



Be Active Your Way

Walking is one of the easiest ways to be physically active. All you need is a comfortable pair of walking shoes and a little time – at least 10 minutes. There are many other activities that provide the same benefits as walking. The most important thing is to be active **your way** by choosing activities you enjoy!

Minimum goals for the Walk Kansas program include 2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes total) of physical activity per week. It is best to spread your activity throughout the week and to **include muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days each week.**

Start at level of intensity that is appropriate for you and do a little more each day. Moderate level activities are fine, and once you feel comfortable with these you can trade some of that time for vigorous activities.

Take the Talk/Sing Test

A simple way to make sure that you are not overdoing it is to take the “Talk/Sing Test.” You should be able to breathe comfortably, deep and rhythmically at all times during physical activity. If you can’t easily talk, your activity is too intense. If you are so comfortable that you could sing, it’s time to pick up the pace a bit.

Choose from these moderate and vigorous activities and log your minutes of activity each day. Do these for 10 minutes or more at a time.

Moderate Activities (I can talk while I do them, but I can't sing.)	Vigorous Activities (I can only say a few words without stopping to catch my breath.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ballroom and line dancing▪ Biking on level ground or with few hills▪ Canoeing▪ General gardening (raking, trimming shrubs)▪ Sports where you catch and throw (baseball, softball, volleyball)▪ Tennis (doubles)▪ Using your manual wheelchair▪ Using hand cyclers – ergometers▪ Walking briskly▪ Water aerobics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Aerobic dance▪ Biking faster than 10 miles per hour▪ Heavy gardening (digging, hoeing)▪ Hiking uphill▪ Jumping rope▪ Martial arts (such as karate)▪ Race walking, jogging, or running▪ Sports with a lot of running (basketball, hockey, soccer)▪ Swimming fast or swimming laps▪ Tennis (singles)

Warming Up/Cooling Down

A few minutes of warm up time before exercise can prepare the heart and other muscles for the activity ahead. You can do a slower, gentle version of the activity you plan to do (walking, swimming, etc.) and include stretching.

When you are finished with the activity, cool down by walking or performing gentle stretching for 5 – 10 minutes. If you stop the activity suddenly, you might get stiff muscles, feel weak and dizzy or even pass out.

Know When to Stop

Always pay attention to your body and the signs and symptoms of overexertion. If any of the following symptoms occur, stop exercising immediately and see your doctor before you start to exercise again.

- Pain or pressure in the chest, abdomen, neck, jaw or arms.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Dizziness or fainting.
- Unaccustomed shortness of breath.
- Extreme fatigue.
- Slow recovery from exercise.

Source: Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/>

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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