



# Geary County

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

[geary.k-state.edu](http://geary.k-state.edu)

February 2019

## Ask the Agent

**Q:** If I want to participate in Walk Kansas but don't have a team, can I still sign up?

**A:** Although finding your own team is ideal, we are happy to help individuals sign up for Walk Kansas without a team. We will try to incorporate all our individuals into their own team so that you can still participate in the same way everyone else does. Call us if you have a question about how to sign up if you don't have a team. Anyone who desires to improve their health through physical activity and healthy eating would make a great addition to Walk Kansas 2019!

For more information call the Geary County K-State Research & Extension office at: **785-238-4161**

## Walk Kansas 2019

The Walk Kansas 2019 season is fast upon us. This 8-week program runs from March 17 – May 11. I invite you to round up five friends to create your team of six and participate in this year's annual walk for wellness program!

February 2019



## How does Walk Kansas work?

Co-workers, family members, friends and neighbors form teams of 6 people who will track minutes of physical activity and food choices during the 8-week challenge. If you want to participate but are unable to pull a team together, contact us at 785-238-4161 and we can help you sign up.

Each team identifies a goal, or challenge, it wants to reach. Three challenges are offered.

**Challenge 1 - 8 Wonders** Each person reaches the minimum goal for physical activity -- 150 minutes per week. Collectively, the team would walk 435 miles as they discover the 8 Wonders of Kansas!

**Challenge 2 - Cross Country** A winding trail from Troy to Elkhart, requiring each person to log 4 hours per week, traveling 764 miles total.

**Challenge 3 - Little Balkans to Nicodemus** Walk the SE part of the state known as the Little Balkans and then wind up and around to Nicodemus. This team will go 1200 miles and require each person to log 6 hours per week.

Walking isn't the only activity that counts. When you sign up, you will be able to access information about how other physical activities count toward your efforts to be more physically active. For example, "Move More – Feel Better, Physical Activity Guide" can be found in the resources section that gives examples of moderate and vigorous activities that count, and strengthening exercises. In addition to recording physical activity, participants record daily fruit and vegetable consumption. Team members report their progress by logging on each week and recording their efforts.

## It's a Win-Win with Walk Kansas!

Regular physical exercise is the first part of the win-win! Your body will respond with more energy, better circulation, and firmer muscle tone. All Walk Kansas participants will receive a weekly newsletter with physical activity and health tips, healthy eating information, and a tasty recipe. Staying motivated is important. Knowing how close you are to your goal can help you with that. On the Walk Kansas website, you can check your team's progress. Seeing how far your team has trekked keeps the program fun and motivates you to reach your goals.

The second part of the win-win comes from the drawings you can be in to receive Walk Kansas incentives! Each week, we will put the names of all the active teams (meaning everyone on the team logged their activity and fruits and vegetable consumption the previous week) into a random drawing. The active team that is drawn will receive a bag of goodies – including gift cards/certificates for each member of the team! The first drawing will be on Wednesday, March 27 from those active teams from Week 1. The week 2 drawing will take place on Wednesday, April 3. The process will continue thru May 15<sup>th</sup> for the week 8 drawing.

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service



For more information about how you can participate in this fun and healthy program, check out our website at: <https://www.geary.k-state.edu/health-home-family/walk-kansas.html>. There you will find an information sheet for both team captains and participants that walk you through how to register. It is very helpful to read these before you try to register.

PLEASE NOTE: Team Captains will need to collect information from their team members to get started. The first step in the online registration process is for the team captain to log in a team name, all 6 names of the team members, contact information for each member, and an email address if possible.

There is a \$8 registration fee for each participant that each captain should collect from the team members. Again this year, participants have the option of purchasing a Walk Kansas t-shirt for an additional cost.

Team captains can choose to pay for their team's registration with a credit or debit card when they register their team online or bring a check by the Geary County K-State Research and Extension office at 119 E. 9<sup>th</sup> in Junction City. A nominal transaction fee will apply for those choosing to use a credit or debit card.

Simple step-by-step instructions can be found in the Captains information sheet found at the link posted above to help you get started.

Online team registration opens **February 25, 2019. Registration will close on March 31, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.**

## Another Snow Day?!?!?!?

Has having the kids home from school due to snow days and other bad weather taxed your standard snack ideas. To add some *fresh* ideas back into your selection, check out the USDA's (United State Department of Agriculture) MyPlate website to help out at <https://www.choosemyplate.gov>. Here is one of the hundreds of resources you can find in this trove of nutritional information treasures:

### 10 Tips: MyPlate Snack Tips for Parents

Snacks can help children get the nutrients needed to grow and maintain a healthy weight. Prepare single-serving snacks for younger children to help them get just enough to satisfy their hunger. Let older kids make their own snacks by keeping healthy foods in the kitchen.

#### Save time by slicing veggies

Store sliced vegetables in the refrigerator and serve with dips like hummus or low-calorie dressing. Top half a whole-wheat English muffin with spaghetti sauce, chopped vegetables, and low-fat shredded mozzarella and melt in the microwave.

#### Mix it up

For older school-age kids, mix dried fruit, unsalted nuts, and popcorn in a snack-size bag for a quick trail mix. Blend plain fat-free or low-fat yogurt with 100% fruit juice and frozen peaches for a tasty smoothie.

#### Grab a glass of milk

A cup of low-fat or fat-free milk or milk alternative (soy milk) is an easy way to drink a healthy snack.

#### Go for great whole grains

Offer whole-wheat breads, popcorn, and whole-oat cereals that are high in fiber and low in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Limit refined-grain products such as snack bars, cakes, and sweetened cereals.

## Family Nutrition

### Nibble on lean protein

Choose lean protein foods such as low-sodium deli meats or unsalted nuts. Wrap sliced, low-sodium deli turkey around an apple wedge. Store hard-cooked (boiled) eggs in the refrigerator for kids to enjoy any time.

### Keep an eye on the size

Snacks shouldn't replace a meal, so look for ways to help your kids understand how much is enough. Store snack-size bags in the cupboard and use them to control serving sizes.

### Fruits are quick and easy

Fresh, frozen, dried, or canned fruits can be easy "grab-and-go" options that need little preparation. Offer whole fruit and limit the amount of 100% juice served.

### Consider convenience

A single-serving container of low-fat or fat-free yogurt or, individually wrapped string cheese, can be just enough for an after-school snack.

### Swap out the sugar

Keep healthier foods handy so kids avoid cookies, pastries, or candies between meals. Add seltzer water to a 1/2 cup of 100% fruit juice instead of offering soda.

### Prepare homemade goodies

For homemade sweets, add dried fruits like apricots or raisins and reduce the amount of sugar in the recipe. Adjust recipes that include fats like butter or shortening by using unsweetened applesauce or prune puree for half the amount of fat.



# Family Finance

## Monday, February 25: Save with a plan

Did you know? Savers with a plan are twice as likely to save successfully for things like retirement and their (or their children's) education! America Saves Week is a great time to start a healthy savings habit.

## Tuesday, February 26: Save the easy way... automatically

Never miss a beat when it comes to savings. Make it so easy you never have to think about it by setting aside money for savings automatically. Learn how to set up automatic transfers from your checking account to your savings account, or have part of your paycheck automatically deposited into a savings account.

## Wednesday, February 27: Save for the unexpected

That day you blew a tire. The time your dishwasher overflowed. That vacation when your child got sick far from home, and the doctor wouldn't take your insurance. We all have those unexpected events in life that can lead to financial stress, but it doesn't have to be that way. Putting aside a few dollars a week into a savings account for unexpected costs can build financial security – and relieve a lot of anxiety! Saving for the unexpected starts with small, regularly scheduled contributions that build up over time.

## Thursday, February 28: Save to retire

Studies show few Americans have adequate savings for retirement but it's never too late – or too early – to start saving. Saving now for retirement will help ensure you have enough money to enjoy a comfortable standard of living when you stop working. Participate in a work-related retirement program such as a 401(k) or open an

# America Saves Week 2019!

Individual Retirement Account (or IRA). Already saving for retirement? Try increasing the amount you save by 1 percent each year.

## Friday, March 1: Save the extra

Did you know you're more likely to save a windfall than a small amount consistently over time? Hack that psychology by saving your bonuses, raises, and tax refunds. This tax season, get ahead of your financial goals by depositing at least \$50 of your refund into a savings account.

## Saturday, March 2: Save as a family

Good savings habits start at home. Model good financial habits for your children by saving money from your paycheck, delaying purchases until you can afford them, avoiding whim purchases, and establishing a monthly budget. Teach your children to do the same and help them open their own savings accounts. They'll love seeing their "pot" grow!

You can learn more about building a savings plan by visiting our webpage as well: <https://www.geary.k-state.edu/> then click on the Health, Home, and Family tab to find more personal finance information.

Check out more information about America Saves week by going to: <https://americasavesweek.org/>



You look like  
you can start saving.

Put some away  
with automatic deposits.



# Avoiding the Flu

Flu season has gained momentum over the past month in Kansas. There has been a significant spike in influenza-associated hospitalizations in February, specifically. The impact of the flu season is widespread in Kansas and our state has been identified as having a "high level of ILI (Influenza-Like Illness) activity according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC.)

If you have had the flu, you know how painful, frustrating, and energy-zapping the virus can be. How soon you bounce back from the illness varies depending on how strong your immune system is, as well as how careful you have been in heeding the self-care guidance offered by your physician or the ER doctor.

If you have been fortunate to avoid the flu, don't let your guard down yet! There are still 3 more months to what the CDC designates as flu season – which runs from October thru May each year. With the rise in Kansas cases, coupled with the many other illnesses that have been circulating in our communities, you need to be more diligent than ever in remaining flu-free!

Here are the everyday precautions you can take to keep yourself healthy all year long, but especially during the flu season:

# Family Health

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. After using a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands. [Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like flu. Of course, it's never too late to get your flu shot. With the heightened activity level in Kansas, the flu-virus is obviously having a significant impact on the health of many people. Taking the precautions listed above can reduce your risk of illness while minimizing the risk of you passing any illnesses along to your family and friends.

**Geary County**

P.O. Box 28  
119 E. 9th Street  
Junction City, KS 66441

**Upcoming Geary County Extension Programs**

**\*\*Requires pre-registration. Call 238-4161 to pre-register\*\***

**February**

25 Walk Kansas Geary County 2019\*\*—Registration opens. Go to <https://www.geary.k-state.edu/> and click on “Walk Kansas 2019” under the Helpful Links tab for more information. Registration is \$8 per participant.

**March**

17 Walk Kansas 2019 Begins!\*\* Register your team and log your efforts at <https://www.geary.k-state.edu/health-home-family/walk-kansas.html>.

31 Walk Kansas 2019 Registration closes at 5:00pm.

**April**

26 Medicare Basics\*\*— This free educational program is designed for anyone interested in learning more about the Medicare maze, particularly those who are nearing age 65, who are soon to qualify because of a disability or who are helping family member with insurance and financial matters. We will cover Medicare eligibility, how and when to apply, what is covered by the various parts, and how to fill the gaps. We will also explain programs available to assist low income individuals and how to watch out for Medicare fraud. This FREE 2 hour program is being offered at the Dorothy Bramlage Public Library in Junction City from 2-4pm. Please call the Geary County K-State Research & Extension office by April 23 to reserve your seat. 785-238-4161



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