

The Post Rock Connection
Post Rock Extension District #1 Family and Consumer Sciences Column
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By Jamie Rathbun, Family and Community Wellness Agent

Popular Walk Kansas Program Gears Up for 2026

Walking or running or biking more than 400 miles across the state of Kansas over the next eight weeks would seem a bit intimidating to most folks.

Yet, an estimated 5,000 people in Kansas and beyond are gearing up to do just that as part of K-State Extension's popular Walk Kansas program which kicks off on March 22.

Walk Kansas, a team-based challenge that encourages teams of people to exercise and live more healthfully while working toward a common goal, will run through May 16. Registration is available online, at www.WalkKansasOnline.org, through the end of March. The cost is \$10 per person.

Walk Kansas is based on the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, which recommend a minimum 150 minutes of activity per week.

Many forms of activity count toward "miles" accumulated. Miles are calculated based on minutes of activity, with adjustments for moderate or vigorous forms of activity. To reach 150 minutes a week, she urges participants to make a goal to exercise 20-30 minutes per day.

All types of physical activity count toward your minutes, whether aerobic activity, strength training, balance exercises, and stretching. Walking, jogging, dancing and playing tennis are examples of aerobic activity, which uses large muscle groups, can be maintained continuously and is rhythmic in nature. Such activity is important because it improves the health of your heart, lungs, and circulatory system. If you are exerting energy to where you can carry on a conversation just barely, but you can't sing is a good indication that you have reached the

moderate intensity level of activity. You can gauge vigorous exercise by whether you can say a few words but not really carry on a conversation.

Strength training makes muscles and bones stronger, allowing you to perform daily activities. Strength training also plays a key role in keeping obesity and diabetes at bay by increasing your metabolism.

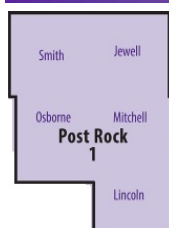
Stretching keeps your body flexible and limber. Stretching allows muscles and joints to move smoothly and helps give you more freedom of movement to do everyday activities such as reaching and looking over your shoulder.

Balance exercises are specifically recommended for senior adults and adults with balance issues. Balance exercises help prevent falls, the most common form of injury related death among adults age 65 and older.

In addition to tracking their minutes of activity, participants are asked to report the number of cups of fruits and vegetables and, optionally, water they consume weekly.

Join Walk Kansas 2026. The team-based program brings together a support network and tracking to keep you accountable. By the end of 8 weeks you will have made physical activity a habit. Contact any Post Rock Extension District office for details on how to register.

The Post Rock District of K-State Research and Extension serves Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Osborne, and Smith Counties. Contact Jamie Rathbun at jrathbun@ksu.edu or by calling 785-524-4432. Stay connected with “Post Rock Extension” on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Our website is www.postrock.ksu.edu.



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