



** This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/walk-kansas-2025>

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Popular Walk Kansas program nears 25th year

Registration opens March 4; program is open to those beyond Kansas

By Pat Melgares, K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. – In the midst of thousands of Kansans rallying around a challenge to walk or roll a distance equivalent to the length of the state, Sharolyn Jackson believes one goal should always be kept in mind.

“It’s important to have fun,” said Jackson, a family and consumer sciences specialist in K-State Research and Extension’s northeast region.

Jackson is also coordinator of the popular Walk Kansas program, which turns 25 this year. ‘Fun,’ she says, has been a cornerstone of the health and fitness program since its beginning more than a quarter-century ago.

“The best physical activity is one you will actually do. There are so many spillover effects from physical activity that include being more productive at work, being more satisfied in your life, improving your mood and improving your outlook on life,” Jackson said.

Walk Kansas is a team-based challenge that encourages people to walk, jog, run, roll, bike, swim or do whatever they enjoy doing to live more healthfully. The program routinely draws more than 5,000 participants.

[Online registration for the 2025 Walk Kansas program](#) opens on March 4. Each team must assign a captain, in addition to a team name. The cost per team member is \$10, which must be paid at the time the captain registers the team.

Each team of friends, family members or others is made of six members who set a goal to engage in moderate exercise for a minimum 150 minutes per week, for eight weeks. Each team members’ exercise minutes translate to miles and the team’s total over eight weeks is roughly equivalent to 423 miles, or the distance across Kansas – east to west.

If team members decide they want to do more, they can sign up for various challenges outlined on the [Walk Kansas website](#).

If you don't have a team, or just prefer to take on the challenge yourself, there is a solo participant option. You do not need to live in Kansas to be on a team or to do the solo challenge.

"The minimum guideline for health is 150 minutes per week at moderate intensity (set by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), or you can go at a more vigorous pace and get the same benefit with less time," Jackson said. "It's up to each team and team member as to how they want to structure their exercise, and we'll explore a lot of the benefits, how-to's and more in our weekly newsletter and webinars."

Walk Kansas began on a local level more than 25 years ago, then grew to a statewide program in 2001, according to Jackson. It remains an eight-week program, which she notes, "is long enough to help people get into a routine."

"There is varying research about how long it takes to form a habit, but eight weeks is a pretty solid timeframe," she said. "It's long enough to have developed a routine and it's something that if you stop, you feel like you're missing something."

The online reporting system will again help participants track their fruit, vegetable and water consumption, in addition to daily exercise minutes. Jackson said the program will also highlight prevention and maintenance of diabetes and other chronic conditions, and there will be information on walking, biking and driving safety, in partnership with the [Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office](#).

"Walk Kansas aims to help you make improvements in your lifestyle habits, and to surround yourself with supportive people," Jackson said. "It really helps to empower you to make good decisions about your health in terms of healthcare and monitoring and just staying on top of your health."

More information about Walk Kansas also is available at [local extension offices in Kansas](#).

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Walk Kansas, <https://www.walkkansas.org>

Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office, <https://www.ktsro.org>

K-State Research and Extension statewide offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations>

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