

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body

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Inside

Timely Tip	2
Selecting Walking Shoes.....	3
Local Walking Trails.....	3
Activity Suggestions for June.....	3
Menu of the Month.....	4
Words to Consider.....	4

Celebrate! A Healthy You

is published monthly. Questions or comments may be directed to:

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Taking Steps for Fitness

Walking is often recommended as a physical activity for several reasons.

- ◆ Most people can walk at least short distances.
- ◆ Most people can fit at least short (10 minute) walks into their busy schedules.
- ◆ Walking costs little or nothing. No memberships fees, no expensive equipment to buy. A sturdy pair of walking shoes is recommended, however.



Walking, like other forms of endurance exercise, has a number of health benefits. Endurance exercises are ones that cause you to breath a bit harder and your heart to beat faster. Benefits include

1. Healthier heart, lungs and circulatory system.
2. Increased endurance and stamina enabling you to do everyday tasks like carrying groceries, mowing the grass or cleaning the house.
3. Delaying or preventing many chronic diseases such as diabetes, colon cancer, heart disease, stroke and others. It can also lessen the effects of such diseases, reducing the amount of medication needed.

Gearing Up

Sturdy, comfortable walking shoes and socks are the only gear you really need for walking. See article for tips on shoes. Walking sticks or poles can be used to add more of an upper-body workout, but are not really essential. If you walk outside after dark, a light source or reflector is absolutely critical, however.



Wear comfortable clothes suitable for the weather—shorts and t-shirt in summer and layers in winter. A hat provides sun protection in summer and holds in body heat in winter.



Pedometers, as noted in the March issue of *Celebrate!*, help you keep track of how far you walk. Many people find keeping track to be an excellent motivator. You can record time spent walking as an alternative to wearing a pedometer. Or, walk known routes, and keep track of mileage that way.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Heading Out

Good posture is as important for walking as sitting. Keep body erect, hold head high and balanced, chin parallel to the ground. Keep eyes down to scan the ground before you. Lead with your chest, stomach pulled in. Swing arms no more than chest high and opposite to stride, so left arm moves forward as you step forward with right leg. Keep toes pointing straight forward as you step. Land on your heel and push off the ball of the foot.

Warm up with a few simple stretches of calf and shoulder muscles, and by walking at a slower pace for a few minutes. Then pick up the pace until the end of the walk when slower steps will help you cool down.

Pace Yourself

If you have not been very active, start slowly. Walk at a leisurely pace for no more than 10 to 15 minutes to start. Gradually increase both pace and time spent walking. Rob Sweetgal, a well-known walking expert who has walked across the country several times, recommends a 3.5 mile per hour pace. At that rate, most people should achieve aerobic fitness. However, use the pace at which you are comfortable, usually one that requires some effort but still allows you to maintain a conversation with your walking companion.

Set Goals

Set walking goals for yourself to keep motivation high. For example, decide how many days you will take to walk a marathon (26 miles). Or, walk across Missouri—250 miles—or take an imaginary walking trip around the world. Look up destinations on the Internet to discover interesting facts about each stop along the way. Keep it fun! Remember, it is often the journey, rather than the destination, that is the best part of a trip.



Timely Tip #15

Give New Year's Resolutions a Six-Month Check Up

Did you make a New Year's Resolution to improve your health? Now is the time to dig it out and take a look at it. Have you made progress toward accomplishing your goal?

If you are experiencing success, congratulations! Be sure to celebrate. Drop a note to the address on page 1 to tell about your accomplishment so we can celebrate with you.

However, if you have fallen somewhat short of your goal, keep your chin up. Take a minute to figure out where you went wrong, and how to get back on track. Remember the **SMART** way to set goals? Be sure your goal is

S—Specific rather than general. Example: I'm going to eat 3 whole grain foods a day. Or, I'm going to walk around the block after dinner at least five nights a week.

M—Measurable so you know when you've accomplished it. In the examples above, there are specific numbers to judge success.

A—Attainable, that is the goal is something you can do. In the example we've been using, if you don't now eat any whole grain foods, 3 may be too high a goal. Start with one, then move to two. Small steps bring success.

R—Is this goal Realistic and Relevant? Many people get tripped up by setting goals that are unrealistic. If the goal is not something you are likely to do, failure is inevitable. Be honest with yourself, especially when setting goals.

T—successful goals also need a Time boundary. When will you do this? Be specific as in the walking example above, to give a framework for success.

Remember, failures are an opportunity to learn. Take a moment to reframe your health goal, to make it a **SMART** and successful goal.

Selecting Walking Shoes

Good walking shoes are essential for preventing injuries and ensuring a pleasant walking experience. It's hard to have fun when your feet hurt! A good fit, rather than price, is the most important consideration when buying walking shoes.

A Texas Extension program called "Walk Across Texas" advises that good walking shoes meet the following criteria:

- ◆ Support—the construction of the back and heel of the shoe should provide stability and control of foot movement, and protect the Achilles tendon from injury.
- ◆ Cushioning—walking shoes should be flexible; however, they should be slightly more rigid than a running shoe to permit rolling off the toes and joints rather than bending through them.
- ◆ Performance—walking shoes that are lightweight and durable are preferred. Consider traction for the surface being walked on. The shoe should be

made of material that will breathe, such as nylon mesh. This type of material allows sweat to evaporate.

Shoes that fit correctly will make walking more fun. Tips to help ensure a good fit when trying on shoes are easy to follow:

1. Shop late in the day when feet are the biggest.
2. Wear the same type of socks that will be worn when walking.
3. The toe box of the shoe should be large enough to wiggle toes and about a thumbnail longer than the longest toe.
4. Feel inside for seams and ridges that may rub.
5. The shoes should bend easily at the widest part.
6. Walk briskly around the store to check for comfort and cushioning.
7. Make sure the shoes feel good on your feet.

Local Walking Trails

City of St. Charles

- ◆ McNair Park, 3200 Droste Road
- ◆ Wapelhorst Park, 1875 Muegge Road

City of St. Peters

- ◆ Brookmount Trail, Willott close to Carrington Dr.
- ◆ City Center Park Trail System, City Center at Mexico Road, connecting to:
- ◆ Spencer Creek Trail, Sutters Mill at Plum Tree
- ◆ Covenant Park Trail, on Willott Road
- ◆ Laurel Park Trail, Country Creek Dr at Jungermann

August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area, Highway 94 to Highway D in St. Charles County.



Activity Suggestions for June



Celebrate **Flag Day** on June 14 with a game of flag football. Players tuck flags—actually handkerchiefs or other pieces of fabric—in a back pocket. Instead of knocking down opponents, players are 'tackled' when the flag is pulled from their pocket. 24-17 hike!



Take a **ride on the rails**. The former railroad line that is now the Katy Trail makes a terrific bike path. It is off-road biking, so no worries about traffic. Because it is relatively flat, there are no strenuous hills—just a smooth, hard-packed gravel surface that allows bikers of every ability to enjoy the scenery. The trail generally follows the Missouri River from St. Charles to Clinton, with numerous access points along the way. In St. Charles, look for Katy Trail parking along Main Street.



Get into the **swim** of things at your community pool. These pools often have a nice variety of water play areas with slides and fountains for hours of cool fun suitable for the entire family. Remember to re-apply sunscreen frequently.

Menu of the Month

Picnic season begins in earnest in June and continues all summer long. Family reunions, church potlucks, neighborhood street parties are all occasions requiring a good tasting dish to show off your culinary skills. However, time is short for everyone, and wouldn't you rather enjoy the party than slave over a hot stove? Tangy Bean and Spinach Salad is a quick recipe adapted from the Nebraska Dry Bean Commission that will get you out of the kitchen and on to the fun in just 10 or 15 minutes of preparation. This salad is crunchy, colorful, low in fat and high in flavor. It makes a great side dish with grilled beef, pork or chicken, or serve it as a main dish salad with crisp bread and fruit cobbler for dessert.

Tangy Bean and Spinach Salad

1 can (15 ounces) beans, drained and rinsed
 1 cup cauliflower florets
 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
 1 small avocado, peeled, pitted and cubed
 2 green onions and tops, sliced
 1/2 cup prepared fat-free sweet and sour dressing
 4 cups baby spinach leaves
 1 can (11-ounces) mandarin orange segments, drained
 2 tablespoons toasted sunflower seeds



Combine beans, vegetables and mandarin orange segments in salad bowl; pour dressing over salad and toss. Spoon salad into bowls; sprinkle with sunflower seeds.

Makes 4 main-dish servings of 1 1/2 cup each or 8 side-dish servings of 3/4 cup each. Nutrition Information Per Main-dish Serving: 246 calories; 38 g carbohydrates; 10 g protein; 9 g fat; 190 mcg folate; 14 g dietary fiber; 29 percent calories from fat; 61 mg sodium; 0 mg cholesterol.



Words to Consider

"Dwell not on the past. Use it to illustrate a point, then leave it behind. Nothing really matters except what you do now in this instant of time." —Eileen Caddy

"It's choice - not chance - that determines your destiny." —Jean Nidetch

"We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee."
 —Marian Wright Edelman

"Trust yourself, you know more than you think you do."
 —Dr. Benjamin Spock

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