

Walk Kansas

celebrate healthy living

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Keep Your Routine Fun!

Sometimes physical activity becomes dull, and doing the same thing each day seems boring. Putting it into perspective, Dr. David Hunnicutt, President of WELCOA (Wellness Councils of America), said "Walking is boring, I agree, but it's nothing like having open heart surgery." To stay motivated, look for ways to keep physical activity fresh and fun because it is essential for healthy living.

At the very least reverse your walking or biking route from time to time. Map several different routes and alternate between them so things are not always the same.

Observe and appreciate your surroundings.

Try a sunrise or sunset walk and enjoy the beauty of nature. Walk in a park and listen to the sounds of children playing. If you are exercising indoors, use music to add variety or find a television program you really like and limit watching it to the time you spend on the treadmill or exercise bike.

Walk backwards.

While this seems a bit strange, it can be beneficial. Walking backwards puts less strain on your knee joints, improves flexibility in your hamstrings, provides greater cardiovascular benefits than

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Keep Your Routine Fun

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walking forward, and it sharpens your thinking skills. More detail on “retro” walking will come next week.

Try a new walking partner. Check with the local Humane Society about opportunities to take a pound pup for a much-needed walk, or offer to walk a neighbor’s dog occasionally.

Set an ambitious goal for yourself, such as entering a charity 5K. Challenge yourself and test your capabilities.

Try Nordic walking. Sometimes called “ski walking,” this physical activity requires the use of poles similar to those used for skiing. Using poles or walking sticks improves balance and stability, and relieves strain on knees, hips, and ankles. Nordic walking also helps loosen tight neck and shoulder muscles. The motion is good for people who tend to hunch forward while working at desks or computers, reading, or watching television.

Do you have other ideas for keeping your exercise routine fun and fresh? Share those with teammates and through the Kansas State University Walk Kansas Facebook page.

Have a Snack Attack – Drink Water

Your mind doesn’t always know whether you are hungry or just need a drink of water. The first signal your brain sends for thirst is frequently confused with the hunger signal. This can lead you to eat more than you otherwise would for a meal or snack.

Drinking a moderate amount of water before each meal, or when you are craving a snack, may help suppress your appetite. Some studies have shown that water drinkers ate 75 to 90 fewer calories per meal. Eating foods high in water and fiber, such as fruits and vegetables, will add bulk to your meals and help fill your stomach. Add some lean protein at meals and you will feel full on fewer calories.

Action Plan Your Healthy Lifestyle Goals

The number one predictor for success at achieving healthy lifestyle habits is to set a goal and write it down. This is especially true for physical activity goals. Having a plan in writing doubles the likelihood that you will be successful.

Action planning is a helpful strategy for many people. Start by identifying something you want to do, a specific behavior. Your goal should be reasonable, something you can accomplish in a week or month. An action plan answers these questions: What? How much? When? How often? Here is an example: This week I will walk (what), for 25 minutes (how much), at 5 p.m. (when), 6 days (how many). Another example: This week I will take a cup of fruit or vegetables to work (what and how much), for a mid-morning snack (when), every day (how many).

My Action Plan

This week I will _____ (what)
_____ (how much)
_____ (when)
_____ (how many)

How confident are you? _____

(0 = not at all confident; 10 = total confidence)

To complete an action plan you need to assess your confidence that you will fulfill the contract. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represents little confidence and 10 represents total confidence, your plan should rank at least a 7. If you don’t feel your confidence level is this high, redesign your action plan so you will be more likely to achieve it.

The form above is easy to complete and can be helpful as you learn the

process. Keep your written action plan where you will see it every day. Post it on your refrigerator door, tape to your bathroom mirror, keep it next to your phone at work, or display it in some other noticeable place.

For more information on action planning, check out *Action Plan for Healthy Living*, MF3053, at: www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/MF3053.pdf.

Enjoy a Great Catch

Eating a variety of seafood, twice a week, can help prevent heart disease. Seafood contains a range of nutrients, including healthy omega-3 fats. Adults should eat about 8 ounces per week according to the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Keep seafood lean and flavorful by grilling, broiling, roasting, and baking. It doesn't need extra fat, so avoid breading or frying seafood. Experiment with spices and herbs, such as dill, chili powder, paprika, and curry. Lemon or lime juice, and balsamic vinegar can add flavor without adding salt.

When preparing seafood, think beyond the fish fillet. Be creative and enjoy fish tacos, a shrimp stir-fry, salmon patties, and scallops with whole grain

pasta. Use canned tuna or salmon for sandwiches or to top a salad.

Seafood cooks quickly, so use a food thermometer to avoid overcooking. Fish is safe to eat when it reaches an internal temperature of 145 degrees F and flakes with a fork. Shrimp, lobster, and scallops should be cooked until they are opaque (milk white), which takes only a few minutes.

One way to include seafood more often is to keep it on hand. Canned tuna, salmon, and sardines are quick and easy to use and you can stock up on these when they go on sale. Frozen seafood is usually a lower-cost option.

Success Stories from 2012

"I do all my walking outside among nature . . . all year round. Every time I walk outside my door it is a new experience. I have lots of great camera shots and had many talks with neighbors. I walk anywhere from 4 to 6 miles daily and I guess you could say it has broadened my horizons! I am healthier, happier, and full of energy because of it! I love the Walk Kansas Program!"

— Kathleen Carpenter, Meadowlark District

Food Safety on Your Smartphone

Here is an app that instantly answers food safety questions — Mobile Ask Karen, a mobile version of the Ask Karen site provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service. A virtual food safety representative offers advice about properly handling, storing, and preparing food to prevent illness. In this mobile format, you can take "Karen" to the grocery store, barbecue grill, farmer's market, your kitchen — anywhere mobile devices can access the Internet.

To start using Mobile Ask Karen now, go to m.AskKaren.gov on your phone's browser.

Tuna Salad

Makes 5 servings

Curry gives this tuna salad a unique flavor.

Ingredients:

- 2 (5-ounce) cans white tuna, drained and flaked
- 6 tablespoons nonfat mayonnaise or salad dressing
- 1 tablespoon nonfat milk
- 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese
- 4 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
- ¼ teaspoon dried minced onion flakes
- ¼ teaspoon curry powder



- 2 teaspoons dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon dried dill weed
- 1 pinch garlic powder

Directions:

1. In a medium bowl, stir together the tuna, mayonnaise, Parmesan cheese, and onion flakes. Season with curry powder, parsley, dill, and garlic powder. Mix well.
2. Serve on a sandwich, with crackers, or top a mixture of greens and fresh vegetables.

Nutrition information per serving:

100 calories; 1.5 g fat; 8 g carbohydrates; 14 g protein; 0 g fiber; 510 mg sodium.