



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

Released: March 3, 2025

Walk Kansas registration opens March 4

Popular program encourages teams, individuals to make physical activity part of a lifestyle

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

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Registration opens March 4 for Walk Kansas, an eight-week team-based challenge that encourages teams of six to exercise and live more healthfully while walking a distance equivalent to the length of the Sunflower State.

Now in its 25th year, Walk Kansas begins March 30 and runs through May 24. [Registration is available online](#) through the end of March. The cost is \$10 per person.

“When we created Walk Kansas in 2001, we were looking at the [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#), which recommend a minimum 150 minutes of activity per week,” said Sharolyn Jackson, a K-State Research and Extension northeast area specialist and the state leader for Walk Kansas for more than two decades.

“So we determined that if six people would collectively meet the minimum guidelines of physical activity, they could virtually walk across the state of Kansas, which is 423 miles, in about eight weeks.”

Jackson said many forms of activity count toward “miles” accumulated. She said 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.

From April 6 through May 18 – Weeks 2 through 7 of Walk Kansas – Jackson said organizers will offer a series of weekly webinars, covering such topics as:

- **Heart disease**, with a focus on how diabetes and pre-diabetes might affect one’s health.
- **Foot care**, including selecting comfortable shoes.
- **Resistance exercises** to help build strength.

- **The secrets of Blue Zones**, or those communities around the world where people are living longer and are predominantly more healthy.

“This year, we are going to focus on the prevention and management of diabetes,” Jackson said. “That is a chronic disease that so many people are at risk for. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control found that lifestyle changes that focus on weight loss and physical activity can save each person up to \$2,000 per year in health care costs due to reduce medical visits and lower use of prescription drugs.”

Jackson added that weight loss and physical activity also lead to increased productivity and energy, “so everything just connects” when people exercise regularly.

Walk Kansas offers opportunities for individuals to form a team of six, or participate by themselves. Each team of six chooses one of four challenges to complete:

- **8 Wonders of Kansas**, which requires each team member to complete 150 minutes per week while tracking their team’s distance between landmarks and various sights in Kansas. 435 miles total.
- **Follow U.S. Route 56**, which is a scenic stroll along Highway 56, challenging team members to complete 200 minutes each per week. 640 miles total.
- **Cross Country**, a challenge for each team member to complete four hours of activity per week while winding from Troy to Elkhart. 764 miles total.
- **Little Balkans to Nicodemus**, which will push each team member to complete six hours of activity per week. The path covers the part of southeast Kansas known as the Little Balkans, and ends up in Nicodemus. 1200 miles total.

The solo challenge, for individuals, is called a Purple Power Trail. Each person is tasked with covering 150 minutes of activity per week – 30 minutes per day for five days.

Jackson said approximately 5,000 individuals participate annually in Walk Kansas, which is not exclusively for residents of the state. She encourages participants to sign up family members or friends from outside Kansas.

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

-30-

FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this article

Walk Kansas, <https://www.walkkansas.org>

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf

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

K-State Research and Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the well-being of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices, experiment fields, area extension offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the K-State campus in Manhattan. For more information, visit www.ksre.ksu.edu. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

More information

Sharolyn Jackson
785-532-5833
sharolyn@ksu.edu

Story by

Pat Melgares
785-532-1160
melgares@ksu.edu