



WALK KANSAS

K-STATE
Research and Extension

www.WalkKansas.org

2025 Week Nine



Walk Kansas Wrap-Up

You did it! Congratulations on completing Walk Kansas 2025. If you have been walking, or doing some other type of activity, and adding strengthening/ stretching exercises at least twice a week, you probably have noticed that many of your daily activities are easier, that you have more stamina and endurance, and you feel stronger.

You have made conscious choices to eat better and move more these past 8 weeks, and our hope is that these positive lifestyle changes continue for you. So, what happens if you hit the “pause” button on your physical activity routine? It depends. Most participants in this program likely fall into the category of a recreational exerciser, and it would take 2 to 4 weeks of inactivity before you see real change in your fitness level.

If you stop exercising, the first change you will notice is a decline in your aerobic fitness. You’ll notice that you get out of breath more quickly when climbing stairs or walking longer distances. While cardio conditioning falls faster than strength, it is easier to regain. It is also important to remember that taking time off from exercise occasionally can be a good thing, and a good exercise routine includes rest days.

The effect of inactivity on your muscle strength and endurance will be slight during the first few weeks. After that, your muscles will not feel as firm, and you will notice a decline in muscle strength.

Other factors play a role in how quickly you lose health benefits after you stop exercising. Older adults tend to lose fitness more quickly than younger adults. The good news is that if you have fallen out of your activity routine, you can regain fitness and health benefits simply by being active again.

The Walk Kansas program is designed to be a catalyst for change — to nudge you to be more active for at least 8 weeks. Hopefully, you have experienced how much better you feel when you are more active every day. This feeling of improved health is called “intrinsic” motivation. Because

continued on next page

In This Issue

Walk Kansas Wrap Up

How Will You Handle Plan B?

Breathe Fresh, Train Smart, Stay Safe!

Make a Healthcutterie Board

Coming Next Year

Walk Kansas 2026: March 22 - May 23

Walk Kansas for Kids: Stay Tuned!

Walk Kansas Wrap-Up continued from first page

you feel better, you are motivated to continue a more active lifestyle. Your motivation to be active is internal (how you feel) rather than external (motivated by prizes or things). Internal motivation is much more powerful, and the lifestyle changes you make as a result will last longer.

How will you handle plan B?

There will always be days when your plans for getting physical activity will be challenged. Some of these will be unexpected; others you might be able to anticipate, such as schedule changes, weather, lack of time, etc. For obstacles you can anticipate, have a Plan B ready before you encounter them. This will increase the likelihood that you will overcome these barriers successfully. If lack of time is a problem, take several 5- to 10-minute walks throughout the day, wake up early to exercise, or combine physical activity with household tasks. If the weather spoils your plan, identify indoor spaces where you can be active or do a no-equipment workout at home.

The same approach can be used to prevent a relapse where you return to old inactive habits. The first step is planning for it, because at some point you will experience a relapse. If you have a bad day or bad week, remember that lapses are normal, and having a short period of missed activity does not erase all your progress. Focus on the big picture and think about all of the progress you have already made, then get back on track with the activities you enjoy.

Breathe Fresh, Train Smart, Stay Safe!



You did it! You made it to the end of Walk Kansas and hit all the milestones! I hope along the way I've been able to share something new or interesting with you about the safety of walking and biking. If it has sparked an interest in safety and advocacy in you, there are

many ways to get involved. Metro areas in Kansas have groups you can get involved with, including volunteering, group rides and walks, or learning more about bike maintenance. Some organizations you can check out are WAMPO in Wichita, Bike Walk Wichita, Bike Walk KC, Bike Walk Hutch, Kansas Safe Routes to School, WyCo Bike-O, The League of American Bicyclists, Ride Lawrence, and many other community organizations. Many communities have bike maps available, and different trail apps and maps can be used to find great areas for walking. If you live in a community that doesn't have any existing organizations, it might be worth trying to start one. There are even community grant funding opportunities that can help to build active transportation infrastructure in the state of Kansas. However you engaged with safety the last few months, keep it up even beyond this amazing program, and we'll all make Kansas a safer place to be a pedestrian!

Courtney Nowland,
Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office

Walk Kansas Webinars

Did you miss a webinar this year? Below are links to the 2025 series.

Your Heart and Diabetes: A Close Connection:
https://youtu.be/_AwNwFvg0t0

Walking Toward a Stronger Future:
<https://youtu.be/ECvviJO2gGw>

Happy Feet: <https://youtu.be/p3vO93hiBlc>

Blue Zones: Keys to Living Longer and Better:
<https://youtu.be/7St3thID02c>



Make a Healthcutterie Board

Charcuterie boards are a popular way to entertain and enjoy a variety of foods. While delicious, charcuterie boards contain foods that are often high in sodium, fat, and calories. However, they can be part of a healthy diet when prepared thoughtfully with leaner meats, healthy cheeses and dips, and fresh fruits and vegetables. Here are tips for making a charcuterie board that is delicious, appealing, and good for you.

Choose meats and cheeses carefully. These are arguably the most important part of any charcuterie board. Popular choices are prosciutto, pepperoni, salami, and cold cuts. These are high in sodium and saturated fat, so look for leaner options like turkey and ham that are labeled reduced or low-sodium.

Almost any cheese you select is bound to be delicious. For a charcuterie board, consider healthier options like goat cheese, fresh mozzarella, Parmesan, Swiss, and feta. These are generally lower in fat and sodium in comparison to other cheeses.

Go for whole grains. Whole grains have a wealth of health benefits. They are packed with fiber, B vitamins, and protein. Plus, many whole grain crackers include other ingredients like nuts and seeds, which add texture, flavor, and nutrition.

Add lots of fruits and veggies. They pair well with meats and cheeses, and they add color and nutrients to the board. Dried fruit is popular on charcuterie boards, so look for the unsweetened options and check the label for added sugars. Fresh fruit is always a great option. If you want to add some sweetness to your board, drizzle fruit with chocolate rather than dipping. Strawberries lightly drizzled with chocolate are a special treat.

There are endless options for veggies. Make sure they are cut into bite-sized pieces for easy munching. Hummus is a healthful dip that pairs well with veggies and crackers.

Add nuts for crunch. While each type of nut has its own nutrition profile, they are a great source of protein and are high in healthful fats and lower in saturated fats. Choose nuts that are lightly salted or without salt.

Include pickled elements. Olives and pickles are a great complement to meats and cheeses. However, store-bought versions of these can often be high in sodium. Look for reduced sodium options, make the pickled elements yourself, or be mindful of the sodium content and enjoy in moderation.

Don't snack directly off the board. While it is tempting and easy to stand by the charcuterie board and snack directly from it while socializing, this is not a good idea for several reasons. First is food safety, since fingers are constantly touching the food. Second, when you eat right off the board, you probably won't realize how much you're eating. So, grab a plate to fill with your favorite ingredients (make sure you use tongs) and step away from the board so you are less likely to overindulge.



Like us on Facebook:
Kansas State University Walk Kansas

This newsletter is 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, 220A Kedzie Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506-0124, (Phone) 785-532-6220; (TTY) 785-532-4807.