

Rules of the road

When people with McArdle's walk together, such as on a walking course, we have some common sense "Rules of the road" to look after everyone.

When walking in a group of people who don't know about our McArdle's, it is very easy for us to damage ourselves as we do not want to hold people back, make a fuss, etc. Even though we know we have to say something, we can sub-consciously suppress that and end up doing too much, going those few yards too far before stopping. The result can be a painful fixed



Rules of the road in action, looking after each other.

muscle contracture which can last for hours or days. If it is severe it can make us feel very unwell and possibly even land us in hospital.

All the walkers in a McArdle's walking group need to protect themselves from possible muscle damage. Apart from good techniques, the key to this is a set of rules which we all need to stick to - and we willingly comply as we all understand.

The more that those of us with McArdle's walk, the more we get to understand our muscles, to know the signs, to know what we can do and can't do, to know how to avoid problems. By walking as a group we can compare notes and help each other to a fuller understanding of all these aspects.

The rules are:

- Always walk at the pace of the slowest person.
- If someone else stops, just carry on slowly, unless...
- If you are the last person, then stop with other person.
- Never mention the stop, just talk about something else.
- The people in front should watch out for those behind and slow down, so as not to put pressure on the ones behind to keep up.
- If the group has spread out more than 150 yards or so, call out for all to stop.
- Usually 30 seconds rest is enough for the sensations to dissipate. However, if the person does not wish to continue after that, the group will take a 5 minute break.
- We will anyway stop frequently for short breaks.
- We will have pick up points wherever we can.
- If anyone needs to, we will all abandon the day's walk without complaint.
- The leader's decision is final!