



# 30 WAYS TO A HEALTHIER NEW YOU.

Try these easy tips to get started.

Looking for ways to get healthier this year? Here are 30 of them. Whether you want to lose a few pounds, get a better night's sleep, manage your stress or anything in between, these health tips can get you started.

## HEALTHY EATING

- 1. Choose good fats.** Stick to monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats like those found in avocados, nuts, fish, olive oil and seeds (sesame, pumpkin and flax). Avoid trans fats, which tend to be in processed foods, and limit saturated fats.
- 2. Go nuts.** Grab a handful of nuts like pistachios, walnuts or almonds. They're rich in good fats, fiber, folic acid and other good nutrients.
- 3. Drink more water.** Make today the day you start drinking enough water. Use your thirst as your guide. Mix it up and add fruit or herbs to your water for a great calorie-free way to satisfy your thirst.
- 4. Get your probiotics.** Start your morning with a yogurt or a probiotic drink like kefir. The live bacteria help aid digestion and balance the "good" and "bad" bacteria in your stomach.
- 5. Limit sodium (salt) to less than 2,300 mg a day.<sup>1</sup>** It adds up fast, so watch out for packaged foods that are high in it. Salt contains sodium chloride which is listed on food labels as just sodium.
- 6. Choose dark chocolate.** Dark chocolate with cocoa contains flavonoids, which may help reduce risk factors for heart disease when it is part of a healthy lifestyle. So as a special treat enjoy dark chocolate with at least 70% cocoa content. But keep in mind that 1.5 ounces of dark chocolate can contain 200 calories or more.

## EXERCISE

- 7. Step to it.** Walking can be an important part of your aerobic exercise plan. Every week, try to get a total of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise like brisk walking or 1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity like jogging or running. You can also mix these activities and do them 10 minutes at a time.<sup>2</sup>
- 8. Do things differently.** Walk a new route to the bus stop, to work or the grocery store. You'll get exercise and stimulate your mind by seeing new things.
- 9. Take a break.** After one hour at the computer, do five minutes of brisk exercise — like fast walking, stair climbing or jumping jacks.
- 10. Take a hike.** Grab your spouse or a friend for a long walk or a hike through a park or preserve. Walking is good for your heart, lungs and mental health.
- 11. Desk-ercise.** Stand at your desk during the day. Move or walk in place while on calls and take advantage of a treadmill station if it's available.
- 12. Walk it out.** Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Walk over to a coworker rather than emailing them. Find a parking spot far from the entrance to your building. These may seem like little things, but they're easy to do and the extra steps add up quickly.

Together, all the way.®



## STRESS MANAGEMENT

- 13. Smile.** It may sound silly, but people respond more positively to you if you smile. Also, laughing is good for you and may even improve your immune system.<sup>3</sup>
- 14. Be kind.** Take a friend to the movies or surprise a loved one with flowers. Being nice to others boosts your own happiness.
- 15. Use the phone.** Pick up the phone and call (don't text) someone you haven't spoken with in a while. It will make you feel good.
- 16. Escape.** Wish you were somewhere else? Close your eyes and pretend. Just five minutes of visualizing yourself swinging in a hammock on a sandy beach can help relax you.
- 17. Rub it in.** Getting a massage with aromatherapy oils is relaxing and good for you. So ask a loved one or close friend to rub your shoulders.
- 18. Ask for help.** If you have a lot on your to-do list, figure out what you can hand off to other people.

## WEIGHT LOSS

- 19. Sign a contract.** Write down how much weight you want to lose and by when. Make it realistic — like a pound per week. Also, jot down exactly how you'll change your eating and exercise habits.
- 20. Keep track.** Keeping a food diary keeps you accountable for everything you eat — from that extra slice of cheese on your sandwich to the slice of cake at the office party.
- 21. Remind yourself.** Write down the reasons why you want to lose weight — to prevent heart disease or type 2 diabetes, set a good example for your kids, or fit into your skinny jeans. Post it on your refrigerator as a constant reminder.
- 22. Keep score.** Set small goals for yourself, like losing five pounds, cutting out sugary sodas or giving up dessert for a week. Reward yourself with a non-food treat when you reach each goal.

- 23. Get active.** Try joining a basketball league or signing up for a dance fitness class.
- 24. Share the snacks.** Want to get high-calorie snacks out of your kitchen? Bring them over to a neighbor's house to share. Or better yet, just buy healthy snacks and keep the junk food out of your house.

## SLEEP

- 25. Stick to a schedule.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. It helps put your body into a healthy rhythm and gets your biological clock on schedule.
- 26. Be empty-headed.** Got a lot on your mind? Get it out. Keep a notebook by your bed and jot down your thoughts before bedtime. Clearing your mind before bed may help you sleep better.
- 27. Cut out caffeine.** Avoid caffeinated coffee, tea or soda before bedtime. Try decaf coffee, herbal tea or hot water with lemon. Cutting back on caffeine may help you fall asleep easier.
- 28. Relax before bedtime.** Don't exercise late in the day. Avoid eating too much late at night. And try not to drink anything too close to bedtime.
- 29. Set the mood.** Make your bedroom the ideal spot for sleep. Quiet any loud noises, dim the lights and make up a comfortable bed. Limit screen time from TV or computers right before bed as it can impact your sleep.
- 30. Rise and shine.** Now that you're well rested, set your alarm clock 30 minutes earlier than normal. And move it across the room so you have to get up to turn it off. Use the extra time to stretch, read the paper or exercise.



### Sources:

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. "2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans" 8th Edition. December 2015. <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015> (accessed May 23, 2016)
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "How much physical activity do adults need?" <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/> (last reviewed/updated June 4, 2015)
3. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. "Stress Management." <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456?pg=2> (accessed May 25, 2016)

This is intended to be general health information and not medical advice or services. You should consult your doctor for medical advice or services, including seeking advice prior to undertaking a new diet or exercise program.

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