



101 tips for body, mind, & spirit

THE NEW YEAR IS ALMOST HERE: WHAT BETTER TIME TO NOURISH YOURSELF INSIDE AND OUT? OUR FUN ROUNDUP OF 101 HEALTHY HABITS WILL INSPIRE YOU AND HELP YOU LOOK AND FEEL BETTER—NATURALLY

By Lisa Turner



1

Eat superfoods.

Focus on foods instead of just supplements. Seven to eat every day: prunes, blueberries, spinach, tomatoes, broccoli, nuts, and pumpkin.

2. Build in workouts. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, park your car at the far end of the parking lot, and bike or walk to shop and run errands.

3. Breathe deep—often. Post small reminder notes saying BREATHE ON your computer, car dashboard, and bathroom mirror.

4. Do cardio. Aim for about 20 to 30 minutes per day, three to five times per week. Choose something you enjoy so you'll stick with it: brisk walking, bicycling, skating, skiing.

5. Supplement. If your diet is lacking, take the essentials: a multi-vitamin and mineral, a high-quality fish oil, and a broad-spectrum antioxidant blend.

6. Focus on fiber. Better than bran: fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, especially beans, lentils, Brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, turnips, raspberries, and flax.

7. Tone your liver. Artichokes and bitter greens help cleanse this vital organ; milk thistle is thought to remove harmful substances from the liver and repair damaged cells.

8. Men: Protect your prostate. Three herbs shown to help ease and prevent benign prostatic hyperplasia are saw palmetto, pygeum, and stinging nettle. Find a formula that includes all three for natural relief.

9. Cut back on saturated fats.

Found in butter and animal products, they're linked to heart disease and inflammation. Substitute heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, especially olive and canola oils.

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Build immunity with foods rich in beta-carotene, selenium, and vitamin C.

The best: pumpkin, strawberries, tomato sauce, garlic, pinto beans, and bell peppers.

11. Work out at work. Replace your coffee break with an exercise break: Keep a jump rope in your desk drawer, jog in place for 10 minutes in your office, or ride your bike on your lunch hour.

12. Get enough calcium to keep bones healthy. Good sources include low-fat dairy products, collard greens, broccoli, kale, and firm tofu. Take a calcium supplement—800 to 1,000 mg per day—if you're deficient.

13. Drink in moderation. Too much alcohol damages the heart and liver and increases the risk of cancer and pancreatitis. Limit consumption to one or two drinks per day.

14. Keep eyes healthy. Wear sunglasses, make sure work areas are well lit, and take breaks from computer or eye-straining work.

15. Steer clear of trans fats, which dramatically increase the risk of heart disease. They're found in margarine and foods that contain partially hydrogenated fats.

16. Stretch—before and after exercise. It helps prevent injury and strain, and increases your range of motion and flexibility.

17. Dance. Take jazz lessons, join a salsa class, or play danceable music at home. Dancing moves your whole body, stimulates circulation, and strengthens heart and lungs.

18. Go green. Even veggie eaters may not get enough greens. Add them with instant green beverages; invest in a juicer and juice your own wheatgrass; keep single-serve envelopes in your car or desk drawer to add to juice.

19. Munch on berries. They're rich in healing antioxidants. Fresh or frozen, scatter them on cereal and salads; use in smoothies and baking; jazz up sparkling water by adding in place of ice.

Get grounded.

Several times a day, feel your feet on the ground, and take 10 deep breaths, imagining the breath coming through your feet. Also, hike, spend time in a garden, and let the sun shine on your face.

21. Build stronger bones. Weight-bearing exercises, including push-ups and pull-ups, are best. You can also try jogging, dancing, or tennis.

22. Don't skip meals. Have three meals and two healthful snacks to keep blood sugar steady, burn fat, and regulate cholesterol.

23. Flatten your abs. Strong belly muscles protect the lower back. You don't need fancy gym equipment; simple crunches work best.

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24. Prevent skin cancer. Wear a hat, slather on a natural sunscreen year-round, and take sun-protective antioxidants; try vitamins A, C, and E, alpha-lipoic acid, and Pycnogenol.

25. Protect skin. Use natural cosmetics free of parabens—preservatives that have estrogenic properties and have been loosely implicated in increased cancer risk.

26. Watch your GI. High GI (glycemic index) foods—e.g., bread, pasta, cookies—cause a spike in blood sugar. Low GI foods—e.g., lean proteins and vegetables—slow insulin release and help control hunger. Get details at glycemicindex.com.

27. Check it out. Regular checkups and tests—mammograms, pap smears, and colon cancer screening—may save your life. Don't skip them.

28. Jump on it. Use a mini-trampoline for an efficient, no-excuses workout; it's great for boosting circulation and promoting lymph health.

29. Make snacks count. Think of them as mini-meals: a hard-boiled egg, a sliced apple with almond butter, hummus with red pepper strips for dipping, or a handful of nuts.

30 Eat less meat. Studies have linked high meat consumption with heart disease, cancer, and inflammation. Alternate with vegetarian protein such as beans, nuts, eggs, and tofu.

31. Meditate. Sit comfortably, close your eyes, and just listen to your breath. Repeat "relax." You will.

32. Take a break from coffee. Tired after 2 p.m.? Skip the coffee break, and exercise instead to boost oxygen to the brain. Or try a healthful energy fix, such as green tea, ginseng, ashwagandha, or reishi mushroom.

33. Get some om time. Add yoga to your daily routine. Even 20 minutes a day makes a difference. Take a class or invest in some good DVDs. Visit gaiam.com for ideas.

34. Take vitamin D. It may save your life. New studies show that ordinary doses of vitamin D supplements are linked to decreases in total mortality.

35 Journal. Get your emotions out of your head and on paper. Write down worries before bed, then sleep peacefully with an empty mind.

36. Hydrate. Keep a bottle or pitcher full of filtered water on your desk or in your car, and sip throughout the day.

37. Eat more veggies. Have a big salad with five or six veggies every day, keep frozen vegetables on hand for fast meal additions.

38. Focus on fish. It's low in calories, and high in protein and healthful oils. Visit oceansalive.org for an updated list of safe fish.

39. Floss—and not just for a brighter smile. Research shows that people with severe gum disease are more likely to develop heart disease.

40. De-stress. Chronic stress increases heart rate and blood pressure. Find ways to reduce stress that work for you: meditation, relaxing music, or frequent short vacations.

Skip the sugar. It's linked to blood sugar swings, inflammation, irritability, and fatigue.

"Natural" sweeteners like honey and agave have the same effect. Sweeten foods and beverages with a small amount of stevia, derived from a South American herb.

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42. Go jump in the lake. Swimming strengthens muscles, increases endurance, and burns fat.

43. Vent. Release frustration before it builds up; studies consistently show that anger, hostility, and anxiety increase risk of heart disease and death.

44. Create a soothing home environment. Play calming music, place plants and flowers throughout, light candles, and keep lighting soft.

45. Stop smoking. Now. For holistic resources, visit carasac.org.

46. Remember breakfast. It kick-starts your metabolism. Make sure it contains protein for long-term energy.

47. Think positively. Emotion follows thought; if you're thinking happy thoughts, you feel inspired and uplifted.



48. Eat beans. They're high in fiber, low in fat, and loaded with protein. Have at least half a cup a day on salads, in soups, or as hummus dip.

49. Socialize. Studies show social interaction is related to improved

health. Join a book club, take a class, or go to wine tastings.

50 Clean up your act. Most common household cleaners and laundry detergents are loaded with toxic chemicals that harm humans and the environment. Stick to natural products.

51. Have a healing salad. Dark leafy greens, carrots, red cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, red peppers, tomatoes, avocado, garbanzo beans, and a handful of nuts, dressed with a little olive oil. Need we say more?

52. Love your work. If you dread it, it's time for a change.

Practice clean living. Eat an organic diet, embrace a spiritual practice, don't drink to excess, and don't smoke.

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54. Go nuts. Studies show they reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes, and other conditions. Best picks: almonds and walnuts.

55. Learn why tart is smart for pain. Tart cherry juice extract and capsules help fight gout and arthritis, and reduce inflammation.

56. Sleep. It's essential for health. Got insomnia? Try snooze-inducing supplements like valerian, passionflower, GABA, melatonin, L-tryptophan, or a warm cup of chamomile tea.

57. Women: Clear up UTIs naturally. Alternatives to UTI antibiotics include cranberries and D-mannose, a sugar molecule, whose supplemental form has been shown to inhibit bacteria from adhering to the urinary tract.

58. Drink smoothies. You can squeeze five servings of fruit into one of these power-packed beverages.

59. Pray. Certain kinds of prayer—especially repetitive prayers or mantras—lower stress hormones, improve blood pressure, and boost brain function.

60 Play ball. Tennis, squash, badminton, and racquetball are great high-energy sports—even if you don't hit the ball much, you'll spend lots of time running.

61. Eat olive oil. It has anti-inflammatory benefits, and reduces the risk of cancer and heart disease.

62. Nurture your creative side. Take painting classes, join a singing group, or write poetry. It keeps your heart young.

63. Help others. Volunteer at homeless shelters, visit senior centers, or donate to your favorite charity. Studies suggest altruists live longer, happier lives.



And when we think less about ourselves and more about the well-being of others, says the Dalai Lama, we enhance our own growth and happiness.

or have dinner with your silliest friend.

64 Smile, even when you're unhappy. More uplifting emotions often follow a conscious grin.

65. Avoid plastics. They contain endocrine-disrupting chemicals. Store food in glass containers, use metal drinking bottles, skip plastic wrap, and never heat plastic in the microwave.

66. Be nice to yourself. Banish criticism, self-judgment, and negative self talk from your internal vocabulary. Would you talk that way to a friend?

67. Cut out gluten. It can cause digestive disorders, headaches, joint pain, irritability, and fatigue. Visit glutenfree.com and celiac.com for more information.

68. Eat less, live longer. Studies show that reducing calories (without cutting out crucial nutrients) can increase life span, halt inflammation, and reduce the risk of heart disease.

69. Get a massage. Therapeutic massage reduces stress and anxiety, boosts blood and lymph circulation, and can treat a variety of specific conditions.

70. Make room for minerals. Minerals, particularly magnesium, zinc, and chromium, are often deficient in our diets. Replenish stores of these vital nutrients with powdered or liquid versions for optimal absorption.

71. Detox. Simple ways to cleanse: a two-day vegetable juice and water fast; a two-week raw-foods regimen; or a lifelong commitment to banishing sugar, caffeine, tobacco, and food additives.

72. Laugh. It lowers stress hormones and relaxes muscles. Rent a funny movie, visit a comedy club, take an improv class,

73. Spice up your life. Pungent and aromatic spices have healing properties and add calorie-free flavor to food. Some to try: turmeric, ginger, garlic, and cayenne.

74. Get stuck. Acupuncture has proven physical and psychological benefits. For more on this 2,000-year-old tradition, visit acupuncture.com.

75. Avoid artificial sweeteners. There's not enough information on long-term health risks, and short-term news isn't good. Try stevia instead, and learn to enjoy food with less sweetener.

76. Know your BMI. Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of percentage of fat on your body, a good predictor of disease. Visit nhlbisupport.com/bmi to learn more.

77. Drink tea. Both green and black teas contain cancer-fighting compounds and have less caffeine than coffee.

78. Have sex. It keeps relationships strong and reduces stress. Keep your loving to one partner: STDs adversely affect health.

79. Eat chocolate. Dark chocolate—70 percent cocoa or more—is low in sugar and high in antioxidants.

80 Ride a bike. Using it to commute or run errands will save on fuel, build muscles, strengthen your heart and lungs, and get you moving outside.

81. Get on the ball. Using an exercise ball instead of a desk chair helps prevent slumping and pain-inducing postures, and helps your body make small strengthening adjustments.



82. Visualize success. Whether it's career, relationships, or health, envision the outcome you most desire; you'll be more likely to get it if you can see it.

83. Go raw. Raw foods are rich in enzymes. Add several servings of raw fruit and a big green salad every day.

84. Keep your mind sharp. Ditch the alcohol in favor of green tea or pomegranate juice; eat berries daily and two servings of fish per week.

85 Get some feedback. Biofeedback can teach you to control blood pressure, heart rate, and muscle tension to benefit mental and physical problems. Check out biofeedback.net for info.

86. Exercise your mental muscles. An agile mind may keep you healthier. Choose new, stimulating activities: learn a foreign language, read challenging books, play chess, or memorize poems.

87. Slow aging. There's no magic bullet, but studies suggest certain supplements can help. Two to try: DHEA and melatonin. Other longevity boosters: fish oil, glutathione, cordyceps mushrooms, and cat's claw.

88. Stay Natural. Avoid processed foods; most contain artificial flavors, colors, and preservatives.

89. Retreat. Take a three-day break from the world. Banish TV, newspapers, and phones; do yoga and deep breathing, and meditate.

90. Get lovely locks. Massage scalp with tinctures of birch, horsetail, and rosemary to stimulate hair growth and keep hair shiny and strong.

91. Try homeopathy. This gentle form of medicine heals both physical and emotional symptoms. To learn more, visit well-known homeopath Dana Ullman's Web site, homeopathic.com.

92. Start now for heart health. A new study shows it's never too late. People aged 45 to 64 who add new, healthful lifestyle behaviors can significantly reduce death rate. Visit drsinatra.com for an alternative perspective.

93. Take a siesta. An afternoon nap

revives faster than a cuppa joe. No time to snooze? Close your eyes and recline for 15 minutes, listening to your breath.

94. Use natural deodorants. Mainstream brands contain potentially harmful chemicals. Look for nontoxic varieties with mineral salts, potassium, and herbal astringents.

95. Get personal with training. A certified personal trainer can increase motivation, show you new moves, and personalize your workout.

96. Stock up on C. Make vitamin C your go-to supplement for more energy, smoother skin, and stronger immunity.

97. Make a spa date. Instead of the movies, treat yourself to a spa visit. Even a 30-minute facial, brow wax, or pedicure will leave you feeling pampered.

98 Cleanse skin from within. A tea of burdock root, oat straw, milk thistle, and red clover can help remove impurities and keep skin breakout free.

99. Sip some rooibos. This favorite African red tea has a sweet, honey-like flavor and is high in antioxidants. Best of all, it's naturally caffeine free.

100. Make scents. Perfumes contain phthalates and petrochemicals. Concoct your own natural fragrances with pure essential oils. Try a mix of lavender, jasmine, and ylang-ylang.

101. Be environmentally conscious. Recycle, compost, use less, and buy in bulk—at home and at the office. Visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Web site at epa.gov for practical tips. □

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