Hello, my name is Sendy Martinez, and I have been the Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Program Coordinator at the Ada County Extension Office for the past 2 and a half years. I was born in Zacatecas, Mexico and raised in Idaho since the age of three. I graduated from Boise State University with my Bachelors in Health Education and Promotion and minors in Psychology and Spanish.

I worked at the Boise VA Medical Center prior to starting at Extension and had the opportunity to explore many different career areas. Now that I am at the Extension Office I enjoy working with our amazing FCS Extension Educators, helping them coordinate their food safety, finance, and nutrition programs.

One of my favorite hobbies is exploring this beautiful city via walking. There are so many events to experience and locations to discover—I often don’t realize that I’m getting exercise in the process! Below are some Boise activities you can try while adding more steps to your life.

- Walk on the Greenbelt (if it’s not flooded)
- Walk around the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial
- Visit Camel’s Back Park
- Participate in First Thursday
- Visit the farmers markets on Saturdays (CCPM and BMF)
- Explore the Foothills
- Hike up to Table Rock

I hope that you enjoy the great article about the seven reasons to lace up your sneakers as well as the yummy and healthy recipes.

Best wishes,
Sendy Martinez
7 Reasons to Lace Up Your Sneakers

“We were made to walk,” says researcher Charles Matthews of the National Cancer Institute. “You can’t say enough about its benefits.” Here are seven reasons to get out and walk.

1. **Build a bigger, sharper brain.** “Walking definitely affects the brains of adults in their 60’s, 70’s and 80’s,” says University of Illinois psychologist Arthur Kramer. Studies that track people’s behaviors for years see healthier brains in more-active people. Older folks who walk more, like a mile to two miles a day versus less than a quarter of a mile, tend to have about a 35 percent lower rate of developing Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

Kramer also states, “We find larger volumes of the areas of the brain controlling reasoning and memory, which are signs of increased brain health. And you don’t have to speed walk. Exercising by walking tends to buy you a few extra years of avoiding Alzheimer’s and other dementias. If we had a drug that would do that we’d pay anything for it.”

2. **Live Longer.** “Americans typically spend two-thirds of their day sitting,” says epidemiologist Charles Matthews. That’s equivalent to almost two full-time jobs every week. It’s a lot of sitting and it really has a negative effect on our health,” he notes. Matthews tracked 150,000 people in the NIH-AARP Diet and Health Study. Nearly half were physically active less than two hours a day. Compared to those inactive participants, study participants who walked or exercised for just one more hour a day were about 40 percent less likely to die over the next seven years. Those who did household chores, gardening, or other tasks for an additional hour were about 20 percent less likely to die.

3. **Ease Your Aching Knees.** “Mobility is really key as we age,” says Stephen Messier. An exercise like walking can help people restore some of the mobility lost because of osteoarthritis and improve quality of life. Walking for 40-60 minutes three to five times a week can reduce the pain of arthritic knees by about 30 percent. And if you combine walking with weight loss, the reduction in pain can be up to 50 percent. That’s greater than what you would get from taking NSAID medications like ibuprofen. In one study, walkers reported less pain and less difficulty with the activities of daily living than the non-exercisers. They also walked farther during a 6-minute test, could get out of a car much faster, and had stronger knees.

Because You Asked:

Q. Are raw food smoothies beneficial for weight loss and overall health?

A. Jennie Chen answers: “To have healthy and safe weight loss, the goal is to maintain satiety *(feeling full after eating)* and prevent loss of muscle while maximizing fat loss. Satiety can be achieved by consumption of proteins and high-fiber and high-volume foods. Raw food smoothies can be a great way to increase satiety by boosting fiber intake and can be a wonderful substitution for highly processed carbohydrates. But watch out for sugar content, because these smoothies can be high in sugar due to the large amounts of fruit. The 2015 Dietary Guidelines recommends two cup-equivalents of fruit per day; you could easily exceed that recommendation, depending on the recipe.”

Smoothies also contribute calories without much protein *(unless made with yogurt)*, Chen notes. “To minimize muscle loss in weight loss, maintain indispensable protein intake at a sufficient level to meet metabolic needs while reducing total calorie intake.”


Q. How much sugar in cold cereal is too much?

A. Angela Goscilo answers: “Many cold breakfast cereals contain a lot of sugar, especially those marketed to children. Be a smart consumer by reading the Nutrition Facts panel as well as the ingredient list. Look for cereals that do not list sugar as one of the first few ingredients. Remember that sugar can be listed in different terms, such as brown sugar, corn syrup, dextrose, cane sugar or honey.

"Next, check the Nutrition Facts panel for the amount of sugar. Aim for cereals that contain no more than four to six grams of sugar per serving, which is about one to one and a half teaspoons of sugar. Finally, determine what percentage of the serving size is sugar. To do so, divide the amount of sugar in grams by the total serving size, in grams, and multiply by 100. Look for cereals that are no more than 20% sugar. If sugar is your main concern, consider other breakfast options like plain yogurt, low-sugar cereals or unflavored oatmeal."

The sugar content of cereals with dried fruits, like raisins, may also be higher, Goscilo adds. But these natural sources contribute a variety of nutrients, unlike added sugars.

Source: Tufts Health & Nutrition Newsletter, April 2017
(Continued from page 2)

4 **Improve Your Mood.** Walking for exercise can help people who have been diagnosed with mild or moderate depression as much as drugs or psychotherapy sessions,” says exercise psychologist Panteleimon Ekkekakis. Exercise appears to work in a way that is similar to antidepressant medications. The drugs correct an imbalance in levels of serotonin (a chemical messenger that helps keep mood balanced). With exercise alone you see a significant increase in serotonin levels.

5 **Lower Your Risk of Cancer.** “People who are more physically active, including those who walk for exercise, are less likely to develop one of the major cancers,” says researcher Christine Friedenreich. There is consistent evidence that physical activity can reduce the risk of breast, colorectal, and endometrial cancers. Even if someone hasn’t been physically active before in their lives, they can still reduce their risk of those cancers by doing moderate-intensity activity like brisk walking.

Walking may also help cancer patients. Physical activity can be of benefit to people who have breast or colorectal cancer. It can help them recover more quickly after their treatments and it improves their quality of life. In fact, says Friedenreich, “we’re seeing 30 to 40 percent improved survival among patients treated for these cancers if they are also physically active.” Brisk walking may also lower the risk of recurrence or progression of tumors in men with prostate cancer.

6 **Strengthen Your Heart.** “A large number of epidemiological studies have consistently demonstrated that regular physical activities reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, sudden cardiac death, atrial fibrillation, and congestive heart failure,” says Howard Sesso. Exercise like walking helps the heart pump more efficiently. It also improves the strength of the heart and the responsiveness of the blood vessels to increased demands on the heart.

Exercise done at a greater intensity level is better—the more you sweat the better. But no sweat doesn’t mean no benefit. Walking around the block or hitting a shopping mall is better for your heart than sitting around the house. Don’t worry if you can’t do too much at one time. It’s the total amount that matters.

7 **Dodge Diabetes.** “If people don’t stay physically active as they get older, their muscles become insulin resistant,” says Loretta DiPietro. That means their insulin does a poor job of moving blood sugar into their muscle cells. When people reach their 70s, the pancreas doesn’t work as well as it used to, so insulin secretion becomes sluggish,” she adds. With less or less-effective insulin, blood sugar levels stay elevated for a longer time after a meal—even fasting blood sugar creeps up over the years. Exercise is very effective at improving insulin sensitivity in the muscles. *(When you exercise your muscles contract, which lets them take in blood sugar even without insulin.)*

One advantage of a longer walk: if you’re walking briskly, you may not have to do it every day. If you can consistently walk briskly for 45 minutes to 1 hour, it would train your muscles to clear glucose more efficiently, so that you might able to skip a day or two every week.” But no matter how you choose to walk, doing it consistently may delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

**Source:** *Nutrition Action Health Letter, June 2015*
Beans & Rice!

To turn either of these two easy combos into a healthy meal, just toss a salad for the red beans or pair the black beans with roasted chicken.

RED BEANS & RICE

**Ingredients**
- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- 1 yellow pepper, chopped
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added red kidney beans, drained
- 2 fully cooked chicken or turkey sausages, chopped

**Nutrition Information (Serves 4)**
**Per Serving (1½ cups):** Calories: 330; Total fat: 9g; Sat fat: 2g; Sodium: 440mg; Carbs: 45g; Fiber: 12g; Protein 19g.

BLACK BEANS & RICE

**Ingredients**
- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added black beans, drained
- ¼ cup cilantro sprigs, chopped
- 2 Tbs. Worcestershire sauce

**Nutrition Information (Serves 4)**
**Per Serving (1 cup):** Calories: 280; Total fat: 19g; Sat fat: 2.5g; Sodium: 310mg; Carbs: 24g; Fiber: 8g; Protein 7g.

Directions (for both beans & rice recipes above)
1. In a large non-stick pan, heat the oil over medium heat until shimmering hot.
2. Stir in the scallions (or onion) and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until they start to brown, 3-5 minutes.
3. Stir in the rice, beans, and sausage (or rice and beans) and heat through, 1-2 minutes
4. Stir in the remaining ingredients.


Must Have Salads!

Two very different salads—want one for dinner? Just add grilled or roasted chicken.

KALE & QUINOA SALAD

**Ingredients**
- 2 Tbs. lemon juice
- 2 Tbs. mayonnaise
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbs. dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 cups cooked warm quinoa
- 5 cups thinly sliced Tuscan or regular kale
- ¼ cup chopped smoked almonds

**Directions**
1. Make the dressing: In a large bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, mayonnaise, oil, mustard, and salt.
2. Thoroughly toss the kale with the dressing.
3. Toss the quinoa with the dressed kale, and sprinkle with the almonds.

**Nutrition Information (Serves 4)**
**Per Serving (1½ cups):** Calories: 280; Total fat: 19g; Sat fat: 2.5g; Sodium: 310mg; Carbs: 24g; Fiber: 8g; Protein 7g.

STRAWBERRY & ARUGULA SALAD

**Ingredients**
- 1 Tbs. white balsamic or red wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. honey
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 cups arugula
- ¼ cup basil leaves, chopped
- ½ avocado, chopped
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 4 radishes, thinly sliced

**Directions**
1. Make the dressing: In a large bowl, whisk together the vinegar, honey, salt, and oil.
2. Toss the arugula, basil, and avocado with the dressing, and top with the strawberries and radishes.

**Nutrition Information (Serves 2)**
**Per Serving (2 cups):** Calories: 170; Total fat: 13g; Sat fat: 1.5g; Sodium: 260mg; Carbs: 14g; Fiber: 5g; Protein 3g.

Source: Nutrition Action Health Letter, May 2017