

Walk Kansas

celebrate healthy living



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Newsletter #2 • 2015

In This Issue

Why Strength Training?
Make Your Own Gear
Refuel with Breakfast
Recipe: Blueberry Oatmeal
Smoothie

Coming Next Week

Exercise Keeps Your Brain Sharp
Functional Fitness
Make Water Your Default Beverage
Fish — A Great Catch
Recipe: Easy Baked Fish Fillets

Like us on Facebook: Kansas State University Walk Kansas

This newsletter developed by Sharolyn Flaming Jackson, Extension Specialist – Family and Consumer Sciences, K-State Research and Extension.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact the Director of Institutional Equity, Kansas State University, 103 Edwards Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506-0124, (Phone) 785-532-6220; (TTY) 785-532-4807.

Who Is Your Health Buddy?

Your environment influences choices you make every day. One of the goals of Walk Kansas is to help you change your environment, so the **healthy choice is the easy choice**.

Last week, you were challenged to “flip your fridge.” This week, the challenge is to find a health or fitness buddy — someone (real or virtual) that will give you that extra push everyone needs sometimes. No need to limit yourself to just one health buddy — having different ones will challenge you with varied activities and provide more support. Your fitness buddies could have two legs, four legs, or no legs at all!

Four legs and a wagging tail. Dogs know instinctively that exercise is good for them. Walking your dog promotes a sense of bonding between you and your pet. Research shows that dog owners are more likely to take regular walks, and they are more active overall than people who don't have dogs. In some ways, dogs are the perfect fitness buddy. They are never late and rarely have a schedule conflict. They don't whine about the weather, are never critical of you, and are always enthusiastic.

*Meet Winston and Maggie
(picture at top and right)*

While they can't go along on walks with you personally, pups Winston and Maggie will Tweet, and have Facebook and Walk Kansas web postings about their weekly Walk Kansas adventures. Listen in each week as wise Winston coaches



Who Is Your Health Buddy?

continued from page 1

mischievous Maggie, and their human families, toward healthier lifestyles. Follow on walkkansas.org; Facebook — Kansas State University Walk Kansas; Facebook and Twitter — Winston; Twitter — GottaWalkKansas.

Two legs. Find someone who is at the same fitness level as you and can do similar activities. As equal partners, you should hold each other accountable. Fitness buddies help each other reach goals. It is helpful to find someone who has a similar schedule as you do. Celebrate together when you reach goals. Someone who hinders your progress is not a good fitness buddy.

No legs at all. Fitness apps and activity trackers can provide motivation and inspiration. Every Body Walk! is an app that lets you track all aspects of your walk. It will track your distance, time, calories burned, and the route you walked. You can view your walking route on maps and watch your progress as you go. It also allows you to save your walking history and share walks on Facebook and Twitter. Visit www.everybodywalk.org/app.html to download the app.

Is a fitness tracker worth the investment? Pedometers and fitness trackers are effective at getting people to move. If that is your goal, both are worth the investment, although, a good pedometer will cost significantly less than a fitness tracker. There is still some question about how accurate fitness trackers are in monitoring movement and calories burned. We do know that keeping a journal or log of what you eat and how much you exercise increases your success in adopting healthy lifestyle habits.

Why Strength Training?

- Around age 25 to 30 people begin losing muscle, and the rate of muscle loss accelerates around age 50. Some muscle loss is part of the aging process, but inactivity accounts for the rest. The good news is you are never too old to start a strength training program. Everyone, no matter what age, can benefit greatly from doing strengthening exercises.
- Walking and other types of aerobic activity provide many health benefits, but they don't make your muscles strong. Strength training does. You can feel a difference when your body is stronger. Strengthening exercises improve your balance, coordination, and agility, allowing you to perform everyday movements much easier. It can decrease your risk of osteoporosis, help reduce blood pressure, and more muscle helps you burn calories at a faster rate. As you get stronger, you will have more stamina. Strength training can also help you manage chronic conditions, including back pain, arthritis, obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.
- Do muscle-strengthening activities two to three days a week, with a rest day between. Work all major muscle groups, including the legs, hips, back, stomach, chest, shoulders, and arms. Strength training can be done easily at home or at a gym. Basic equipment could include:
 - Free weights or dumbbells. These are classic tools used to strengthen your upper body. They are inexpensive and available in many sizes. Start with 2-, 3-, or 5-pound weights and gradually work up.
 - Body weight exercises. These require little or no equipment because they use your body weight for resistance. Try push-ups, pull-ups, abdominal crunches, and leg squats.

continued on page 3

Make Your Own Gear

Hand weights. Put leftover water bottles to good use and make light hand weights. Fill bottles with sand, water, rocks, or dried rice. Weigh the bottle on a household scale, label, and secure lid with duct tape. When the small bottles are no longer a challenge, fill bigger containers like milk jugs.

Medicine ball. Take an old basketball and drill a hole in one of the black stripes on the ball. Using a small funnel, fill the ball with sand to the

desired weight. Patch the hole with a radial tire patch kit.

Battling ropes. Don't throw away that old garden hose — use it as a battling rope. Start out with empty hoses, then fill with sand for a more challenging full-body workout. (Don't forget to plug both ends of the hose.)

Search the Web and Pinterest for more instructions to create your own fitness equipment.

Why Strength Training?

continued from page 2

- Resistance tubing or bands. These offer weight-like resistance when you pull on them. They are inexpensive and good for building strength in arms and other muscles, and they are available in varying degrees of resistance.

If you are new to strength training, start slowly. Make sure you warm up with 5 to 10 minutes of stretching or walking. Choose an appropriate weight or resistance level that will challenge you. Each exercise set should include 12 repetitions, meaning you will lift the weight the same way 12 times in a row, then rest. Aim to perform 2 to 4 sets

of 12 repetitions with each exercise.

Work opposing muscle groups with each set. For example, if you start with a set of exercises using your right arm, switch to the left and perform the same set. Repeat with your right arm, and then switch back to the left again. When you can do 12 repetitions easily, increase weight or resistance.

Week 2 strengthening videos are available at: www.walkkansas.org/p.aspx?tabid=66. You will find several total body strengthening exercises and stretches this week.

Refuel with Breakfast

A car with an empty gas tank wouldn't make it out of the driveway. Your body is much the same. You need fuel — calories and fluids — to stay energized throughout the day.

Wake up to water. That's right, one of the very first things you should do when you wake up is reach for a glass of water, not a cup of coffee. Drinking water first will help replace the fluid your body lost during sleep and can help with energy levels during the day.

Strive for five. Include at least 5 grams of fiber and 5 grams of protein in every breakfast. Your breakfast meal should be balanced. Carbohydrates will give you nearly instant pep, and protein provides staying power to keep your blood sugar on an even keel. Choose carbs that are 100 percent whole grain such as whole-wheat toast, oatmeal, and whole-grain cereal, and go for fruit rather than fruit juice to boost fiber. To make sure you are getting a whole-grain product, check the ingredient list. Whole grains should be listed first. Avoid processed grains (such as white bread), pastries, scones, and sugared cereals whenever possible.

Good protein choices include lean meats, eggs, low-fat dairy products, legumes, nuts, and nut butters. A quick and easy breakfast on the go could be a peanut butter and banana sandwich on whole-grain toast and a cup of skim milk. Another good option starts with plain, unsweetened yogurt. Add fruit, nuts or seeds, and raw or toasted oats. A smoothie also makes a healthful grab-and-go breakfast.

Blueberry Oatmeal Smoothie

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients:

1 cup frozen or fresh blueberries
1 banana
½ cup nonfat vanilla Greek yogurt
½ cup nonfat milk
¼ cup rolled oats
Optional: Sweeten to your liking with artificial sweetener, Agave syrup, or honey
(Use frozen blueberries and banana for a creamier texture.)



Directions:

Place all ingredients in a blender and blend until well combined.

Nutrition Information per serving:

378 calories; 1 g fat; 73 g carbohydrates; 20 g protein; 9 g fiber; 210 mg sodium.