

T-NEWS

Spring 2010

T-News, a quarterly e-newsletter providing Texercise updates, highlights, resources and fitness and nutrition related activities and opportunities.

What's New?

2010 Texas Round-Up: Helping Texans keep their New Year resolutions.

With each new year, many people make resolutions to add healthy behaviors to their daily lives. The 2010 Texas Round-Up provides a perfect opportunity to keep individuals committed to their resolutions.

On January 1, the Texas Round-Up and Governor Rick Perry kicked off the seventh annual Governor's Challenge. The challenge encourages Texans to become more active by taking part in 30 minutes of exercise, five days a week, for six weeks or any combination of 150 minutes of physical activity a week. In addition to regular exercise, the Governor's Challenge recommends people incorporate other healthy choices into their everyday routines.

To help Texans stay committed to the Governor's Challenge, Texas Round-Up provides several online tools for participants to use. To use these tools, individuals need to visit the Texas Round-Up website and create a personal profile. Once participants have made an account, they can

start logging activity times, join a team, read fitness tips and even watch exercise videos. Participants can also read success stories about former "Fittest Texans" award winners.

The Texas Round-Up will also host its seventh annual 10k, 5k and family run/walk race events on April 24. A combined 6,400 Texans ran or walked in the three races held by the 2009 Texas Round-Up. More participants are expected to attend the races this year.

To encourage participants to stay dedicated throughout the six weeks of the challenge, Texas Round-Up gives various awards. The awards are based on the completion (per capita) of the six-week activity-training program. Each award category with the highest participant completion rates will be awarded the Governor's Cup and named "Fittest in Texas."

While the challenge may only be six weeks, healthy living lasts a lifetime. For this reason, the Texas Round-Up website stays active year round to allow people to continue logging activity times even when the challenge is not going on.

Walk Across Texas!

Whether you are just starting an exercise program or not, the Texas AgriLIFE *Walk Across Texas!* program is a great way to bring physical activity into

your everyday life. This free eight-week program is designed to help Texans make a habit of regular exercise.

The program challenges Texans to "walk" the 830 miles from the east to the west borders of Texas. Contrary to the name, walking is not the only activity participants can do. *Walk Across Texas!* provides a conversion calculator for individuals to estimate the "miles walked" while performing another activity.

While individuals can participate in the program on their own, they are encouraged to join a team to create shared support. This team design is perfect for neighbors and community centers to set up walking groups.

Texercise has partnered with *Walk Across Texas!* to encourage Texans ages 45 and over to make healthy life choices by increasing their awareness of exercise and proper nutrition.

So, remember while you are walking across Texas, you are also walking toward better health.

Did You Know?

Approximately 24 million individuals are diagnosed with diabetes with an estimated 52% being aged 60 or over.¹

Participation in regular physical activity can help lower the risk of developing diabetes and high blood pressure.²

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National diabetes fact sheet: general information and national estimates on diabetes in the United States, 2007*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008.

² Department of Health and Human Services. *Healthy people 2010: Understanding and improving health*, ed. 2: November, 2000.

Facing the Facts about Diabetes.

With an estimated one million people diagnosed and another half a million undiagnosed, diabetes is a major health concern for Texans. Diabetes, the seventh leading cause of death in the United States, is a disease in which the body inadequately produces or utilizes insulin, hindering the metabolism of carbohydrates and causing blood sugar levels to become elevated.

Diabetes can affect people of all ages, genders and races; however, people who have a family history of diabetes are more likely than others to be diagnosed with the disease. Other risk factors include being overweight, low activity levels, high blood pressure and age. Also, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and Asians are more at risk for diabetes.

According to the National Diabetes Fact Sheet posted on the American Diabetes Association website, in 2007, approximately \$174 billion were spent on diagnosed diabetes. Of the total cost of diabetes, an

estimated 67% was spent on direct medical costs, with \$58 billion being spent on indirect costs such as disability, work loss and premature mortality.

Treatment of diabetes is a multi-faceted solution. Medications are typically prescribed and in some cases insulin injections are required. It is also recommended that people with diabetes start a health program. The program should consist of regular physical activity and proper nutrition. Before diabetics start a fitness and nutrition routine, they should follow certain procedures to make sure the program is safe for them to do. Always talk to a doctor before beginning an exercise or diet program.

Our next issue of T-News will have more information on how to exercising and eat healthy with diabetes.

For more information on diabetes visit the American Diabetes Association website at <http://www.diabetes.org> or the Texas Diabetes Council website at <http://dshs.state.tx.us/diabetes>.

Texercise Team and Community Program Highlights

New 2010 Texercise Programs Across Texas

Many Texas communities provide 12-week Texercise programs to help their residents engage in regular physical activity and form social support networks. These are a few community program highlights.

Eleven **Tarrant County Senior Centers** have taken the 12-week challenge. With a total of 330 participants, they are starting 2010 on the right path.

Texercise has built relationships with many Parks and Recreation Departments in Texas. The **Houston Parks and Recreation Department** has embraced Texercise as part of their activities and launched a 12-week program in January with 362 participants signing up for the challenge.

Longview, Texas is at it again. After winning the 2009 Texas Round-Up "Fittest City" award with over 500 older adults participating, the senior citizens of Longview have geared up for another 12-week Texercise program. How many will participate this year and will they win the coveted title again? Stay tuned to find out.

The **MedTeams in Brownsville and San Antonio** have both started Texercise 12-week programs in their communities that have made a huge impact. The San Antonio MedTeam launched three separate programs with more than 138 participants. The MedTeam in Brownsville recently met their midpoint mark with a staggering 228 participants. Congratulations to both teams for the outstanding accomplishments – keep up the good work!

Shape Up Sugar Land Award Ceremony

Every year Nicole Volek, a geriatric physical therapist with Weston Group, holds a community wide 12-week

Texercise program for Sugar Land seniors. Nicole's collaborative spirit and enthusiasm for health motivates assisted living facilities, senior centers, nursing homes, fitness centers and other area organizations to participate in the 12-week program. A highlight of this annual event is the annual award ceremony. This year's ceremony was held January 22 with more than 300 in attendance.

The award ceremony provided participants with useful resources and information from guest speakers and vendors. This event also allowed the participants an opportunity to continue being physically active by participating in some interactive tai chi and jazzercise demonstrations.

The "Shape Up Sugar Land" Award Ceremony ended with the presentation of the Leadership and Most Resourceful Person awards and all Texercise participants receiving their certificate of completion and Texercise t-shirt.

Upcoming Events

The Dallas Family Fitness Festival

May is Older Americans Month and what better way to celebrate than having a family festival? The City of Dallas Parks and Recreation Department will be hosting the Family Fitness Festival at the Cotton Bowl sometime in May. Texercise will be showcased at the festival as a resource to

encourage older family members to stay active as they age.

Partnership Activities

Texas Retired Teachers Association

The Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA) featured a great Texercise article in their newsletter, *The Voice*. The article, which highlighted Texercise and the importance of physical activity, created lots of interest from retired teachers all over Texas. While several retired teachers have requested materials for themselves, many local TRTA chapters have implemented 12-week Texercise programs with approximately 180 currently participating.

The Brownwood TRTA group has members ranging in age all the way up to 92 years old! The group participates in Texercise by line dancing at the local church four days a week.

Texas AgriLIFE

In 2009, the Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service and DADS began expanding their partnership to enhance the public's awareness and access to wellness and volunteer opportunities available through the agencies.

The agencies' Texercise and *Walk Across Texas!* programs have recommitted their partnership to provide Texans 45 and older with the resources, motivation and team camaraderie available through

the two programs to improve health and quality of life. Several extension offices that have already begun using the partnerships resources to start community programs include:

- Grapevine
- Colleyville
- Keller
- Denton
- Lewisville

Another key component of the partnership is developing volunteer opportunities in Texas. AgriLIFE's 4-H and DADS' Silver Lining program are collaborating to create opportunities for 4-H youth to volunteer in Texas' long-term care facilities through Silver Lining. Volunteers in the programs visit residents in Texas' assisted living centers, nursing homes and state supported living centers to provide life-enriching activities for everyone involved.

Other community organizations participating in the AgriLIFE DADS partnership include Area Agencies on Aging, mayor's fitness councils and aging and disability service providers.

Resources and Links

Check out the new Texercise website! www.texercise.com

Texas Round-Up
www.texasroundup.org

Walk Across Texas!
<http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu>

Texas Retired Teachers Association www.trta.org

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