



Walk Kansas

a fitness challenge

K-State Research and Extension

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Calendar

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What Motivates You?

With just two weeks left in Walk Kansas 2010, some of you are well on your way to making physical activity a daily habit. Others may be struggling and feeling less motivated.

Think about what motivates you to exercise regularly. For some, it is the urge to compete and to win. For others, it's the desire to be healthy and to continue enjoyable activities. Still others see it as a way to add more time in their lives to enjoy children and grandchildren.

Motivation is personal. It is something we create – not something that comes to us if we wait long enough. When making a lifestyle change, plan for setbacks or times when motivation is low. Setbacks are normal, and you can get back on track.

Using one or more of the following elements may be helpful.

- **Examine and adjust goals.** While walking 30 minutes every day is a good foundation, this could be the time to try something different. Take advantage of outdoor activity and add strengthening exercises if you are not doing so already. Challenge yourself: Add a few more minutes or pick up the pace while walking.

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What Motivates You?

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Try a new activity – yoga or tai chi – to improve flexibility and balance. Always have a goal, big or small, to keep yourself going.

- **Prepare for success.** Make it as easy as possible to follow through with your goal. Set out exercise clothes or pack a gym bag to take to work. Plan for meals and other daily responsibilities so they won't interfere with your time for exercise.
- **Be flexible.** Have a backup plan. While sticking to a routine is good advice, we all know that life happens. On days when you feel too tired or you work late, have a backup plan so you don't abandon exercise. Instead, try a short walk at lunch or during a break, or maybe 15 minutes of stretching before bedtime. Physical activity counts, so it's better to do *something* than nothing.
- **Stay committed.** Being healthy is a decision you make every day. It's important to recommit and redefine your goals regularly. Write down your goals and post them where you can see them. If

there are phrases, quotes, or words that inspire you — post them on your wall or desk.

- **Have fun!** While setting goals, preparing for success, and commitment are serious, you don't want exercise to become just another duty. Find activities you enjoy and lighten up a little. Be spontaneous and enjoy being active!
- **Reward yourself.** Rewards can be small, and they don't need to be expensive. Think about what is important to you — extra time to read a magazine, a trip to the bookstore, a bubble bath, a new garden tool, or a pair of walking shoes. If your local Walk Kansas program has a celebration event, plan to attend and enjoy the positive energy from other participants.

The ultimate reward of being active is the way you feel, so don't ever take that for granted. Do you have more energy? Sleep better? Have a more positive outlook on life? These are the intrinsic rewards that will continue to motivate you.

Grow a Salsa Garden

You don't need to sing or dance to enjoy salsa: Salsa is the Spanish word for sauce.

Salsa was an important food in Central and South America for centuries before the Spaniards arrived. Native tomato and pepper were its basic ingredients. Today, ingredients commonly included are onions, garlic, herbs, spices, seeds, and seasonings. Recipes vary from watery sauces to chunky dips.

Basic salsa types are described by their main ingredients: salsa roja (red), is based on tomato; salsa verde (green), tomatillo; salsa cocida, cooked ingredients; and salsa fresca, fresh ingredients.

Tomatoes and peppers are easy to grow in Kansas. Follow the directions to improve soil based on an inexpensive *soil test*, plant *K-State recommended varieties*, mulch, and water appropriately. Plant a few tomatoes, peppers, and onions — along with herbs such as cilantro and basil — to create a salsa garden. If you decide to add some lettuce and spinach, you will have a salad garden as well.

K-State Research and Extension horticulture publications are a great source of information on growing vegetables for your salsa garden.

For research-based gardening information, use the links below or

go to your local K-State Research and Extension office to request the printed publications.

- *MF312, Tomatoes*
- *L41, Recommended Vegetable Varieties*
- *Pepper fact sheet*

For gardening information focused on Kansas, bookmark *K-State's Horticulture Information Center* at: <http://www.hfrr.ksu.edu/Desktop-Default.aspx?tabid=583>

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Smother Your Food with Salsa!

Salsa is the best-selling condiment in our country, perhaps because of increasing awareness of nutrition issues and great-tasting vegetable and fruit combinations.

Salsas based on fruits such as pineapple, peaches, kiwi, or pears are especially good on grilled fish and poultry. Tomato-based salsas are the most traditional and are a staple in Mexican foods, in mild or hot and spicy varieties.

While most people think of chips with salsa, there are many ways to enjoy it. Try salsa as a salad dressing. Replace water with salsa when cooking rice. Mix tuna and salsa for sandwich filling. Add it to chili and soups. Substitute it for spaghetti sauce in a pasta dish. Smother chicken with salsa, add a bit of shredded cheese, and bake. Top a baked potato. Use salsa in a stir-fry. Top spaghetti squash with salsa. Add it to eggs and omelets. Dip veggies in salsa. Use it instead of ketchup on a hot dog or burger. Stir it into macaroni and cheese or a meatloaf. Add salsa to cornmeal batter for Tex-Mex muffins.

Salsa can boost a meal's nutritional value. Most salsa has only 4 to 5 calories per tablespoon, and usually no added fat or sugar. It is rich in vitamins and minerals, including vitamins A, B6, and C; iron; magnesium; and potassium. Tomatoes contribute heart-healthy lycopene – the carotenoid pigment that turns them red – which is believed to play a role in preventing some types of cancer. Chili peppers add a fiery punch, and their active ingredient – capsaicin – may have anti-inflammatory effects helpful for people with rheumatoid arthritis. Onions are low in calories, abundant in flavor, and contain generous amounts of the flavonoid quercetin – shown to protect against cataracts, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.

So, go ahead – add flavor and nutrients – and smother your food with salsa!

Did you know?

Since 2000, salsa sales have pushed ketchup out of the top-selling spotlight. You can count salsa as a vegetable, since the main ingredients include a broad range of chopped fruits and vegetables.

Health benefits from tomatoes in ketchup are offset by its salt and sugar content. In 1981, a proposal to reclassify ketchup as a vegetable was met with outrage from nutritionists, and the policy was never implemented.

Salsa Pizza

Makes 8 wedges/servings

Ingredients:

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| 1 | prebaked 12-inch pizza crust | $\frac{3}{4}$ | cup salsa, chunky variety preferred |
| 1 | cup shredded cheese, divided (Monterey jack, mozzarella, pizza or Italian cheese, or a combination) | 2 | tablespoons minced fresh cilantro |

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 425° F. Place crust on an ungreased baking sheet or pizza pan.
- 2) In a small bowl, combine $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cheese, salsa, and cilantro.
- 3) Spread salsa mixture over crust to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of edge; sprinkle with remaining cheese.
- 4) Bake 12 to 13 minutes or until cheese is melted. Cut into 8 wedges.

Nutrition Information per Serving:

Calories – 220; Fat – 6g; Carbohydrate – 30g; Fiber – 2g; Protein – 10g; Sodium – 580mg

Find more great ideas for homemade pizza at: www.walkkansas.org in the "Healthy Eating for Life" section under "Pizza with Pizzazz."

