

News Column for use week of March 4, 2024
Kaitlin Moore, Nutrition, Food Safety & Health Agent
River Valley Extension District
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It's Simple, It's Free, It's Effective... It's Walking!

Have you been thinking of adding more physical activity to your life? Have you thought about walking? Walking is a great way to be more active and is the most popular physical activity among adults. Most people can walk, including many people with disabilities who are able to walk on their own or with walkers or other aids. Walking is easy to do and has a low risk of injury. Walking is free or low-cost because you don't need special equipment, clothing, facilities, or training. Because walking can easily fit your schedule, needs, and abilities, it's a good way to start getting active if you've been inactive.

Like other kinds of regular physical activity, walking may offer health benefits, such as:

- lowering your risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes
- strengthening your bones and muscles
- improving your fitness
- lifting your mood

Most people do not need to see a doctor before they start a walking program. However, you should check with your doctor if you have a chronic health problem such as a heart condition, diabetes, or high blood pressure or are over 40 years old and have been inactive. You should talk with your doctor if, while walking, you get dizzy; feel faint or short of breath; or have chest, neck, shoulder, or arm pain. Source: niddk.nih.gov

The most important step is the first one!

Consider participating in Walk Kansas this year! Registration opens March 4th. The Walk Kansas program begins March 31st and runs through May 25th. During these 8 weeks you report steps or minutes of activity. These steps or minutes are then converted into distance and over the course of the 8-week program you will have walked across a portion of Kansas! The \$10 registration fee includes a weekly newsletter and access to the online Walk Kansas system for tracking your physical activity. This year participants will also have access to exclusive webinars produced by K-State Extension Specialists. You can join Walk Kansas as part of a team or solo. If you choose to join as a team, your teammates do not have to live in the River Valley District or even the state or even the country! We've had friends and families across the globe participate in Walk Kansas. Knowing thousands of people across the state are making an effort, at the same time, to be active, can be very motivating. Seeing your distance increase each time you log into the Walk Kansas website and report your minutes, can be very motivating. Walk Kansas presents a unique opportunity to establish healthy habits. Don't miss out! Call your local Extension Office today to learn more or get registered! Questions can also be directed to Kaitlin Moore, Nutrition, Food Safety & Health Agent, at 785-243-8185 or kaitlinmoore@ksu.edu.

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