

Celebrate

healthy living

2018 Week 1

Make it Stick

Have you ever created a resolution in January to exercise more? Was it easy to stick to that plan? For most of us, creating a habit is challenging. One focus of Walk Kansas 2018 is to help you make positive health habits stick!

In a nutshell, health habits are more likely to stick if you: find activities you enjoy, build your skills to do the exercises safely and with confidence, have social support and accountability, and if the physical activity fits into your daily routine. Check this newsletter each week for articles and resources that support these “make it stick” factors.

To get started, locate the program [Activity Guide](#) so you know how to log minutes of exercise for Walk Kansas. The guide has several simple pre/post flexibility tests and a walking test that you are encouraged to complete. The ultimate reward for being active every day is a sense of accomplishment, and completing these simple tests before and after Walk Kansas can show you how much your physical fitness improves over 8 weeks.

Resources, including past program newsletters and how-to videos, can be found on the [Walk Kansas website](#) and in the “Resources” section of the online system where you log activity minutes. Make sure you regularly view your team’s progress “On the Map” and learn more about Kansas by unlocking points of interest along your trail.

Walk Kansas would like to thank Marci Penner, and the Kansas Sampler Foundation for partnering with us to highlight the “8 Wonders of Kansas” as well as many other “wonder” finalists. Learn more about Kansas through their books and online resources at www.kansassampler.org.

Now, grab your walking shoes and hit the trail!

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Don't Skip This!

Getting your body ready for exercise, and cooling down with stretches afterward, are crucial for keeping your body injury free and to improve flexibility. When pressed for time, however, many people skip this part of a walking or workout routine.

A 5- to 10-minute warm-up that includes light activity, such as a slow version of what you do for exercise, such as walking, helps prepare your mind and body for more vigorous activity. The warm-up increases your body's core and muscle temperature, and it helps make your muscles less tight. During this time your heart rate and respiratory rate increase, and your blood flow increases — again, preparing your body for more vigorous activity. You can include dynamic stretches during a warm up. These are slow, controlled movements such as arm circles, shoulder rolls, and knee lifts.

Just as important as the warm-up is the cool-down time. For the last 5 to 10 minutes of your walk or workout, slow your pace to allow your breathing to return to normal. This will also help reduce muscle stiffness. After the cool down, your muscles are ready for stretching.

It is important to stretch when muscles are warmed up, so after exercise is the best time. Static stretching, where you hold a stretch for 15 to 30 seconds, is best. Do upper and lower body stretches and never push yourself to the point of pain, just slight discomfort. Stay relaxed and breathe in and out slowly. Don't hold your breath. Make sure you stretch both sides of your body equally and don't bounce or jerk while stretching. Stretch every day, if possible, or at least three times per week, and always after walking or exercise.

Hamstring Stretch

Tight hamstrings, the muscle group located in the back of your thigh, are a problem for many people. It is important to stretch this muscle group after walking or exercise and there are several different ways you can stretch your hamstrings.

Seated hamstring stretch: Sit near the front of a stable chair with a tall posture. Extend left leg straight forward with the heel on floor, toe pointed up. Try to touch the left toe with both hands, keeping the leg as straight as possible. Keep head above heart level while leaning forward. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat with right leg. Complete twice for each leg.



Hamstring stretch on floor or ground: Lie on your back. Grab the upper thigh of your right leg, straighten the leg and pull it up toward your chest, keeping the leg straight. Switch legs and repeat.

Standing hamstring stretch: Bend forward from the hips (not waist), keeping back and shoulders straight at all times. Use a chair for support and to help with balance, if needed. When upper body is parallel to floor, hold the position for 15 seconds. Relax and repeat a second time.

Enjoy Eggs

The egg has long been a symbol of new beginnings and they are celebrating a new chapter in the diet as the 2015 version of the Dietary Guidelines lifted the limit on dietary cholesterol. While research shows that high blood cholesterol is associated with heart disease, it has become evident that cholesterol in food is not the culprit — saturated fat is, and eating food high in saturated fat can trigger the body to produce cholesterol.

This gives the green light to enjoy the wonderfully nutritious egg, a high-quality protein with only 70 calories. One large egg also provides varying amounts of 13 essential vitamins and minerals, and the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin.

Eggs are often thought of as breakfast food, but egg dishes can be a one-pot entrée for any meal during the day, like this frittata. These are similar to an omelette or scrambled eggs, and they are super easy to make. Frittatas cook quickly, are inexpensive and an efficient way to use leftovers. You can also pack in the vegetables when preparing a frittata. Enjoy the following recipe, which boasts a southwest flare!



Meditation in Motion

Walking and other forms of exercise are super stress busters. During a brisk walk or a fast-paced game of racquetball, the day's irritations are often left behind as you concentrate only on your body's movements. Focusing on a single task, like walking, helps you shed daily tensions and brings calm and focus to your thoughts. Exercise is like meditation in motion and leaves you feeling more optimistic and energetic.

Regular exercise can also increase your self-confidence and it leads to the release of your body's natural happy drugs — endorphins. Physicians often recommend adding regular walking and other exercise as a natural treatment for depression.

Another way that exercise can aid in managing stress is by helping you sleep better. Sleep is often disrupted by stress and anxiety. Feeling rested allows you to be more productive and it is likely that you will manage stressful situations more appropriately.

You will be building your toolbox for managing stress each week during Walk Kansas, so give some of these techniques a try and use the ones that work for you.

Southwest Vegetable Frittata

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
- ½ cup diced red pepper
- ¼ cup diced yellow onion
- ½ to 1 small jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely minced
- ½ cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 6 large eggs
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup grated reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese
- ¼ avocado, thinly sliced
- ½ cup chunky salsa or pico de gallo
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro, for garnish (optional)

Directions:

1. In large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat.
2. Add red pepper, onion and jalapeno; sauté for 5 minutes. Add black beans and with wooden spoon, stir vegetables and beans until evenly distributed.
3. Beat eggs in bowl and pour eggs over top. Spread with spoon to evenly distribute across vegetables and beans. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover and cook over medium heat until eggs are just set, about 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Remove pan from heat and sprinkle with cheese. Cover and allow cheese to melt for a minute. Gently slide the frittata onto plate or platter.
5. Top with avocado slices and salsa. If desired, garnish with fresh cilantro.



Nutrition Information per serving:

200 calories
13 g fat (3 g saturated fat)
9 g carbohydrates
13 g protein
3 g fiber
260 mg sodium

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