



# K-State Extension Connection

## Walk Kansas Program Helps Combat Chronic Disease

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Did you know that chronic diseases are responsible for more than 70% of health care costs in Kansas? Did you know that making healthy lifestyle choices can help protect against chronic diseases?

According to the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease: If Americans were to stop smoking, exercise regularly, and eat well, they could prevent up to 80% of heart disease and stroke, 80% of type 2 diabetes and 40% of cancers. Think about that statement. What effect could making better choices have on your health and your healthcare costs?

With these thoughts in mind, each spring K-State Research and Extension encourages Kansans and beyond to get more active and make lifestyle choices that support healthy living through the Walk Kansas Healthy Lifestyle Challenge.

Walk Kansas encourages participants to form teams of six, with one serving as a team captain. Each team selects a goal, or one of three challenges, they will collectively work toward. Participants log activity minutes and the amount of fruits/vegetables they eat. They can log online or on paper.

Participants receive weekly newsletters and motivational messages which will help them develop social connections that support healthy living, share ways to lower personal stress, help them focus on their sense of purpose, and more!

While physical activity, walking in particular, is at the heart of Walk Kansas, the program will have a couple of new twists this year. One focuses on the Mediterranean style of eating.

Eating the “Med” way is not about flavors, it is about eating lots of fruits and vegetables, choosing whole grains, eating more beans and legumes, reducing added sugars, using olive and canola oil, and more.



The second twist centers on introducing participants to the nine shared lifestyle traits of the Blue Zones, places around the world where people are known to live measurably longer and healthier lives. These traits, and ways to incorporate them into your life, will be introduced during the eight week Walk Kansas program.

Want to feel better and have more energy? The health benefits from regular exercise and physical activity are hard to ignore and they are available to everyone! Also, joining the Walk Kansas program can make physical activity more fun!

Walk Kansas will run from March 15 to May 9, 2020. Contact your local K-State Research and Extension Office to find out how you can join Walk Kansas 2020 for a healthier you!

Find more information about these topics and others, by contacting the Wildcat Extension District offices at: Crawford County, 620-724-8233; Labette County, 620-784-5337; Montgomery County, 620-331-2690; Wilson County, 620-378-2167; Pittsburg Office, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP), 620-232-1930. Wildcat District Extension is on the Web at <http://www.wildcatdistrict.ksu.edu>. Or, like our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/wildcat.extension.district](http://www.facebook.com/wildcat.extension.district).

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