

# 60-Mile Walk Survival Guide

from an old lady walking



*Why 60 Miles?*  
*A journey of the heart*

# The ~~Crazy~~ Author:

## Cathy Miller

After 30-plus years, Cathy Miller left the corporate world behind and started her own business writing company.



Since 2003, Cathy has participated as a walker (and one year as a crewmember) in the Susan G. Komen 3-Day Walk for the Cure.

Some would say it's crazy to walk 60 miles in 3 days – especially when you are over 50 years of age when you sign up for your first Walk.

Cathy pleads the fifth; however, she does share her survival tips if you are crazy enough to try this feat.

You can follow Cathy's ongoing journey at [Why60Miles.com](http://Why60Miles.com)

**CONNECT WITH CATHY**



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# INTRODUCTION

Avon sponsored the 3-Day until 2002. I was living in a lovely area of southern California, known as Channel Islands Harbor.

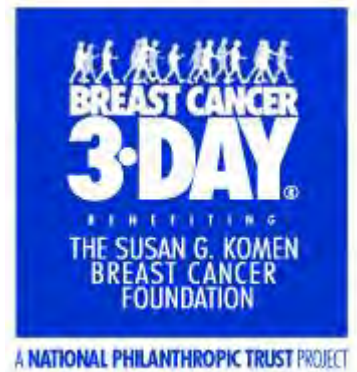
It was there I first laid eyes on walkers making their way down the coast from Santa Barbara to Malibu.

I discovered they were walking to raise money for breast cancer research. I felt an instant connection, although I did not know anyone personally who had been diagnosed with breast cancer. I said to myself, "I need to do this." You know what they say about the best-laid plans.

It wasn't until years later when I received a call from my mother that I got my rear off the couch and signed up.

**MY SISTER HAD BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH BREAST CANCER.  
NOW IT WAS PERSONAL.**

In 2003, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation adopted the 3-Day, known then as the Breast Cancer 3-Day. I took my first step in a journey far beyond those first 60 miles.



# TIP #1: FAVOR A FOOT FETISH

You may not spend a lot of time thinking about your feet.

- They get you from Point A to Point B
- Occasionally, you may pamper them with a pedicure

With the 3-Day Walk, you want to focus on your feet. In fact, favor a foot fetish. You cannot believe the impact of the foot follies of walking 60 miles.

**The tiniest blister sneaks up on you** with a screaming force that sends zombies racing away in terror. You may manage to ignore them throughout the day, only to feel their rage as you wake up in the morning to blood rushing to those pockets of pain.

**Toenails bruise and fall off** in escape from the constant pavement-slapping of walking 60 miles. Or perhaps it's the abuse of trusted shoes turning violent in protest of so much walking.

**YOUR FEET ARE MUCH MORE THAN  
BODY EXTENSIONS**



Why walk 60 miles?  
Because walking 61  
miles would be silly.

**SIGN ON 3-DAY WALK**

I wish I could offer you the magic formula for your foot fetish. What I have found in over a decade of walking 60 miles in 3 days is every walker's feet are different.

- Some feet favor thick, cushiony socks
- Others weep for light, dry-fit hugs of fabric
- Some feet march to the beat of hiking shoes
- Others race toward running shoes

### **Strange feet (like mine)**

demand funny, curved-bottom walking sandals like the fading-fast MBT (Masai Barefoot Technology) brand.



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**The shoes** – I discovered MBTs before my fourth 3-Day Walk. The initial experience is like trying to walk on a deck of a rocking boat at sea – drunk. However, I soon became an MBT disciple.

In my first three Walks, no matter what socks I wore or how much I trained, those sneaky blister **b#\$^@#\*s** launched a full-on attack by Day 2 of the Walk. I also lost my big toenails – twice.

**Since wearing the MBT sandals**, I have not had a single blister or lost any toenails. Take that you dastardly devils of foot doom!

The bad news is the company declared bankruptcy and it is getting more and more difficult to find legitimate MBTs. There are plenty of knock-offs.



**Experiment with different shoes** – In the early days of the Walks, I trained religiously by the guidelines offered by the event coordinators.

Even though I never got blisters on training walks, **IT DID NOT MATTER**. I still got them during the 3-Day.

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**The socks** – Get ready for another trial and error experiment in sockdom.

I tried thick socks, thin socks, dri-fit, and two-pairs-at-once sock strategy. Until I purchased my MBTs, I had not discovered the secret of the socks.

Since my MBTs delivered blister-blasting freedom, my socks have not been an issue.

However, that doesn't mean I stopped experimenting. I am easily bored, and of course, there is the fashion angle. More about that later.

Recently, I switched from mini-crew, thick socks to lighter, multi-activity micro-mini crew. So far, so good. What's next? Barefoot?



### Additional foot fetishes:

- Blister-preventing, anti-chafing lubricants like BodyGlide
- Or the poor walker's version – Vaseline (my personal favorite)
- Foot massages before and after 60 miles – ah, bliss



**IN 2007, SUSAN G. KOMEN CHANGED THE LOOK OF THE LOGO**



## TIP #2: LIGHTEN THE LOAD

I like to think I get smarter with each 3-Day Walk that passes under my feet. I suspect my getting older plays a bigger role in my changing strategy.

When you walk 60 miles over 3 days, there are conveniences you want to carry. For example, if you are like me:

**Walking + outdoors = running sinuses**

**Good to know some part of my body is capable of running 60 miles.** Thank the sinus gods for creating travel-size tissue packs.



Then there's 1) sunscreen/lip balm, 2) I.D., money & credit cards, 3) extra pairs of socks, 4) pain reliever, 5) Glide or vaseline, 6) band-aids/moleskin, 7) camera/phone, 8) water bottles, 9) sanitary wipes, 10) gloves...

**STOP THE MADNESS**

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Like many 3-Day walkers, I started with a fanny pack.

The following is what my early fanny packs contained.

- Two water bottle holders – 1 for water, 1 for sports drink
- 2 – 3 extra pairs of socks
- Bandana, gloves
- Vaseline tube
- Sunscreen tube, lip balm
- Sanitary wipes
- Lipstick, eyeliner
- Band-aids, moleskin
- Business cards, pen
- Wallet



I had back surgery when I was 40-years-old.

**By the end of Day 3, my back screamed in protest** of the loaded-down fanny pack resting squarely on my surgery scar.

Why did I think I had to do my version of a pack mule?

**I bought a windbreaker with a deep front pocket.**

When it warms up, I tie it around my waist. Take a look at my revised list.

- ✓ **A SINGLE WATER BOTTLE HOLDER** – I alternate between water and sports drink
- ✓ **1 PAIR OF SOCKS** – A single pair (especially after discovering my MBTs) works just fine
- ✓ **SEAMLESS WRAP** (as shown in picture) replaced bandanas – when not using it, the multi-functional wrap becomes a lovely wrist adornment
- ✓ **VASELINE/LIP BALM TUBE** – Small keepers
- ✓ **SUNSCREEN STICK** – replaced the larger tube – much lighter
- ✓ **SMALL I.D. POUCH** – replaced heavier wallet



I eliminated:

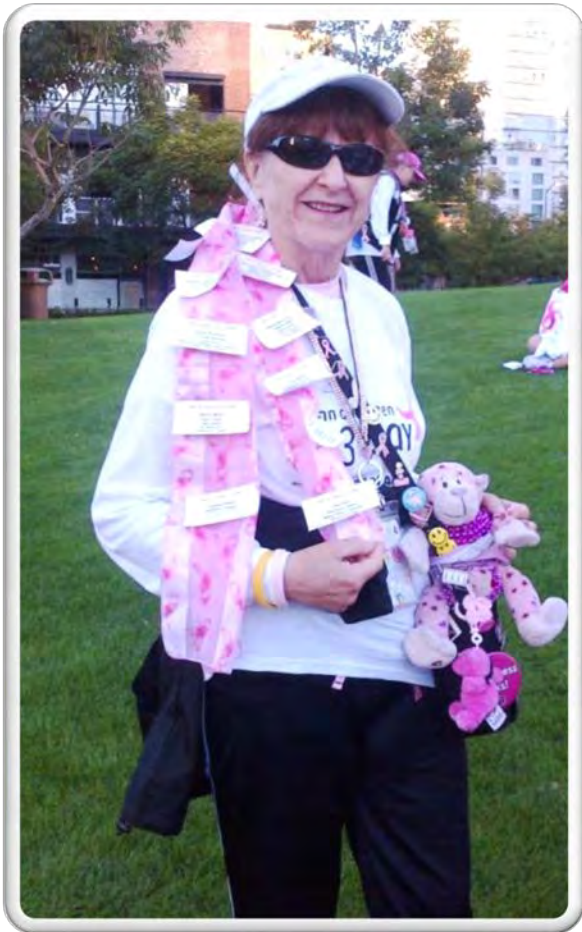
- 1) Band-aids/moleskin (medics have them)
- 2) Makeup (hey, walking 60 miles – who cares?)
- 3) 1-2 extra pairs of socks (I ♥ my MBTs)
- 4) Sanitary wipes (3-Day provides them)

Even tissues are offered by wonderful cheering residents (at least in San Diego). They must understand the theory of **walking + outdoors = running sinuses.**

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**Devoted pack mules** – I am a firm believer in *doing your own thing*. But, I admit I marvel at some walkers' notion of "essentials".

- **Back-packs** that could support a 14-day trek around Europe
- **Fanny packs** so full you expect the force of gravity will pull the walker on her back
- **Double duty** with some walkers sporting fanny packs and backpacks



One of my teammates has her light load down to a science.

Her waist pack carries one water bottle and has a small zippered pouch for her essentials – lip balm.

### THE LIGHTER VERSION

THE PINK MONKEY IS A RECENT ADDITION – CUREI OSITY IS SHIPPED AROUND THE COUNTRY TO WALK...UH...RIDE IN ALL 3-DAY WALKS

## TIP #3: FORGET FASHION FAUX PAS



### IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BLING

I lived two years in Minneapolis. I remember two morning radio disc jockeys counseling newbies to the Twin City area.

Their advice? Forget fashion – dress to stay warm.

You could say something similar about dressing for the 3-Day Walk.

“

Forget fashion faux pas – just wear pink

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You may find this hard to believe – I don't like pink – except when it comes to the 3-Day Walk.

- ✓ **PINK TOES & HEELS** on my socks
- ✓ **PINK WRAPS** for warmth
- ✓ **PINK PIPING** on my capris
- ✓ **PINK SCARF** where I attach the names of loved ones
- ✓ **PINK SAFETY PINS** to attach those names to the scarf
- ✓ **PINK SPORTS BRA** okay, too much information (TMI!)

Not to mention the endless **pink** adornments that end up on our heads, feet, arms, and necks.



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But even all that **pink** goes by the wayside when Mother Nature comes calling.

**In 2010, we had a monsoon** creep in on Day 2. I mean a wind-whipping, walker-whooping gully-washer.



**WHO NEEDS RAIN PONCHOS WHEN YOU HAVE TRASH BAGS? THIS WAS ACTUALLY THE 2009 WALK IN ARIZONA. YES, IT RAINS IN ARIZONA, TOO.**

You can take this to the bank. The last thing on your mind is fashion when you go through this experience.

- Being pelted by rain so hard you swear someone is shooting BBs at you
- Umbrellas turned inside out and ripped to shreds
- Sitting on rocks under a bridge to change socks, only to be drenched the minute you clear the bridge

**The most addicting fashion statement** of the 3-Day Walk is the collection of pins – and what my sister calls – neat junk.

- CANCER SUCKS pins
- Other variations
- Not all printable
- Little pink teddy bears
- Pink ribbons
- Team names

The more you have – the better.



**MY WATER BOTTLE HOLDER**

**MOST WALKERS ADORN THEIR FANNY PACKS WITH PINS & NEAT JUNK.**

**WHEN I DUMPED MINE, I HAD TO FIND AN ALTERNATIVE CARRIER FOR MY BLING.**



# TIP #4: COUNT CALORIES (MORE OR LESS)



**Food, glorious food.** The 3-Day Walk is a 60-mile buffet table extravaganza.

- Pit stops with pig-out delights
- Featuring your forbidden pleasures
- Chips, bagels, peanuts, cheese sticks
- And PBJs!!! (peanut butter & jelly)
- Did I mention the PBJs?!

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**The supporters** – I have walked all of my 3-Day Walks in San Diego (where I used to live).

The support of the San Diego community is nothing short of phenomenal. I thank God every 3-Day Walk that I was not cursed with a sweet tooth.

The San Diego supporters come out in droves to offer sweet concoctions that would make Willy Wonka weep.

- Homemade chocolate chip cookies
- Every candy bar known to man (and woman) kind
- Licorice sticks, push-up frozen treats
- And my personal favorite – fresh strawberries
- To name a few



**Taste bud overload** – Believe it or not – you can overload on food – even when walking 60 miles.

- **Loose Lips** – My 1st year I thought I had to eat at every pit stop offering food. Uh, no. Pace yourself – especially on the supporters' sweet offerings.
- **Calorie count** – On the other hand – relax. I remember seeing one walker flipping over a nutrition bar to check out the number of calories. Trust me. You can afford the extra calories.

And then there are the famous words of Forrest Gump.

“

I gotta pee.

Yes, peeing is a major deal on the 3-Day Walk. Need to do it. Often, it is is all you think about.

But, this is me – and maybe only me – after the first few Walks, I found I could alternate between water & sports drinks between pit stops. I no longer drink ~

**1 WATER + 1 SPORTS DRINK FOR EVERY PIT STOP**

**CAN YOU SPELL RELIEF?**

## TIP #5: PAVE YOUR OWN PATH



If I learned anything in participating in nearly a dozen 3-Day Walks, it's **march to the beat of your own drum.**

Okay, that may be my own middle child of seven stubbornness.

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There will be those who ~

- Tell you how to train
- Which shoes to wear
- When to get on a sweep van



While I appreciate hearing what works for others, I know not all of the advice works for me.

Here are a few examples of my contrariness.

**TRAINING** – I no longer follow the training plan that gradually builds to 20 miles. Instead, I find walking 5-6 miles/day consistently is all the training I need.

**BUS PASS** – After ripping off my baby toenail (not on purpose – duh!), I developed the **worst blister ever**. But I refused to be put on a sweep van at the **last** pit stop. I walked the remaining 3 miles in my stocking feet.

**KNOW WHEN TO FOLD 'EM** – I also learned it was okay to hit the sweep vans the two years my fat, out-of-shape body couldn't master the hills.

I'm happy to report that all this walking has me back in shape. Once again, I **navigate every hill and all 60 miles**.

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My point? Yes, there is one.

The 3-Day Walk for the Cure is a unique experience for each of us.

- My shoes may not be your shoes
- Your socks might chafe me but work for you
- Our training may take different paths

For one reason, I am an ~

## OLD LADY WALKING



But, there is one truth for every individual who participates ~

**The 3-Day Walk for the Cure will change your life.**

# Keep the Old Lady Walking

<http://www.zazzle.com/oldladywalking?rf=238034681773608791>

## Old Lady Walking

Crushing cancer and loving life



Visit my Zazzle Store for fun items with the Old Lady Walking theme. A portion of sales will help me reach the minimum fundraising requirement to participate in another 3-Day Walk.

**Purchase items** for your next walk, run or charity event. Or simply to show the world you are proud to be or proud to support an [Old Lady Walking](#).

**Sign up** to receive blog and product updates at [Why60Miles](#).

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN A SMALL PART OF THIS  
JOURNEY OF THE HEART.