



# Walking with a Weighted Vest: Weight Loss and Bone Strength

*By Dr. Tricia Talerico, D.C., M.S., Nutr.*

For many women, walking is a cornerstone of sustainable exercise. It is low impact, accessible, and easy to maintain long term. However, standard walking may not provide enough mechanical load to stimulate meaningful changes in body composition or bone density, especially after age 35-40 when muscle mass and estrogen levels begin to decline. Adding a weighted vest introduces progressive overload, transforming walking into a clinically effective strategy for both fat loss and skeletal health.

From a metabolic perspective, external loading increases energy expenditure. The added mass elevates heart rate, oxygen consumption, and muscular recruitment, which results in greater caloric burn per session. This is particularly valuable for women pursuing weight loss without resorting to high-impact or joint-stressful activities.

Weighted walking also improves insulin sensitivity and fat oxidation by engaging large muscle groups for longer durations at moderate intensity.

Muscle preservation is another critical benefit. During weight loss, women are at risk for losing lean mass, which slows metabolic rate. A weighted vest recruits the glutes, quadriceps, hamstrings, calves, spinal stabilizers, and deep core muscles, helping preserve and build lean tissue

while reducing fat mass. Maintaining muscle supports resting metabolic rate and improves long-term weight maintenance.

Bone health is where weighted walking becomes especially powerful. Bone responds to mechanical strain through a process called mechanotransduction. When bones experience load, osteoblast activity increases, promoting bone formation. This is essential for women, particularly peri- and





post-menopause when declining estrogen accelerates bone loss. Weighted vests increase ground-reaction forces safely, stimulating the hips, spine, and lower extremities—areas most vulnerable to osteopenia and osteoporosis.

Cardiovascular adaptations also improve. With added load, the heart must pump more efficiently to supply working tissues, increasing aerobic capacity without the joint stress associated with running. This makes weighted walking a clinically

favorable intervention for women managing weight, blood sugar, or cardiovascular risk factors.

Core stability and posture benefit as well. The added resistance requires continuous engagement of the abdominal and postural muscles, improving spinal alignment and balance. For safe implementation, start with a vest equal to 5-10% of body weight, focusing on upright posture and natural stride mechanics. Progress slowly as strength and tolerance

improve. Weighted-vest walking bridges the gap between cardio and resistance training. For women seeking sustainable fat loss while protecting bones and muscle, it offers a practical, science-based upgrade to everyday movement.

Challenge yourself... Add a weighted vest to two to three walks per week for the next four weeks. Track energy, strength, and body composition changes and turn your daily steps into a powerful investment in long-term health.

## IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH... IMPROVE YOUR LIFE!



**Tricia Talerico, D.C., M.S., Nutr.**  
**Nutrition and Weight Loss Center of Ocean**  
 Dow Plaza • 1819 Highway 35 North  
 Oakhurst, NJ 07755

**732-609-3366**

[www.nutritionandweightlosscenter.com](http://www.nutritionandweightlosscenter.com)



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