

Walk Kansas

celebrate healthy living

Atchison County Extension
www.atchison.ksu.edu

K-STATE
Research and Extension

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Mary Lee

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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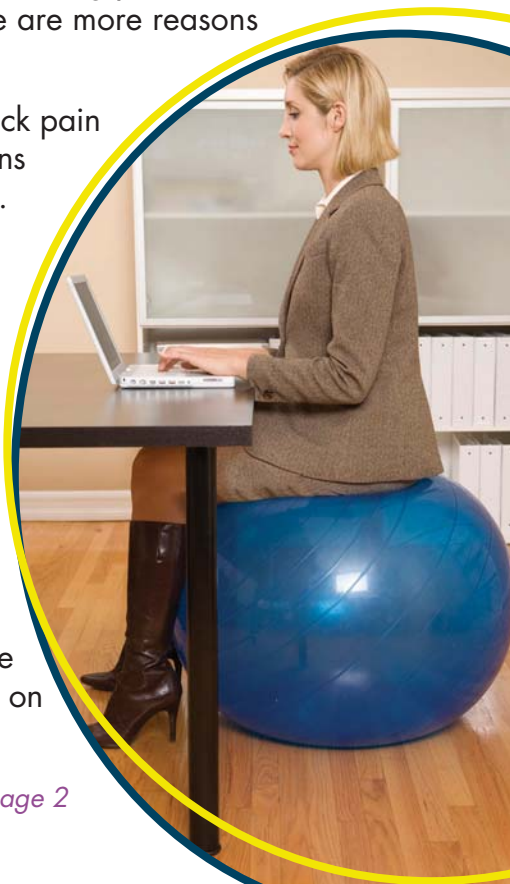
Strength at Your Core

The core includes all muscle groups that stabilize and support the spine. This includes abdominal and back muscles and those around the pelvis. You can also think of the core region as your body except for your limbs.

Strong core muscles make it possible for you stand upright and move on two feet. They help you balance, shift body weight, stop and start, and move in any direction. They also protect your body from the wear and tear of sitting all day.

There are many reasons why you should strengthen your core. Perhaps most importantly, it is something you can do to take care of yourself as you age. Here are more reasons to strengthen your core:

- 1. Prevent back pain.** Low back pain affects four out of five Americans at some point during their lives. You can prevent back pain by doing exercises that strengthen and bring balance to the front and back of your body. If you sit for a long period of time, practice sitting tall and avoid slouching in your chair. If you can, sit on a stability ball part of the day instead of a traditional chair. The ball creates the sense of instability and movement, which will force you to use core muscles to stay on the ball.



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Strength at Your Core

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2. Improve posture. Your posture will automatically improve as you strengthen core muscles, and you will carry yourself with more confidence. Good posture will lessen wear and tear on your spine and will allow you to breathe deeply. Practice good posture throughout your day, when sitting, standing, and walking. One tip for improving posture while driving is to adjust your rear-view mirror when you are sitting tall. As you start to slump, you will lose sight of yourself and can use this cue to sit up tall again.

3. Make everyday tasks easier. Most basic activities of daily living call on your core, such as bending to put on shoes, dressing, bathing, cooking, and just standing or sitting. Housework, gardening, and fix-it tasks require the core as you bend, lift, twist, carry, and reach. Strengthening core muscles will help you do these tasks easier.

4. Improve balance. The core muscles stabilize your body and allow you to move in any direction or stand in one spot without losing your balance. When you walk on a bumpy surface, such as an uneven sidewalk or walking path, your core muscles are working. You can reduce your risk of falling by strengthening your core.

Several videos that demonstrate core exercises have been added to the *Walk Kansas website*. One of the best exercises to engage core muscles is a plank, and you will find several variations of this exercise. Yoga is another activity that strengthens the core. Watch for videos next week that will demonstrate basic yoga movements and poses.

2014 Success Stories

It has been great to walk during my lunch hours and bond with my co-workers/team members. I love this program. It's a jump start to more exercising at home.

— Southwind District – Allen County

I had an 87-year-old on my team. He was so consistent every week and was such an inspiration to keep us all moving with a great attitude!

— Post Rock District – Mitchell County

As a result of Walk Kansas, my son and I have started making better food choices such as salads in place of pizza. Our taste for food has changed. Fruits and vegetables have more appeal and junk food looks and smells bad to us now. We enjoy a walk after we eat, and we are looking forward to riding our bikes.

— Wyandotte County

Make the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

Be Ready for Exercise



There are many ways you can change the environment around you to make it easier to get extra steps in your day. Start with your calendar and schedule time for a 10-minute walk or 30-minute exercise session. Schedule this like any other appointment. Here are more ways to be ready for exercise:

- Pack a bag with exercise clothing and shoes, and keep it in your car or office. This way you will always be ready for a walk, a game of basketball, or a session at the gym.
- Choose a parking spot far away from your destination.
- Leave exercise shoes by the door as a reminder.
- Carry a bottle of water — always.
- Prepare mentally, and visualize yourself walking, doing strengthening exercises, eating fruit for a snack, and practicing other healthy habits.

Legumes: Nutrition Powerhouses

Legumes (beans, peas, and lentils) are nutrition powerhouses and are unique because, nutritionally, they belong to both the protein and vegetable food groups. They have no cholesterol, are high in fiber, and naturally low in fat. Legumes are also good sources of folate, potassium, iron, and magnesium. When included in your diet, they can help reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers. They are a good choice for people who must control blood sugar, and a good alternative for a meatless meal. Some are used as ground flours for those with gluten intolerance.

Legumes are versatile. They are inexpensive and available dry, canned, or frozen. One half cup of cooked beans or peas equals 2 ounces of protein or a serving of vegetables and provides 10 grams of dietary fiber.

Though dry beans don't require soaking, doing so reduces cooking time and helps dissolve gas-producing oligosaccharides, easing digestion. For soaking, use 10 cups of water per pound. Beans double or triple in size, so use a large pot. Bring water to a boil and simmer beans 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let stand 1 to 4 hours. Drain, add fresh water, and cook 2 hours or until tender. Do not add salt while cooking as it can cause beans to toughen.

Lentils and split peas do not require soaking. Sort and remove debris, rinse, and boil lentils 15 to 20 minutes, split peas 30 minutes. Do not add salt

during cooking. To save time, cook dried beans and peas, divide into smaller quantities, and freeze. Package in 1½-cup quantities, and use in recipes to replace a 15-ounce can of beans. To reduce sodium in canned beans, drain and rinse them. This will remove about 40 percent of the sodium.

There are many ways you can add legumes to your diet. At the salad bar, add garbanzo and kidney beans; add lentils to spaghetti sauce; include beans and lentils when making soup, stew, or a casserole. Enjoy hummus as a snack with vegetable dippers and whole-grain pita bread or crackers, and spread on a sandwich or wrap. Prepare legumes as a side dish, and explore how other cultures feature beans by trying an ethnic recipe. Edamame (green soybeans) are great as a snack, and add them to salads, casseroles, and rice dishes.

For more information on using beans, peas, and lentils go the *Healthy Eating for Life* page of the Walk Kansas website and the *American Institute for Cancer Research*.



Ultimate Greek Chopped Salad

Makes 12 servings

Salad Ingredients:

- 4 to 5 Roma tomatoes, diced
- 1 cucumber, diced
- 1 large red bell pepper, diced
- 1 small red onion, diced
- 1 15-ounce can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed or 1½ cups cooked dry garbanzo beans

Optional: Feta cheese

Dressing Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt (or less)

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, combine all ingredients for the dressing and whisk to combine. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, combine cucumbers, tomatoes, red pepper, onion, and garbanzo beans. Add dressing and toss to combine.
3. This can be served immediately or refrigerate for an hour so flavors combine. Stir salad before serving.



Nutrition information per ½-cup serving:

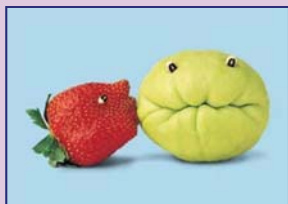
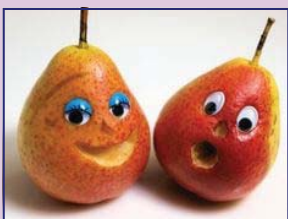
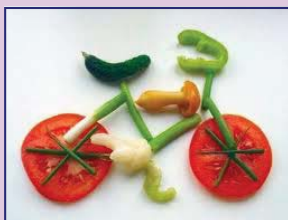
- 100 calories;
- 6 g fat;
- 11 g carbohydrates;
- 3 g protein; 1 g fiber;
- 140 mg sodium.

WALK KANSAS

2015 WEEK 4

ATCHISON COUNTY NOTES & NEWS

Weekly Team Progress and Totals



Team	Wk 4 Miles	Total Miles	Wk 4 F/V	Total F/V
Are We There Yet?	146	340	270	582
At Last	61	305	65	211
Avengers	119	562	94	344
Ban Calories Not Books	55	192	122.5	462
Between a Walk & a Hard Place	94	389	181	683
Bun Burners	0	210	0	164
County Cruisers	97	472	57	220
Dirt Road Trotters				
Farmerettes	110	384	184	763
Fit Walkers	252	252	216	216
FitBit Fanatics	132	638	117	355
Happy Feet	0	165	0	218
Healthcare Hustlers	218	434	264	437
K-State Extension Movers	51	171	40	156
K-State Extension Pacers	0	12	0	28
KAIR Radio	120	568	80	366
Keep On Movin' Soles	468	1537	209	713
Lancaster Walkie Talkies	95	349	164	370
One Step at a Time	135	567	171	682
Ruby Slippers	58	372	141	522
Six Pack of Buds	75	311	134	533
Sole Sisters	217	863	207	782
Team America	76	280	114	439
Team Mikon	95	299	52	205
Team Walka Walka	0	71	0	97
The Young and the Rest of Us	58	327	53	335
Walk to Glory	271	989	169	641
Walka Walka Team	123	442	39	175
Walking Wonders	74	331	146	461
Witness the Fitness	0	170	0	236

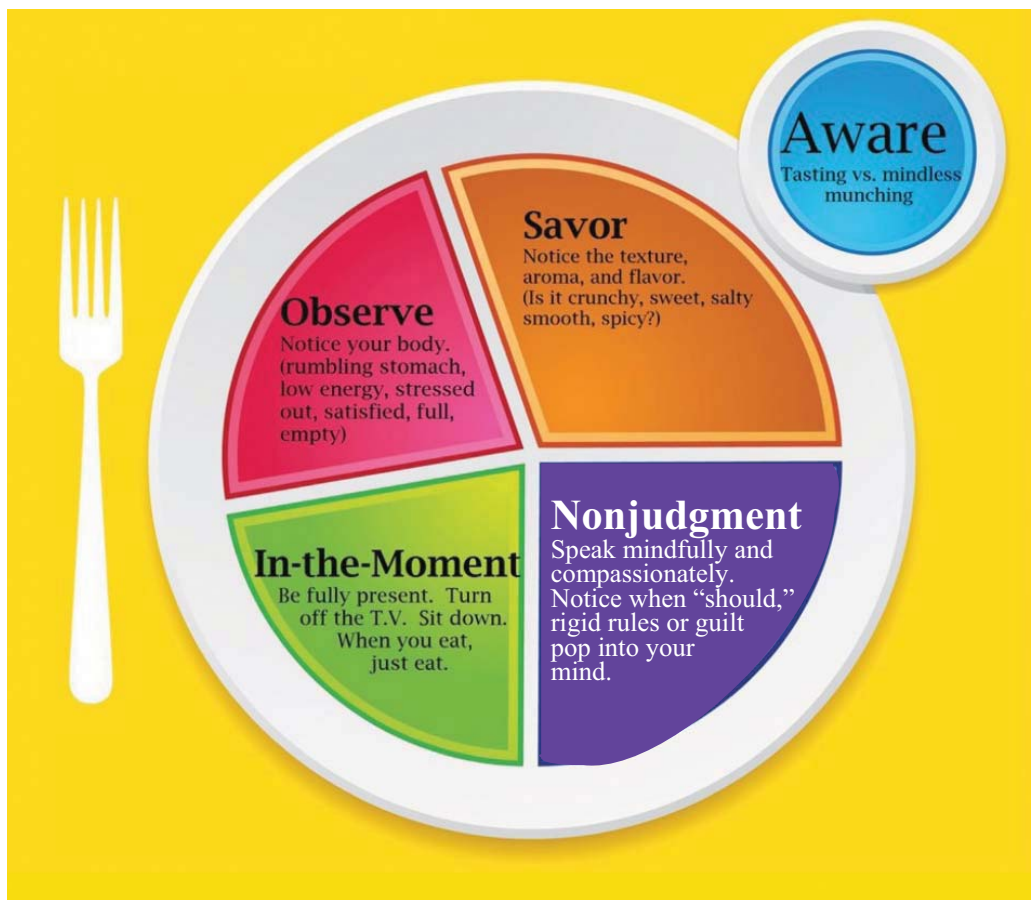
Eating Should Be Fun

Salads are a fantastic way to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Earlier this year, our office offered a class called Salad Secrets. The secret was simple, class members provided ingredients that began with the first letter of their middle name and I had the fun of creating a variety of new salads. Yes, we should fill half our plate with fruits and vegetables because it's the right thing to do. But diets based on **shoulds and can't haves** tend to be boring and not much fun. I recently heard the phrase to take the time, each day to enjoy the foods that love you back. If you need help adding fruits and vegetables to your diet, check out [More Plants on Your Plate](#).

That is a message that I can live with for the rest of my life. Yet, the billion dollar diet industry has convinced us that diets should be restrictive. Meanwhile, we may be eating foods to fill our

emotional hunger rather than our actual hunger. When we eat to fill an emotional void in our life, our brains are wired to tell us we need sweets, fats, salty food and sometimes carbohydrates. And the fact is, emotionally it works because these foods cause the brain to release endorphins that do give us that temporary feeling good moment.

Being mindful of why we are



eating is important to remember; if it is due to hunger we may want to hit the pause button to think about the whys. That said, food is part of our culture. We celebrate with food and comfort others with food. Food brings us together as we sit around the table and chat. Food and fun should belong together – because life **should be fun**. The Magic of Laughter is another fun class I have the opportunity to share in the community. Laughter is healthy. Children laugh an average of 400 times a day. Adults on the other hand only average about 15 times. Modern medicine suggests we should laugh daily just for the health benefits. The funny thing about laughter is that it often causes us to cry; yet unlike crying caused by anger or stress, these tears are fill with energy and renewal and gives us energy. Eating food, **jest** like laughter, should be a joyous experience.



K-STATE

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Atchison County has been partnering with K-State Research and Extension since 1915 to provide local citizens with knowledge for living. We focus our educational program efforts in four key areas—family and consumer sciences, youth development, community development and agriculture/horticulture. Atchison County has 2 extension agent educators—Diane Nielson and Ray Ladd. You may see us in a classroom teaching youth, leading a workshop, hear us on the radio, read a news column we have written, answering a question on the phone, making a home or work site visit or working with others in the community to make Atchison County a great place to live and work. Our programs are backed up by researchers at K-State and other universities. Whether you live in Atchison, a farm or a community in between, we are here to provide answers to make life a little easier.

Providing Knowledge For Life
It's What We Do

Hello Walkers,

This newsletter marks the end of the 5th week of Walk Kansas.

On your walk Kansas journey, be sure to take a few laughter breaks and enjoy life. Laughter, walking, and eating fruits and vegetables - even 3 raisins and 2 peas - adds up to a healthier lifestyle. This week aim to find or create a little humor each day.

Diane Nielson
County Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Sciences



“My doctor told me to eat 5 fruits and vegetables every day. Today I had 3 raisins and 2 peas.”