



Walk Kansas

a fitness challenge

K-State Research and Extension

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Kansas State University Walk Kansas

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Fitness Trends Emerge

Fitness fads have come and gone. Exercise equipment that sounded too good to be true was probably just that. Now, experts at the *American Council on Exercise (ACE)* predict that emerging *trends* are less gimmick-laden than in the past.

Popular Workouts

A workout that tops the popularity list is Zumba, a class that focuses on Latin dance moves. Zumba has become popular because "everyone loves it," says Jennifer Ploeger, Brown County family and consumer sciences agent with K-State Research and Extension. "It appeals to all ages."

Walk Kansas participants gathered in the lobby of the Brown County Courthouse (see picture at right) to enjoy a Zumba workout at the program kick-off on a chilly day in early March. The 35 or more who gathered ranged in age from 7 to 74. Ploeger credits much of the success of the event to certified Zumba instructor Amy McNulty, who tailored the moves to the needs and abilities of participants.

Exercise Buddy

Today's buddy trend is to be more selective and not ask just any friend to team



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Fitness Trends Emerge

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up with you. First, ask if the potential buddy likes outdoor or indoor activities and determine if you have similar interests. It is great to find someone who is at the same level of fitness, but the most important thing is matching levels of commitment. Consider schedule compatibility: If you prefer a morning walk, a buddy who likes to sleep in will not be a good match. Personality also matters, so find someone whose company you enjoy outside of exercise time. Finally, a good fitness buddy should be positive and offer the motivation you need to stick with it.

Youth-Based Fitness

Child obesity rates are increasing at an alarming rate, and more youth-based fitness programs are emerging. *Walk Kansas for Kids* is just one example. (To learn more, go to <http://www.walkkansas.org/kids>.)

Kids prefer activities that don't feel like exercise. A watered-down version of an adult program will not appeal to children. Last year, First Lady Michelle Obama launched *Let's Move!* — a comprehensive initiative to change the way a generation of kids thinks about food, nutrition, and physical activity. To learn more about *Let's Move!* go to <http://www.letsmove.gov>.

In 2011 and beyond, we also see a trend toward turning to exercise for stress reduction as well as a surge in the use of technology as a support resource.

- *Eat Well — but Less*
- New dietary guidelines suggest that we enjoy food, but eat less.
- In a society where food plays a key role when people gather, it is important to pay attention to calorie balance. Calories provide energy. When the energy is not balanced or used through physical activity, the result is weight gain.
- The best advice is to monitor consumption and replace foods higher in calories with nutrient-dense, lower-calorie foods and beverages. For example: Replace an afternoon candy bar with fruit and string cheese.
- Choose water instead of a soft drink with meals. Beverages can easily add empty calories, and many restaurants offer free refills — encouraging overconsumption. A 22-ounce regular soda has 260 calories. A refill can easily total 500 calories (energy) without providing any nutrients.

Healthy Smile Links to Healthy Heart

You may have a powerful weapon against heart disease sitting on your bathroom counter — a \$2 toothbrush.

Problems that result from poor oral hygiene include decaying teeth, swollen gums, and bad breath. A bacteria-filled mouth, medical experts say, can also lead to problems throughout the body, including heart disease, diabetes, blood infection, and even low birth-weight babies.

"People who have gum disease, are suffering from a chronic low-grade infection," says Jean Connor, president-elect of the

American Dental Hygienists' Association. "Your whole body is a little bit compromised."

According to the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, recent studies have shown an increased risk of heart disease and stroke in people with gum infections. The risk appears to increase with the severity of the infection. Gum disease produces a tremendous amount of bacteria. If you have a heart valve problem, the bacteria can invade and infect the heart.

Remember that regular and thorough brushing and flossing

represent the first line of defense against gum disease. Make sure you get regular dental check-ups, choose a healthy diet without sugary snacks and sodas, avoid tobacco products, and limit alcohol intake.

If you discover that you have gum disease, you can avoid spreading the problem. Do not share a glass with anyone or blow on your child's food to help cool it.

Maintaining good oral health is something you can do. Consult your physician and dentist for more information.

Eggs: High-Quality Protein

In the new dietary guidelines, Americans are encouraged to consume eggs more frequently. In the past, egg consumption was questioned because of cholesterol content. Now, more than 40 years of research shows that healthy adults can eat eggs without significantly affecting the risk of heart disease. The key point is that eggs can be part of a balanced diet. Most individuals can enjoy them several days a week — but limit consumption to average one or less per day.

The egg is a nutrient-dense food and an inexpensive source of high-quality protein. One egg provides a wide range of nutrients in proportion to calories — about 70 per large egg.

Enjoy eggs in moderation, and pay attention to other foods you eat with them. Often, preparation methods or accompanying foods are the problem, rather than the egg itself. Consider having a poached egg on a bed of sautéed spinach. Smother eggs with vegetables such as zucchini, asparagus, potatoes, and onions. Replace the typical breakfast sausage or bacon with spicy pinto beans or black beans. If you enjoy quiche, make a crustless variety (saving fat and calories), and pair it with fresh fruit and whole-grain toast. Try the recipe below.

Walk Kansas Success Story

"Helen is 92 years old. She has participated in Walk Kansas for several years. Last year she took part in the program by walking the hallway of the nursing home with her walker while recovering from a stroke. This year, she will reach her Walk Kansas goal on her stationary bike at home."

— Submitted by
Nancy McBride,
team captain,
Silver Snails,
Woodson County

Crustless Quiche

Makes 8 servings

Ingredients

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 1/2 | teaspoon cooking oil | Dash salt and pepper |
| 1/2 | cup chopped onions | 1 1/4 cups shredded cheese (mozzarella, Italian, Mexican, etc.) |
| 1 | cup sliced mushrooms | 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese |
| 1 | cup frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed, or 3 cups fresh spinach | Optional: |
| 1/3 | cup lite sour cream | 1/4 teaspoon dried basil |
| 1 | cup nonfat milk | 1/4 teaspoon dried mustard powder |
| 7 | eggs | |

Directions

- 1) Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly grease a deep 9-inch pie pan.
- 2) Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are soft. Stir in mushrooms and spinach; cook until excess moisture has evaporated and (fresh) spinach is wilted.
- 3) In a large bowl, combine lite sour cream, nonfat milk, eggs, salt, pepper, and cheese. Add optional seasonings, if desired.
- 4) Scoop into prepared pie pan. Bake on lower oven rack 30 to 40 minutes, or until quiche is set in the center. Cool 10 minutes before serving.

Nutrition information per serving: Calories — 180; fat — 12 g (saturated fat — 6 g); carbohydrate — 6 g; fiber — 1 g; protein — 13 g; sodium — 250 mg.

