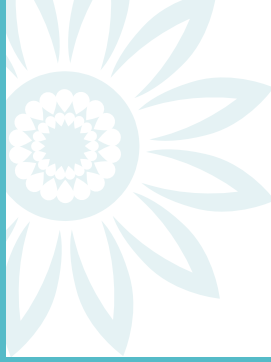


# Celebrate *healthy living*

2020 Week Eight



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Walk Kansas

[www.WalkKansas.org](http://www.WalkKansas.org)



## The Power 9®

During the eight weeks of Walk Kansas, this newsletter has introduced you to the Power 9®, the evidence-based common denominators found among the five Blue Zones® areas. This week, we introduce you to the last two – loved ones first and belong.

**Loved Ones First.** Science proves that when people are surrounded by loving family and friends, their mental health, self-esteem, and physical well-being increase. People in Blue Zones® communities live their philosophy of putting loved ones first, and they often keep aging parents and grandparents in or near their home. They also spend a lot of time on relationships with their spouses, children, grandchildren, and good friends. They consider family and loved ones the most important things in their lives and successfully balance time between work/non-family, and family.

One important way to strengthen connections with those you love is to share meals together. Sharing a family meal, or a meal with friends, provides experiences that touch all of your senses – sight, touch, taste, smell, and listening to warm laughter or good conversation.

The past six weeks, during the “stay-at-home” order, have provided many opportunities to prepare and eat more meals at home with family. Sharing a meal is one of the few times where people seem to be happy to put aside their work and take time out of their day to catch up and talk. The dinner table – whether at home, a group potluck, office lunch, or backyard barbeque with friends – can act as a unifier and a place of community, something those living in Blue Zones® communities have known and practiced for a very long time.

**Power of Belonging.** Having a sense of belonging and connection, whether that be with your community, your faith, or other groups, is the final Power 9® trait. Studies show that belonging

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## Next Week

Walk Kansas 2020 in Review

Cheers! Stay Hydrated

Grilling Season is Here!

Recipe: Garlic Grilled Broccoli



to a faith-based community and regularly attending services can add 4 to 14 years of life expectancy. It doesn't seem to matter which faith you choose, as long as you are engaged.

Faith-based communities provide a social network and offer a regular gathering opportunity. These weekly meetings are a great way to talk, connect, de-stress, laugh, and learn with others. These groups also encourage positive behaviors. People who attend regular faith-based gatherings tend to be more physically active and less likely to indulge in unhealthy behaviors. This regular scheduled time to connect offers the opportunity to slow down, reflect, and take a break from the rigors of daily life. Being with others in a faith-based community also supports your sense of purpose, and strengthens your social, physical, and emotional health.

Studies show that the more you participate, the greater the reward. If you currently belong to a faith-based group or community group of some kind, seek out opportunities to volunteer and become more involved. Doing things for others takes the focus away from a personal problem and can be an opportunity to meet new friends and discover hidden skills.

## Walk Kansas Week 8

- » Plan for shared meals this week with family, friends, or your Walk Kansas teammates. You can use technology and arrange for a video conference shared mealtime with family or friends in another location.
- » Schedule and do strengthening exercises 2 or 3 days this week. Include exercises that strengthen upper and lower body and your core. [walkkansas.org/activity/strength](http://walkkansas.org/activity/strength)
- » Check the labels of grain products you have in your home now. How many of these contain whole grains? Add whole-grain products to your next shopping list.
- » Change up your walking routine to prevent boredom.
- » Walk backwards for a short distance. Find a space that is flat and even for 20 to 30 yards. Walking backwards engages muscles you don't normally use when walking forward. It is good for people with knee problems, sharpens your balance, and burns more calories.

## Goodness of Whole Grains

The Mediterranean diet is packed with delicious whole grains, which are essential for good health. They provide energy, help promote digestive health, and reduce the risk of developing a number of diseases. Whole-grain foods are also more satisfying, they have great texture and taste, and provide a feeling of fullness.

Common whole grains include brown rice, oatmeal, popcorn, whole wheat, and wild rice. Expand your whole-grain choices with quinoa, whole-grain barley, whole-grain corn or cornmeal, whole rye, and others. One easy way to add whole grain is to replace half the flour in a recipe with whole-wheat flour. Give white whole-wheat flour a try. White wheat is lighter in color and has a sweeter, milder, and somewhat nutty flavor, while having the same nutritional benefits as traditional wheat flour.

To make sure you are selecting a whole-grain product, check the ingredient list. The first item listed should be "whole" followed by the grain. Enriched wheat flour is not whole grain. Here is a tip sheet for choosing more whole grains.

[medinsteadofmeds.com/tips-and-tools/make-your-grains-whole/](http://medinsteadofmeds.com/tips-and-tools/make-your-grains-whole/)



## Stretch and Strengthen Hip Flexors

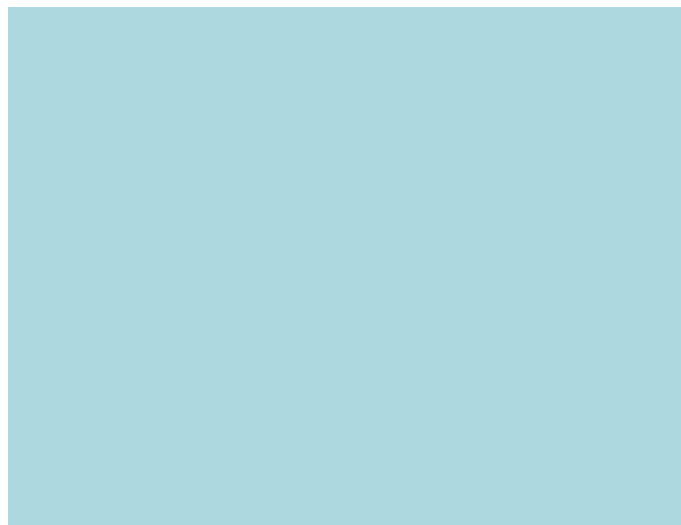
Hip flexors are a group of muscles that allow you to lift your knees toward your chest and to bend forward from the hips. Tight hip flexors are a common problem for people who spend a lot of time sitting. If these muscles are tight, you could also have low back pain, hip pain, and injury. Here is a hip flexor stretch and an exercise you can do to help strengthen these muscles.

### Basic Hip Flexor Stretch

1. Start in a half-kneeling position on the floor. If you have knee stiffness, put a cushion on the floor.
2. Hold a stick (ex., mop handle) in front of you and actively push it down into the ground. This will engage your core and help you do the stretch correctly.
3. Keep your body upright, squeeze your butt, and lean forward at the hips to feel the stretch. Here is a demonstration of the Hip Flexor Stretch. [youtube.com/watch?v=lf1XhGTBJx8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lf1XhGTBJx8)

### Lunge Exercise

1. From a standing position, place hands on your hips and look straight ahead. Take a generous step forward with your right foot.
2. Bend your extended (right) knee and transfer your weight onto that leg. Continue to lower yourself slowly into the lunge. Your right knee should be directly above your right ankle and your left knee hovers just above the ground.
3. Step back into a standing position and repeat with your left leg. You can also do a “walking lunge” as demonstrated here. [youtube.com/watch?v=bjg4yXpXIEo&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjg4yXpXIEo&feature=youtu.be)



## Banana Oatmeal Pancakes

Makes 2 servings

### Ingredients:

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 bananas
- ½ cup old fashioned rolled oats, uncooked
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon olive oil
- ½ cup fresh or frozen fruit (optional)

### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Prepare fruit. Gently rub whole bananas and other fresh fruit under cool running water. Peel bananas and mash them in a medium-sized bowl.
3. Combine eggs, rolled oats, baking powder, vanilla extract, and cinnamon with bananas. Batter should be cohesive and without lumps.
4. Heat oil in medium skillet on medium-low heat. Once heated, spoon ¼-cup portions of the batter onto skillet and cook until golden brown on both sides (about 4 minutes on each side).
5. Heat fruit in a small skillet until warm, stirring occasionally. Serve over pancakes. You can also serve pancakes with chopped nuts or peanut butter on top.

### Nutrition Information per serving:

280 calories; 8 g fat (0 trans fat, 2 g saturated fat); 46 g carbohydrates; 10 g protein; 6 g fiber; 210 mg sodium; 0 g added sugars.



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#### Kansas State University Walk Kansas

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