

MOVE YOUR WAY!

2021 Week One

K-STATE
Research and Extension

Walk Kansas

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What is Your Why?

As we begin Walk Kansas 2021, think about your “why” for joining this year. Has the pandemic resulted in 15 extra quarantine pounds for you? Do you have a health condition that regular physical activity could help? Do you just need a nudge to make better nutrition choices and move more? Or, is a fun health challenge a good way to connect with family and friends from a distance? Think about your reason – your “why” – and write it down and post it in a place where you will see it every day. This can help you stay focused over the next 8 weeks and beyond.

Walk Kansas 2021 is centered on three key messages:

Move Your Way. The best activity is the one you will actually do, so try some different ones, find what is enjoyable for you, and stick with it! When you think about physical activity, remember that some is better than none, more is better than some, and too much is hard to get.

Make Every Bite Count. Foods and beverages you choose have a profound impact on your health. Healthy eating is important at every life stage. We will introduce you to different eating patterns, along with nutritious and tasty recipes.

Prevent/Delay/Manage Chronic Disease. Many chronic conditions can be prevented or delayed, and they can be managed more effectively with healthful habits. We will look specifically at mental health, heart disease, osteoporosis, Alzheimer’s, obesity, arthritis, diabetes, and cancer.

Wow, that is a lot to accomplish in 8 weeks, so let’s get started!

Sharolyn Flaming Jackson

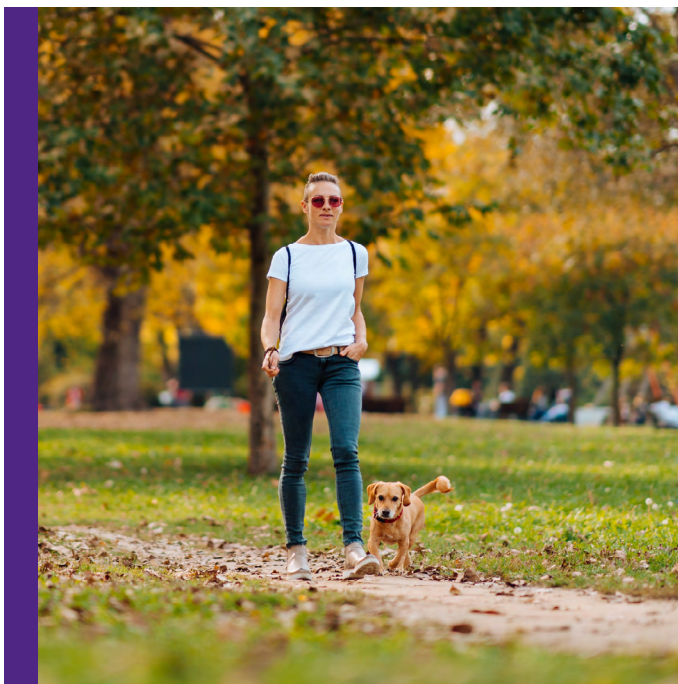
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Immediate Benefits

During this first week of Walk Kansas, focus on how you feel after physical activity. Exercise increases brain chemicals associated with feeling happy, feeling less anxiety and stress, and even less physical pain. Getting more movement can also help some people relieve feelings of depression.

During moderate or vigorous activity, your body and brain produce hormones and neurotransmitters that improve your mood, enhance your memory, increase energy levels, and elevate your sense of well being. These are the body's "feel-good" chemicals at work. While your muscles will feel tired after activity, you will probably feel more relaxed. You may also feel a sense of accomplishment, which gives you a boost of self-confidence. Feeling better as result of movement can be a powerful motivator.

Being in nature can also work wonders for your state of mind, and popularity of outdoor activity has risen dramatically as we cope with pandemic life. Compared to indoor activity, outdoor walking creates even greater improvements in mood, enjoyment, and the intent to exercise in the future. Research shows that exercising outdoors can have a similar effect on the brain and mood as meditation. Here is a great tool if you are ready to explore outdoor trails where you live or to plan a fun family or friend outing. Visit www.alltrails.com to see trails in your area.



Make Every Meal Count

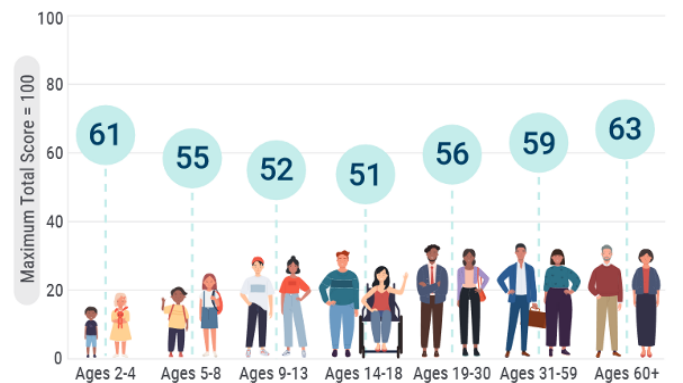
Since 1980, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans have provided science-based advice on what to eat and drink to promote health. These guidelines are revised every five years and, while many recommendations stay consistent, others evolve as scientific knowledge grows.

New with the 2020-2025 edition is a call to action: "Make Every Bite Count with the *Dietary Guidelines* (www.dietaryguidelines.gov/)." The focus is on choosing foods and beverages rich in nutrients and within your calorie limits. Think of "nutrient dense" foods rather than "empty calorie" foods.

These guidelines can be adapted to your personal preferences, to include foods that represent different cultures and budget considerations. We will explore several eating patterns during Walk Kansas and highlight tasty recipes that "make every bite count."

While the science that links food and health continues to grow stronger, most Americans fall far short of meeting the dietary guidelines. The graphic below illustrates, on average, how well we do at different stages of life based on the Healthy Eating Index (HEI). You can see that the score is higher early in life and in older adulthood. Remember that it is never too early or too late to improve food and beverage choices.

You can get a punch of nutrients from every bite of this Southwestern Salad. The protein boost in this recipe comes from quinoa and black beans. Quinoa is a seed that is cooked and eaten like grains and has the highest protein content of all whole grains. It provides all nine essential amino acids, is gluten-free, and cholesterol-free. This nutrient profile is why quinoa is sometimes called the "Mother Grain." Serve this salad on a bed of dark leafy greens to make a light and satisfying meal.



The Healthy Eating Index shows how well society eats over their lifespan.

Southwestern Salad

Serves 8

Dressing Ingredients:

- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons honey
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ cup cilantro, chopped
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Salad Ingredients:

- 1 large bell pepper, chopped
- ½ medium sweet onion, halved, then sliced into half rings
- 1 small zucchini, chopped
- 10 cherry tomatoes
- 1 15-ounce. can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup sweet corn, thawed from frozen
- 2 cups cooked quinoa (½ cup uncooked, use package directions)
- 4 small whole radishes, thinly sliced
- Garnishes (optional): Sliced avocado, jalapeno pepper rings, Mexican crumbling cheese, cilantro.

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Prepare produce and rinse under cold running water. Rinse cilantro under cold water and dry with paper towels to remove excess moisture.
3. Combine dressing ingredients in a large mason jar and shake vigorously. Set aside.
4. Place salad ingredients in a large bowl and stir to combine. Add dressing and stir to combine; garnish as desired. Refrigerate leftovers in a covered container.



Nutrition Information per 1 cup serving:

200 calories; 8 g fat (0 trans fat, 1g saturated fat); 29 g carbohydrates; 6 g protein; 6 g fiber; 220 mg sodium

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