



# Celebrate *healthy living* newsletter

Week 9 | 2019

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## Coming next year:

- Walk Kansas 2020 — March 15 to May 9
- Walk KS 5K for the Fight — May 2

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## Keep Moving Your Way

Walk Kansas 2019 is a wrap! While the formal program has ended, we hope that you keep moving in whatever way that works best for you. Remember that any amount of physical activity has some health benefits. Moving throughout your day, even if it is for short amounts of time, is beneficial.

The beautiful Kansas State University campus was the location for the annual Walk Kansas 5K for the Fight and Fun Walk on May 4. This event benefits cancer research at K-State through the Johnson Cancer Research Center. A big shout out to all of those who participated!

We would like to hear about your experience in Walk Kansas this year. [Please take a few minutes to respond to this survey.](#) We also value your suggestions on how we can improve the program in the future. If you prefer a paper survey, please request one from your local K-State Research and Extension Office. If you have the state employee health plan (SEHP) and are seeking Health Quest credits, please [complete this short survey before June 12.](#)

Now for a sneak peek at Walk Kansas 2020! Have you heard of Blue Zones? These are geographic areas, throughout the world, where people live the longest, often free of dementia and chronic disease. Studies have established that only about 20 percent of how long the average person lives is determined by their genes. So, the answers to why these people live longer, healthier lives must be in their lifestyle and environment.

During Walk Kansas 2020, we will introduce you to the nine commonalities that exist in the five blue zone communities and look at how their surroundings make the healthy choice easy for those who live there. We hope you will join us again next year!

Enjoy your summer — be active and be well!

*Sharolyn Flaming Jackson*

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## Refresh with a Beverage

One of the most refreshing beverages is a glass of flavored water. For subtle flavor, toss frozen berries into your water bottle and let them melt as you drink. Add frozen berries or citrus zest to water when you make ice cubes. For a clean refreshing taste, add freshly cut cucumbers to water. For a natural tummy tamer, add fresh sliced ginger. Flavors that pair well together include lime and raspberry, watermelon and rosemary, pineapple and mint, blackberry and sage, cranberry and orange, lemon and ginger, strawberry and vanilla. Flavored water is also healthful, inexpensive, and gorgeous! Use carbonated water if you want a bubbly treat.

For a special treat that everyone can enjoy, try non-alcoholic sangria! You can use any combination of juice that you like and change with the seasons by using fruit that is in season. Raise a glass to toast your success in Walk Kansas this year!



## How Long Does it Take to Lose Fitness?

Congratulations on completing Walk Kansas! If you have been walking or doing some other type of aerobic activity, and adding strengthening and/or stretching exercises at least twice a week, you probably have noticed that many of your daily activities are easier, that you have more stamina and endurance, and you feel stronger.

So, what happens if you hit the “pause” button on your daily activity? It depends. Most participants in this program likely fall into the category of a recreational exerciser and it would take 2 to 4 weeks of inactivity before you see real change in your fitness level.

If you stop exercising, the first change you will notice is a decline in your aerobic fitness. You’ll notice that you get out of breath more quickly when climbing stairs or walking longer distances. While cardio conditioning falls faster than strength, it is easier to regain. It is also important to remember that taking time off from exercise once in a while can be a good thing, and a good exercise routine includes rest days.

The effect of inactivity on your muscle strength and endurance will be slight during the first few weeks. After that, your muscles will not feel as firm and you will notice a decline in muscle strength. The effect inactivity has on your waistline is based on input and output. When you exercise, you burn more calories. If you stop being active, you will need to reduce calories to avoid weight gain.

Other factors play a role in how quickly you lose health benefits after you stop exercising. When comparing adults who were either 20 to 30 years old or 65 to 75 years old, the older adults lost fitness gains almost twice as fast as the younger set. The good news is that if you have fallen out of your routine, you can regain fitness and health benefits simply by being active again!

The Walk Kansas program is designed to be a catalyst for change — to nudge you to be more active for at least 8 weeks. Hopefully, you have experienced how much better you feel when you are more active every day. This feeling of improved health is called “intrinsic” motivation. Because you feel better, you are motivated to continue a more active lifestyle. Your motivation to be active is internal (how you feel) rather than external (motivated by prizes or things). Internal motivation is much more powerful, and the lifestyle changes you make as a result will last longer.





## Keep Your Cool

Most people in Kansas have been looking forward to warmer weather — and everyone knows it is coming. When a heat wave hits, it can be difficult and even dangerous to do extended physical activities outdoors. These tips can help you meet the recommendation of at least 150 minutes/week of moderate intensity exercise, even when it is hot outside.

**Get your steps.** If the thought of being outside makes you melt, think of ways to get your daily steps indoors. You can walk the perimeter of a large store or walk in a shopping mall. Take care of errands while staying in an area that has air conditioning. Add steps while you grocery shop and clean your house. Avoid walking and exercising during the hottest part of the day. Adjust your routine so you can walk closer to sunrise and sunset.

**Get Wet.** This might seem like a no-brainer, but swimming and other water sports are often overlooked as a good way to get some activity while staying cool. Try swimming laps at a local pool, or be more adventurous and try canoeing, kayaking, or paddle boarding. Playing in the sprinkler with your kids or grandkids is a fun way to get your steps.

**Hydrate well.** Drinking water is a good way to keep your body nourished and help prevent heat exhaustion. Be sure to hydrate well before and during any activity. Depending on the situation, you may need a sports drink or food to replace lost electrolytes (sodium, potassium, and magnesium). Foods that help you stay hydrated include watermelon, cucumbers, cantaloupe, grapefruit, berries, and iceberg lettuce, to name a few. You can also gauge if you are hydrated by monitoring urine volume output and color. A large amount of light colored, diluted urine is a sign you are hydrated, while dark colored, concentrated urine means you are dehydrated.

**Know the signs.** Heat exhaustion can occur when you are dehydrated and have lost an excessive amount of water and salt through sweat. During heat exhaustion, your body can become overwhelmed by heat and your sweat response can stop working properly. Signs and symptoms include: dizziness, weakness, muscle cramps, heavy sweating, nausea, headache, tiredness, fainting, and skin that is pale, cool, and moist.

When you recognize any symptoms of heat exhaustion, stop the activity and rest. Find shade, shelter or a cool room. Drink cool, non-alcoholic

## Summer Sangria

*Makes 6 (12oz) servings*

### Ingredients:

Fresh lemon slices  
Fresh lime slices  
Fresh orange slices  
Fresh blueberries  
Fresh strawberries, sliced  
3 cups white cranberry peach juice cocktail  
1 cup cranberry juice  
1 cup orange juice  
½ cup lemon juice  
¼ cup lime juice  
4 cups seltzer water

### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Wash whole fruit by gently rubbing it under cold running water. Wash blueberries and strawberries in a basin of cool water, then remove the hull and stem from strawberries and slice them.
3. In a large pitcher, add the sliced fruit and whole blueberries. Add juices and stir well.
4. Refrigerate until ready to use.
5. Just before serving, add the seltzer water; mix well. Enjoy!

Nutrition Information per serving:

*90 calories; 24 g carbohydrates; 2; 30 mg sodium*



beverages, splash yourself with cool water, and place a wet, cold towel around your neck. If heat exhaustion is left untreated, it can lead to heat stroke. This is a medical emergency and requires immediate treatment.