**K-State**

**Extension Connection**

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**Walk Kansas 2020 starts March 15, 2020**

Walk Kansas, the popular K-State Research and Extension program that encourages physical activity and healthy eating, runs March 15 through May 9.

Participants can sign up online at <https://www.walkkansas.org/> or get more information through the Wildcat Extension District Independence Office at 620-331-2690. The cost to participate is $10 per person, which includes access to the online tracker, a weekly newsletter with tips and recipes, program resources, and local activities.

“With spring getting closer by the day, this is a great way to make a promise to yourself to be more active and to make lifestyle choices that support healthy living,” said Sharolyn Jackson, K-State Research and Extension family and consumer science specialist and Walk Kansas coordinator. “Plus, it’s fun to support friends, family, neighbors or co-workers – anyone who makes up your team.”

Participants form teams of six, with one serving as a team captain. Team members record their own activity online each week. Participants do not have to walk or participate in other types of activity together, or even live in Kansas. Many teams form with family members or friends in other parts of the state or country. Teams connect through technology.

While physical activity is at the heart of Walk Kansas, the program will have a couple of new twists this year, Jackson said. One focuses on the Mediterranean style of eating.

“Eating the Med way is not about flavors,” Jackson said. “It is about eating lots of fruits and vegetables, choosing whole grains, eating more beans and legumes, reducing added sugars, using olive and canola oil, and more.” Wildcat District plans to offer several opportunities to participate in a Mediterranean Lifestyle/Diet program during Walk Kansas.

The second twist centers on introducing participants to nine shared lifestyle traits of the Blue Zones, places around the world where people are known to live measurably longer and healthier lives. These traits, and ways to incorporate them into your life, will be introduced during the eight-week program.

“Your health is so much more than a number on the scale,” Jackson said.

More information and registration for Walk Kansas is available at <https://www.walkkansas.org/> or through the Wildcat Extension District Independence Office at 620-331-2690

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