**

If you would like to go somewhere by actively commuting, but you're not sure what would be the best route, look on Google Maps. Go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), click on the "Maps" tab at the top of the page, then click on "Get directions". The website lets you choose how you will be traveling. You can click on the pedestrian icon if you will be walking or the bicycling icon if you will be biking. Enter your starting and ending locations; the website will give you directions that are best suited for your mode of traveling. For example, if you click on the bike, the directions will consist of bike trails and less traveled roads, rather than busy, main roads.

### Area Bike Shops

<b>Adventure Cycle and Ski</b>	507-452-4228	178 Center Street, Winona, MN 55987
<b>Bikes Limited</b>	608-785-2326	1001 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, WI 54601
<b>Blue Dog Cycles</b>	608-637-6993	201 So Main Street, Viroqua, WI 54665
<b>Coulee Bikes</b>	608-783-7433	213 Main Street, Onalaska, WI 54650
<b>Decorah Bicycles</b>	563-382-8209	101 College Drive, Decorah, IA 52101
<b>Kolter Bicycle and Fitness</b>	507-452-5665	400 Mankato Ave, Winona, MN 55987
<b>La Crescent Com. Bike Shop</b>	608-790-2580	520 S 14 <sup>th</sup> St, La Crescent, MN 55947
<b>Oneota River Cycles</b>	563-382-0421	220 E. Water Street, Decorah, IA 52101
<b>River Trail Cycles</b>	608-519-5757	106 Mason Street, Onalaska, WI 54650
<b>Smith's Cycling</b>	608-784-1175	125 7 <sup>th</sup> St. N. La Crosse, WI 54601
<b>Speeds Bike Shop</b>	608-269-2315	1126 John Street, Sparta, WI 54656
<b>Sprockets Bike</b>	608-372-5609	14582 State Hwy 131, Tomah, WI 54660
<b>Wyatt Bicycle Co</b>	608-785-2453	1100 Kane St, La Crosse, WI 54603

### How to properly wear your helmet



If you are not sure how to fit your helmet, this website is a great resource: [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Fitting Your Bike Helmet.](#)

Or check out Safe Kids video for instruction: [Safe Kids, Bike Helmet Fit Test.](#)

## **Traffic and pedestrian laws**

To see a summary of bicycle and pedestrian laws in Wisconsin, please visit [Wisconsin DOT](#). To view bicycle and pedestrian laws in Minnesota, please visit [Minnesota DOT](#). To review pedestrian and bicycle laws in Iowa, please visit [Iowa DOT](#).

## **MTU Bus information**

Gundersen Health System employees have the opportunity to purchase a monthly bus pass for \$8 (they are normally \$30). Passes may be purchased at the cashier's desk on the first floor of the clinic.

Here is the form on Gladiator related to the [discount bus pass](#).

If you'd like to try out riding the bus before you purchase a pass, check it out on the following free days (first Monday of each month, excluding holidays): June 8, July 6, and August 3.

To figure out how to use the MTU bus, call 608-789-7350. They will help plan your trip for you (ie. where and when you can be picked up, what bus to get on, where and when you will be dropped off).

The MTU busses also offer the option of bringing your bike with you! All MTU busses have space for two bicycles to be loaded on them (first come, first serve). To learn more about "Bike 'n' Ride," please visit [City of La Crosse MTU information](#).

## **SMRT Bus information**

Scenic Mississippi Region Transit (SMRT) bus services are available to Gundersen employees. Gundersen is a sponsor of this transportation resource. Information is available on Gladiator under GundU/HR Other Resources

<http://www.ridesmrt.com/>

## **Ride board information**

Gundersen Health System has a ride board available on Gladiator. If you're interested in carpooling, check it out!

<http://connect.gundluth.org/hrgundu/OtherResources/Rideshare.aspx>

### **La Crosse Campus Neighborhood Employee Incentive program information**

Gundersen Health System offers a one-time financial incentive for employees that purchase and live in a home in the Southside neighborhood and agree to actively commute to work. La Crosse Campus Neighborhood Employee Incentive program information is available on Gladiator (GL-1810 La Crosse Campus Neighborhood Employee Incentive Program).

[http://glpub.gundluth.org/PolicyManual/policyView.xsql?co=1&index\\_no=GL-1810&status=7](http://glpub.gundluth.org/PolicyManual/policyView.xsql?co=1&index_no=GL-1810&status=7)

Please contact Anna at extension 53956 or email [atdix@gundersenhealth.org](mailto:atdix@gundersenhealth.org) with questions.