

How to Organize a
Walk n' Roll to Cure Ataxia

in recognition of
International Ataxia Awareness Day



National Ataxia Foundation

Introduction

The first NAF Walk n' Roll for Ataxia was held in September, 2007 in San Diego, California. Since that time, NAF Walk n' Roll for Ataxia events have grown nation-wide informing tens of thousands about ataxia and raising more than \$300,000 annually for research and important programs and services. Its primary objectives are to have FUN, raise awareness of ataxia, and funds for research and other important NAF programs.

September was chosen because September 25th has been designated International Ataxia Awareness Day (IAAD), a day recognized by ataxia organizations around the world. The goal of IAAD is for every individual or group to participate in some activity, creating awareness about ataxia. The Walk n' Roll for Ataxia is an easy, fun, and rewarding activity to hold to meet that goal.

Below are suggested steps to take to organize a Walk n' Roll, followed by some useful:

Steps to Organize a Walk n' Roll

STEP 1: Gather 2 or 3 key people to form your event committee and get things going: Support Group members, friends and family, especially those with experience with similar events. Review the information in this "kit" and NAF's "Walk n' Roll Application" which can be found on NAF's website or requested by contacting the NAF office.

STEP 2: Select a route, in a central location, that is easy to find and has ample parking. A Walk n' Roll can be inside or outside. Many times a Walk is held in a mall, which eliminates the issue of bad weather. Above all, make sure the location of the event is accessible. Contact the local government authority or owner of the location selected to confirm the route's availability, use fees or permit costs, and insurance requirements. The NAF can obtain an insurance rider to meet these requirements. Choose a starting time, and determine the length of the race and the route. Decide how many participants your location (and the route) can successfully handle. An event with several hundred participants is a whole different beast than one with few dozen. The more participants, the more spectators come to watch. Set a date--rain or shine which may be determined by the availability of the desired event location.

STEP 3: Set a registration fee or suggested minimum donation. Statistics show that events that do not charge a registration fee raise more money.

STEP 4: Contact NAF to discuss the preliminary details of your event then complete and submit the Walk n' Roll Application.

STEP 5: Work with NAF to build your event website and other communication pieces such as your event flyer, registration form, pledge form, press release, and sponsor letter.

STEP 6: Hold planning meetings with your event committee. Establish procedures and discuss policies for registration, media relations and publicity, volunteers, safety, traffic management, first aid, food, rest rooms, accommodations, cleanup, and entertainment. Put FUN at the forefront of your event. This is an opportunity to have fun with friends and family. The size of your event can be 5 to a 1000. Have fun, create awareness, make new friends, and at the end of the day you will raise money too.

STEP 7: Approach potential sponsors to help finance, publicize or even organize the event. Contact an athletic or sporting-goods store, a running club, a podiatrist, and local sports hero. Solicit corporate donations for water, energy bars, other snacks and sports drinks to be handed out along the route and at the end of the race. Sponsors will always want to promote their product with giveaways such as T-shirts, caps and water bottles.

STEP 8: Contact law enforcement agencies about local ordinances, road closures, traffic barricades, crowd control and security issues.

STEP 9: Get the word out to as many volunteers, runners and walkers as possible. Contact a local TV station to see if it will get involved; maybe a news anchor is an avid runner. You can begin promoting the event by encouraging participants to register on the event website and then share their pages with their friends, neighbors, co-workers and by posting flyers around town and on social media. If you belong to a civic group, church, or synagogue contact them about the event. Contact your local newspapers, television and radio stations about the Walk n' Roll. In addition, ask your local access cable company to place information about the event on the community bulletin section. NAF Chapters, support groups, and ambassadors can post it on their web site. NAF will also help you promote your Walk n' Roll and send you informational materials for your event.

Tips & Warnings

- Encourage residents to come out and cheer on the runners and walkers.
- Delegate as much as possible on race day to your volunteers. The lead organizer should avoid being charge of any one particular task but act as the trouble shooter making sure the overall event is running as planned.
- Always have more supplies, food, water and volunteers than you think you'll need.
- If you are planning on having t-shirts available for participants, contact local business to pay for the cost and printing of the tee shirts with the agreement that their names and logos will be on the tee shirt as one of the sponsors. Try to get t-shirts and printing costs donated.

- If you are planning on selling food and beverages at the event to raise additional funds, you will also need to check with city hall regarding ordinances on food and beverage sales. See if you can get the food and beverages donated for your event. Request Ataxia Awareness materials to give away and sell from the National Ataxia Foundation.
- Selling food and beverages, collecting pledges and helping those who participate in the event will take volunteers. Make sure you have volunteers to clean-up after the event. Your volunteer needs will depend greatly upon your own event and activities.
- Make sure all participants sign a registration or release form before the event begins. This signature is required to complete the registration form. The sign in sheet will also help you gauge how many participants attended your event.
- After the event is completed, make sure you thank all of your volunteers, participants, and donors for their help and support. Keep a list of these individuals, businesses, and organizations so you can contact them again for next year's event.
- Send checks by certified mail to the NAF.
- Do not re-invent the wheel. Copy the registration and pledge forms created by the NAF and other support groups, and personalize them to your event. Network with other Walk n' Roll organizers about how they execute various aspects of their events.

Whether you are planning a Walk n' Roll for several hundred participants or a dozen support group members, you are helping to raise awareness about ataxia and funds to support the important work of the National Ataxia Foundation. Your effort gives hope to the entire ataxia community. Past event website, pictures, and video can be found on the Walk n' Roll page of NAF's website.

For more information about Walk n' Roll, contact Lori Shogren, NAF's Special Projects Coordinator, at (763) 553-0020 or lori@ataxia.org.

For more information about Walk n' Roll for ataxia visit NAF's [Walk n' Roll webpage](#).

Attachments

1. *Sample Flyer used for Walk n' Roll (Note the short URL under the registration time.)*
2. *Sample Press Release used for FIRST Walk n' Roll*
3. *Sample Sponsorship Letter*
4. *Sample Registration Form used for Walk n' Roll*
5. *Sample Pledge Form used for Walk n' Roll*



The _____ Ataxia Support Group Presents

Walk n' Roll to Cure Ataxia

Date



**In Celebration of
INTERNATIONAL ATAXIA AWARENESS DAY**

Location

Time

[Event Website](#)

For more information

Contact Phone Number & Email Address



All Proceeds benefit the National Ataxia Foundation

Tax ID # 41-0832903

For Immediate Release

Contact Event Organizer
 Phone Number
 Email Address

San Diego, CA (August,) -- In recognition of International Ataxia Awareness Day, the San Diego Support Group of the National Ataxia Foundation is hosting The First Annual Charley McLaughlin 2K Walk n' Roll to Cure Ataxia. The event will be held on Saturday, September 29 at Tuna Harbor Park. Registration runs from 7:00-8:00 a.m., and the Walk n' Roll starts at 8:00 a.m.

Ataxia is an often-fatal degenerative neurological disorder that affects the balance, coordination, and speech of more than 150,000 men, women and children in the United States. As the disease progresses, it also can impact heart, sight, and hearing. Ataxia can strike anyone at any time; children, adolescents and adults are all affected. To find out more about ataxia, visit www.ataxia.org.

Juice, granola bars and water will be served during registration for the 2K Walk n' Roll. There is no registration fee; donations will be gladly accepted. All proceeds benefit the National Ataxia Foundation, a nonprofit organization established in 1957 to help families affected by hereditary or sporadic ataxia.

Tuna Harbor Park is next to downtown San Diego's Fish Market (750 North Harbor Drive), in the shadows of the USS Midway. Free parking is available at the Fish Market.

For more event information, or to volunteer, contact the Event Organizer at (763) 553-0020 or naf@ataxia.org.

CALL FOR DONATIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

The 8th Annual Walk n' Roll to Cure Ataxia

Saturday, September 17, 2016 8:00a.m. check-in 9:00a.m. Walk

*Location: **East Lake Village Clubhouse***

5325 Village Center Dr., Yorba Linda, CA, 92886

*EXPECTED ATTENDANCE: **400-500 Family and Friends***

The OC/LA Ataxia Support Groups are organizing the eight Annual Walk n' Roll to Cure Ataxia. This event, over the past few years, has brought greater awareness of ataxia to thousands of people in southern California and beyond. Ataxia is a group of degenerative neurological disorders that affects balance, coordination, and speech.

We are in need of corporate sponsors, monetary donations, gift cards, promotional products, and items for silent auction and opportunity baskets. As always, contributions in any amount are appreciated. With a donation valued at \$500 or more, you will receive name recognition on the t-shirts that are distributed at the Walk n' Roll event as well as recognized on our event web site. All contributors are welcome to attend the event.

The NAF was established in 1957 as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, tax ID #41-0832903. NAF's primary financial focus is in supporting promising ataxia research to help find answers in ending ataxia. In fact, the most recent audited financial statements shows that only 7.5% of expenditures were used for fund raising and administrative costs, while 92.5% were used to support research and programs.

The NAF is dedicated to helping ataxia families through research, education, and support services. Families with ataxia are hopeful of your consideration of this most important event. Ataxia affects more than 150,000 men, women and children in the United States, including thousands here in the surrounding area. As the disorder progresses, it also can impact the heart, sight, and hearing. To find out more about Ataxia and the NAF, please visit our web site at www.ataxia.org.

Thank you for considering the National Ataxia Foundation, your support will truly make a difference. This will give you and your company local exposure while benefiting a wonderful cause. Please contact me at your convenience to discuss supporting this important event.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Whether you are walking or rolling, we are all heading for that ultimate finish line ... a cure for Ataxia!
Please help us on this vital journey. Thank you.