

Celebrate *healthy living*

2020 Week Four



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Walk Kansas

www.WalkKansas.org

Find Your Right Tribe



Can having strong social connections really help you live longer? Social support from family, friends, and your community influence your long-term health in positive ways. This week, the Power 9® trait we will explore is finding your “right tribe.”

Research from longevity studies in the Blue Zones® revealed that health behaviors of each culture were reinforced as people worked and socialized with each other. In Blue Zones® communities, people chose – or were born into – social circles that shaped and supported healthful behaviors. Those who have this type of social support appear to be happier, have fewer health problems, and live longer. In addition, those who feel more connected experience less anxiety and depression. They have higher self-esteem and more ability to empathize. They are also more trusting and cooperative. Strong social connections can also strengthen your immune system and aid you in recovering from disease.

Social connections are powerful. If those in your “right tribe” practice healthful behaviors, you are more likely to do the same. Unfortunately, people in your social circle can also influence you in negative ways. If they choose unhealthy behaviors, you will be more likely to follow that path.

In the coming weeks, challenge yourself to improve your health, and to influence the health of those around you in a positive way. When life returns to a somewhat normal state after this coronavirus pandemic, reestablish meaningful connections with your “right tribe.” Small actions can mean a lot, like eating lunch with your colleagues, carpooling to work, establishing a weekly walk date with a friend, or volunteering for a cause. It can be simple, but like many health practices, it can also be easy to neglect.

Even though there are limitations right now, there are many ways to connect and still maintain physical distancing. Continue to push yourself to engage in meaningful connection every day.

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Pulses: Cornerstone of Blue Zone Eating

Pulses can be thought of as the world's No. 1 longevity food. Pulses are the dried seeds of legume plants. You are probably most familiar with dry beans, lentils, dry peas, and chickpeas, but hundreds of different pulses are grown around the world.

Legumes are nutrition powerhouses and are unique because, nutritionally, they belong to both the protein and vegetable food groups. They have no cholesterol, are high in fiber, and are naturally low in fat. They are also good sources of folate, potassium, iron, and magnesium. Legumes are a versatile and inexpensive choice for people who must control blood sugar.

People in Blue Zones® eat a full cup of beans every day. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend eating at least a half cup every day, but the average American eats about 4 tablespoons per day.

Pulses are often overlooked but many options are available, such as canned beans, and dry beans are easy to cook and freeze for later use.

Though dry beans don't require soaking, doing so reduces cooking time and helps dissolve gas-producing oligosaccharides. For soaking, use 10 cups of water per pound. Beans double or triple in size, so use a large pot. Bring water to a boil and simmer beans 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let stand 1 to 4 hours. Drain, add fresh water, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer gently until beans are tender but firm. Most beans will cook in 45 minutes to 2 hours. While you can add herbs and spices at any time during cooking, wait to add salt until beans are tender as it tends to toughen them. Acidic foods (lemon juice, vinegar, tomatoes, wine, etc.) should be added after

beans are cooked because they can prevent beans from becoming tender. Lentils and split peas do not require soaking. Sort and remove debris, rinse, and boil lentils 15 to 20 minutes, split peas 30 minutes. Do not add salt during cooking.

For more information on cooking with beans and recipes, go to beaninstitute.com or usapulses.org.

Walk Kansas Week 4

- » Get outside and walk each day. At least once a week, walk with a friend, family member or another member of your Walk Kansas team (practice physical distancing).
- » Reflect on these things: Identify your social circle and think about how they influence your health habits. How do you think you influence their health habits?
- » Connect regularly with others on your Walk Kansas team. Talk about how you can support each other to practice healthful habits.
- » Add squats to your physical activity routine at least 2 days this week.
- » Try a new recipe that features legumes.

Build Muscle with Squats

Make this exercise a part of your routine. It doesn't matter how old you are, your gender, or what your fitness goals are. Everyone can benefit from doing squats. This exercise forces the body's parts to work and grow stronger together as a single unit. Here is a guide:

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Keep your back in a neutral position, and keep your knees centered over your feet.
3. Slowly bend your knees, hips, and ankles, lowering until you reach a 90-degree angle.
4. Return to your starting position.

Click here for a demonstration doing squats. youtube.com/watch?v=TDu8MMr6_hU&feature=youtu.be

Click here for a demonstration of squats with a dumbbell. youtube.com/watch?v=G4L0VMnRapA&feature=youtu.be



Baked Chickpeas

Makes 8, entrée size servings

This beautiful dish is common in Ikaria, Greece. It is served on its own, as a main course, with good bread, a little feta cheese, and a dish of boiled greens or a salad. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

- 1 pound dried chickpeas, soaked overnight
- 6 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 3 bay leaves
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 3 medium onions
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 1 carrot
- 3 large firm tomatoes
- 1/4 cup olive oil

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Drain chickpeas and place in a large pot with enough fresh cold water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook for approximately 1 hour.
3. Meanwhile, prepare produce. Peel carrot, onions, and garlic. Remove stems and cores from peppers and tomatoes. Rinse herbs under running water and dry. Rinse all vegetables under cold running water. Slice onions and peppers into 1/4 inch rings and cut garlic into slivers. Slice carrot in half lengthwise and then slice lengthwise into thin strips. Slice tomatoes crosswise into 6 slices each.
4. Preheat oven to 325°F.
5. Drain chickpeas, reserving cooking liquid.

6. Place drained chickpeas in an ovenproof clay or ceramic baking dish with a lid. Pour in enough of the reserved cooking liquid to come about two-thirds of the way up the beans. Add the herbs to the pan and season with salt and pepper.
7. Layer vegetables over chickpeas in the following order – onions, garlic, bell peppers, carrot and tomatoes. Drizzle olive oil over the contents of the baking dish. Cover the pan with its lid (or with parchment paper, then foil) and bake for 2 1/2 hours. Remove the cover and bake an additional 30 minutes.

Nutrition Information per entrée-size serving:

333 calories; 12 g fat (0 trans fat, 1.5 g saturated fat); 46 g carbohydrates; 13 g protein; 10 g fiber; 160 mg sodium; 0 g added sugars



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