

November/December 2017

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Winter Wonders
On a Plate

Nutrition



In this Issue...

The role of our
gut in our overall
health

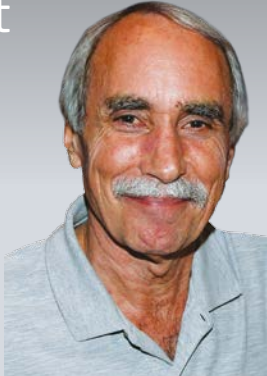
Altruism: Help
Yourself by
Helping Others

Through the Eyes
of a Child



In this Issue...

Why Counting
Calories Often Misses
the Point
02



Nutritional News
03



Benefits of Dance
04



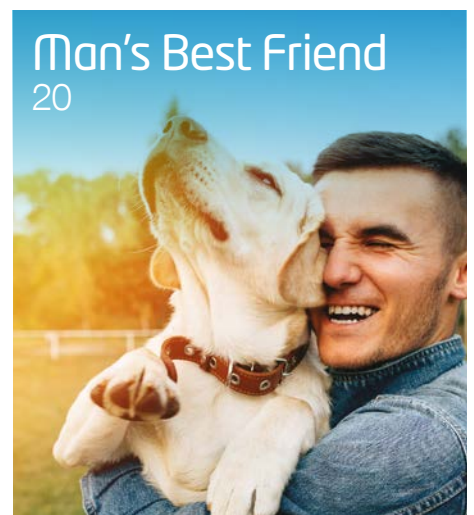
Winter Wonders on
a Plate
12



Post-Workout
Nutrition
14



Man's Best Friend
20



02 **Why Counting Calories Often Misses the Point**

03 **Nutritional News**

04 **Fitness**
Benefits of Dance

06 **Feature Article**
The Role of Our Gut
Microbiome in Our
Overall Health

10 **Lifestyle**
Altruism: Help Yourself
by Helping Others

12 **Nutrition**
Winter Wonders on
a Plate

14 **Feature Article**
Post-Workout Nutrition

18 **Herbs and Supplements**
Periwinkle—The Powerful
Purple Flower

20 **Family Health**
Man's Best Friend

22 **Family Health**
Staying Fit with Age

24 **Family Health**
Through the Eyes
of a Child

26 **Family Health**
Boost Your Winter Skin
Care Regimen

29 **Ask the Expert**

Why Counting Calories Often Misses the Point

Do you ever find yourself eating dessert just because you know you exercised earlier in the day? Or have you even gone for a run because you had to burn off the calories you consumed from an unhealthy dinner? If you have, you're not alone. Many of us think of calories and exercise in terms of a simple math problem. If I consume x number of calories, I need to run y number of miles.

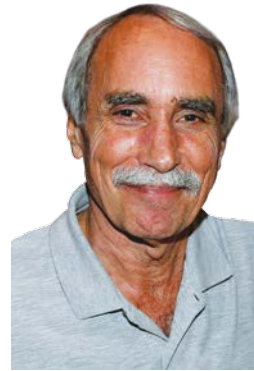
There are a few reasons this isn't the best way to view diet and exercise. First, we very often miscalculate the number of calories we consume. And we very often miscalculate the amount of exercise it will take to burn those calories. So from the very start, our "math" is often wrong. We eat more than we think, and we don't exercise enough to burn off the excess calories.

Secondly, diet and exercise shouldn't be working against each other. They should complement each other. A healthy diet should provide the amount of fat and calories your body needs for your level of physical activity, while also providing you with the nutritional support you need for optimum health in all other areas. Diet, as well as exercise, should add to your body's health, not subtract from it.

Rather than looking at diet in terms of good or bad, and as exercise in terms of just burning calories to shed fat, we should strive to think about diet and exercise holistically as parts of a lifestyle that make us feel good, give us energy and keep us healthy.

When we give up counting calories, we can more freely allow the occasional indulgence without fretting about how many additional miles we must run—and again, this stops us from viewing diet and exercise as opponents.

Diet and exercise are partners that work with each other. When we frame the relationship this way, we stop counting calories and worrying about equations. We instead get to experience the amazing synergistic effects that good food and energy-boosting exercise have on our bodies and our minds!



Dwight L. McKee M.D.

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Nutritional News

A Better Night's Sleep

Turn off your smartphone and tablet in the evening as early as possible before going to bed for a better night of sleep. The blue light emitted from electronic devices has been linked to disruption of melatonin production and sleep. Most LED-based devices emit some of the same short wavelengths that come from the sun, which normally tells our bodies when it is time to be awake. Artificial sources such as phones, tablets and computers used in the bedroom are disrupting sleep patterns. For a better night of deeper sleep, remove all light sources from the bedroom and avoid using electronic devices after the sun goes down. With today's popularity of LED light sources, these need to be turned off as much as possible. Most of them emit blue light. Research them before you buy. Some emit a "soft" light in the yellow range, more similar to the incandescent bulbs we have used for decades.



Exercising Outdoors Is Good for Your Mental Health

It's worth the effort to brave the temperature and walk or run outside during these colder months, according to research that says exercising outdoors can help stave off depression. A systematic review of exercise habits found that those who get their physical activity outdoors, rather than in the home or at a gym, experience greater feelings of revitalization and positive engagement, as well as decreases in tension, confusion, anger and depression.

Keeping Proper Mental Focus

Feeling they have a purpose in life appears to help people age healthier. According to a new study published in JAMA Psychiatry, the extent to which people see their lives as having meaning, a sense of direction and goals directly influences their ability to maintain their function and independence as they age. This is yet another reason why keeping proper mental focus through life is so important to our health and well-being.

Sugary Drinks vs. Water

There is yet another reason to replace soda, sports drinks and sugary juices with water—especially at the dinner table. Protein, which is essential for optimum health and a critical component of muscle tissue, is a healthy part of any diet. However, when protein is combined with sugar, research shows, the body decreases thermogenesis (heat production), which leads to fewer calories being burned and more fat being stored by the body.



Sugar and Depression

Too much dietary sugar may lead to depression or anxiety, according to a new study out of University College London. After studying over 8,000 individuals, researchers found that those who consumed more sugar from snacks and sweet drinks such as soda were 23 percent more likely to develop depression or anxiety.



Benefits of Dance

Turn up the music and get moving, because dancing is a great way for people of all ages to stay physically fit and emotionally healthy.

Whether you prefer slower-paced waltzes at a community center or up-tempo club dancing during a night out, your body and mind will benefit in numerous ways from regular dance sessions.

Dancing is a fun workout for everyone, at every age, because the health benefits are wide-reaching. Of course, there are the obvious physical benefits from dance such as toned muscles, increased balance, improved cardiovascular health, weight management and more. There are also less obvious benefits, such as better spatial awareness, better mood, increased confidence and improved mental functioning.^{1,2}

Dancing is great for the brain. It helps protect against age-related degeneration of cerebral white matter, boosts mood and improves cognitive flexibility and speed.

Researchers attribute this to dance's combination of cognitive, physical and social training—all three of which positively impact the body and mind.^{3,4}

In a study that examined mood changes after a person dances, researchers found that dancing elicited positive feelings. However, it appears that recreational dancers experience a bigger boost to their mood after dancing than do competitive dancers. This could be due to the stress involved with competition. But anyone who is simply dancing for exercise or fun can expect to come off the dance floor feeling better physically and mentally.⁵

After the music stops, don't let go of those positive feelings. Focus on them and let them guide you and attract more positive feelings and actions in your life, even after you leave the dance floor.

Another way dancing helps with cognitive health and mood is by introducing you to new social experiences. Dancing is a great way to make new friends, and there is no better way to exercise your brain than by engaging in conversations with new people. And chances are good that if you are out dancing for fitness, the new friends you make are doing the same. Attracting more like-minded, positive-focused people in your life has its own set of rewards.

Dancing can also drastically improve your muscle tone, strength, endurance, balance and overall physical fitness.



This is true for anyone at any age engaged in any style of dance, although the more physically intense the form or style you choose, the greater the amount of physical exercise you will get.

Dancing requires continuous exertion, making it a great cardiovascular exercise. It also often requires dancers to maneuver into difficult postures, jumps and movements that give muscles a resistance workout. In this way, dancing can help develop strength and tone muscles, especially in the legs, buttocks and stomach.

¹ Duberg A, Hagberg L, Sunvissan H, Möller M. Influencing Self-rated Health Among Adolescent Girls With Dance Intervention: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2013;167(1):27–31.

² Jimison, Robert. Why dancing is good for your health. CNN. Cable News Network, 08 June 2017.

³ AZ Burzynska, Y Jiao, AM Knecht, et al. White Matter Integrity Declined Over 6 Months, but Dance Intervention Improved Integrity of the Fornix of Older Adults. *Front. Aging Neurosci.*, 16 March 2017.

⁴ Coubard, Olivier A. et al. Practice of Contemporary Dance Improves Cognitive Flexibility in Aging. *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience* 3 (2011): 13. PMC. Web. 14 Aug. 2017.

⁵ Marcin Zajenkowski, Konrad S. Jankowski, Daria Kolata. Let's dance – feel better! Mood changes following dancing in different situations. *European Journal of Sport Science* Vol. 15, Iss. 7, 2015.



Similar to yoga and tai chi, dancing is a powerful tool for improving balance and flexibility.

Many dance moves require balancing on one foot, stepping in unexpected directions and holding positions that require a lot of balance and concentration.

Learning proper forms for various dances can also improve overall posture to help prevent hunched shoulders and a weakened lower spine. While there is no need for formal training from an instructor to benefit from dancing, having an instructor may help maximize these benefits, as a teacher will help you learn the proper forms and movements that help with posture.

Before lacing up your shoes, decide why you want to dance and what form it will take. Ask yourself, do I want to dance to improve my fitness, flexibility, coordination or mood? Do I prefer slow or fast dancing? Do I want to join a group, or have private lessons? There is no right or wrong answer to any of these questions. But if you better understand your personal reasons, desires and goals, you are much more likely to make dancing a regular part of your life.

You can dance alone, with a partner or in a group. You can do it at home, at the club, in a gym, onstage or anywhere else. Lace up your shoes and “cut a rug,” because dancing will help keep you healthy and happy for years to come.

The Role of Our Gut Microbiome in Our Overall Health

We usually think of bacteria as something negative that causes disease. But there are plenty of good bacteria too. You may not be aware of it, but your body is home to an entire ecosystem of bacteria working to keep you healthy.



Within our digestive tracts lives a complex community of over 100 trillion microbial cells. Collectively referred to as gut flora or the gut microbiome, these tiny organisms help keep our digestive system functioning well, help regulate metabolism, boost immune function, fight against obesity and generally work to keep our entire bodies healthy. Researchers even believe that gut flora can affect our brains.^{1,2}

Large-scale changes to once-healthy gut flora have been associated with obesity. And gut flora seem to be responsive to weight loss as well. It appears our metabolisms are impacted by gut flora. Specifically, the health of your gut flora can impact inflammation, insulin resistance and how energy is stored as fat—three key areas related to obesity.

Researchers believe healthy diet and lifestyle changes can help restore a healthy gut flora population which may help combat obesity.³

The link between gut health and the brain is now so established that the phrase *microbiome-gut-brain axis*, which refers to the biochemical signaling back and forth between the brain and gut, is now common. The axis consists of more than just brain and gut; it also includes the neuroendocrine and neuroimmune systems, the autonomic nervous system and other parts of the body. Since so much of the nervous system is connected so closely to the gut, it's easy to see that an unhealthy gut flora could somehow impede communication and disrupt brain function.

Since the connection was initially discovered, evidence has quickly piled up showing just how strong the link is. Studies have seen healthy gut flora exert a positive influence on everything from stress and depression to genetic conditions such as autism. While boosting your healthy gut flora colony is not a cure for severe mental conditions, the evidence of how deeply a healthy gut can impact brain function is leading more and more scientists to research this new discovery.^{4,5}

Healthy gut flora populations work in tandem with the immune system to keep unwanted bugs out of our bodies. When able to fully colonize the area, the community of healthy bacteria in your gut defends against pathogens by making use of all available nutrients. In other words, they starve out unhealthy bacteria. Some healthy gut flora also secrete compounds that kill or inhibit unwelcome organisms that can cause illness or disease.⁶

Without gut flora, our bodies would not be able to fully utilize the foods we eat. Some types of gut flora produce enzymes that our bodies cannot produce—enzymes required to break down certain nutrients, including certain starches, fiber, oligosaccharides and sugars.⁷

You can help increase the good bacteria in your gut by consuming more probiotics, which are live bacteria and yeasts. When the good bacteria flourish, resources are taken away from the bad bacteria, which further helps keep your body healthy.

Probiotics are found in fermented foods. In the dairy section, you can find yogurt and kefir—foods made with live active cultures. If you prefer spicier foods, Korean kimchi uses lactic acid fermentation to turn cabbage into a spicy, pungent side dish full of probiotics. Similarly, sauerkraut is a fermented cabbage dish. Look for “live cultures” on the label for the most gut-friendly version. Tempeh, sourdough bread, miso paste and cultured soy milk are also probiotic-rich options.



You can also drink your probiotics. A daily cup of kombucha tea will help ensure a constant supply of probiotics are entering your gut.

Kombucha is a tangy, fizzy, fermented drink with a slight vinegar taste. Or you can try kvass, a fermented beet juice from Russia.

¹ Guinane, Cairiona M., and Paul D. Cotter. Role of the Gut Microbiota in Health and Chronic Gastrointestinal Disease: Understanding a Hidden Metabolic Organ. *Therapeutic Advances in Gastroenterology* 6.4 (2013): 295–308.

² Hsiao, Elaine Y. et al. The Microbiota Modulates Gut Physiology and Behavioral Abnormalities Associated with Autism. *Cell* 155.7 (2013): 1451–1463.

³ Ley R. (2010) Obesity and the human microbiome. *Curr Opin Gastroenterol* 26: 5–11

⁴ L. Desbonnet, L. Garrett, G. Clarke, B. Kiely, et al. Effects of the probiotic *Bifidobacterium infantis* in the maternal separation model of depression. *Neuroscience*, Volume 170, Issue 4, Pages 1179–1188.

⁵ Mulle, Jennifer G., William G. Sharp, and Joseph F. Cubells. The Gut Microbiome: A New Frontier in Autism Research. *Current psychiatry reports* 15.2 (2013): 337.

⁶ Yoon MY, Lee K, Yoon SS (2014). Protective role of gut commensal microbes against intestinal infections. *J Microbiol.* 52 (12): 983–9.

⁷ Clarke G, et al. (Aug 2014). Minireview: Gut microbiota: the neglected endocrine organ. *Mol Endocrinol.* 28 (8): 1221–38.



Lifestyle also influences our gut health. Overprescribing antibiotics when not essential, widespread use of antibacterial soap, drinking chlorinated water, chronic use of NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) for pain, consuming altered faux foods, pesticide and herbicide food contamination, and overabundance of sterilized foods can all contribute to an unhealthy balance of gut flora.

As global society has become more advanced and aware of the presence of bacteria around us, people have become increasingly fixated on creating sterile environments. To be sure, in areas of the world without proper sanitation, people do suffer from exposure to detrimental bacteria and viruses. But as a culture, we have gone too far in the opposite direction, trying to eradicate all possible germs with antibacterial soaps and cleaners.

No doubt you have seen fear-mongering articles with titles like *The Top 10 Most Germ-Infested Items in Your House*. It's hard not to want to sanitize your entire house (including your food supplies) when you read something like this.

We need to remember that not all germs are bad for us. Without them, our bodies would be even more susceptible to the unhealthy, disease-causing ones.

Consuming more fermented foods, eating a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, drinking pure water, and avoiding prolonged use of antibiotics and antibacterial cleaners can help ensure your body creates an environment for healthy gut flora to flourish. If you help take care of your gut flora, it will help take care of you.



Make Your Own Probiotic-Rich Sauerkraut

Ingredients:

5 Pounds of fresh cabbage
3 Tablespoons of kosher salt

Core and shred 5 pounds of cabbage. Measure out 3 tablespoons of kosher salt. In a large pot, alternate layers of cabbage with a sprinkling of salt. Tap each layer down. Continue this process until the last layer is salt. Sanitize an old dish towel by boiling it for five minutes. Place the towel over the pot. Place a flat plate on top of the towel and weigh this down with a jar filled with water. Let sit for one day. If after one day there isn't enough brine to cover the cabbage, add 1 cup of water with 1.5 teaspoons of salt to the pot. Let sit for another day or two. When white scum forms on the top, skim it off and replace the cloth and plate with clean versions. Repeat this process every day for two weeks. Be patient. Your cabbage is fermenting into a probiotic-rich food. After two weeks, when you see no more bubbling in the pot, your sauerkraut is ready.

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Altruism: Help Yourself by Helping Others

There is a Chinese saying that states: “If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody.”

For centuries, the greatest thinkers have suggested the same thing: Happiness is found in helping others. Now science has validated that concept. Altruism, the concept of selflessly helping other people, appears to help protect our health.

The embodiment of altruism, compassion, empathy, helpfulness and a desire to take care of others is associated with greater well-being, health and longer lives. When we embody compassion, both emotionally and behaviorally, we are also acting for our own good, as long as we are not overwhelmed with the helping tasks.¹

Specifically, helping others appears to help negate some of the negative effects of stress in our lives.

Researchers assessed a group of people who had experienced stressful events during a period of one year, and determined whether or not they had also provided tangible assistance to friends or family members. The people who had given their time and talents to help others were significantly less likely to die during the course of the study.²

What is it about living an altruistic life that creates these benefits? Several factors may be responsible. To start with, the positive feeling one often receives after helping someone in need is caused by endorphins, and possibly endocannabinoids as well. These are the same feel-good chemicals released during exercise that the body rewards us with when we are taking care of ourselves (or in this case, taking care of others).

The “helper’s high” experienced after performing an altruistic act is due to these chemicals, which help boost happiness and reduce sensations of pain.

Helping others often reminds us to be grateful for what we have. In a time when so many of us are constantly striving to acquire more possessions while constantly comparing what we have to what others have, cultivating gratitude can be extremely rewarding. It helps us let go of desires and more freely live in the moment with what we have—and be happy with that!

Helping others also helps distract us from our own problems. Focusing on doing good for someone else can break negative thought cycles and preoccupations with our own worries. Studies have shown that people with medical conditions reduce their own distress and disability when they counsel others about the same conditions.³

The happiness derived from compassionate living and helping others is a very specific kind of happiness. Revolutionary research from UCLA and the University of North Carolina demonstrates this. Scientists looked at the link between happiness and inflammation, which is suspected to be at the root of cancer and other chronic non-infectious diseases. Inflammation is often higher in people who live with high levels of stress. Because stress and inflammation are connected, you might expect those who report they live a “happy” life would experience less inflammation. Not true!



Amazingly, the researchers found that if a person’s happiness was derived from a life of pleasure (also known as “hedonic happiness”), that person still had high inflammation. However, when a person’s happiness stemmed from an altruistic life of purpose (also known as “eudaimonic happiness”), low levels of inflammation were recorded.⁴

We sometimes need to be reminded that it is okay to feel good about helping others.

You are making a difference in somebody’s life. That is wonderful, and you should allow yourself to embrace that feeling without guilt.

³ Carter, Sherrie Bourg. Helper’s High: The Benefits (and Risks) of Altruism. Psychology Today. Sussex Publishers, 04 Sept. 2014. Web. 13 July 2017.

⁴ Fredrickson, Barbara L. et al. A Functional Genomic Perspective on Human Well-Being. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America 110.33 (2013): 13684–13689. PMC. Web. 13 Aug. 2017.

¹ Post SG. Altruism, happiness, and health: it’s good to be good. Int J Behav Med. 2005;12(2):66-77.

² Poulin, Michael J. et al. Giving to Others and the Association Between Stress and Mortality. American Journal of Public Health 103.9 (2013): 1649–1655.



When you let go of guilt and focus on your positive feelings, you will quickly see how many more positive things, people, ideas and experiences come into your life.

The benefits of altruism and positive thinking go hand in hand. Both will help you fill your life with more wonderful, happy experiences and feelings.

Research suggests that we are born with an innate desire to help others. Embrace it! Scientists at the University of British Columbia found that children as young as two years old benefit from altruism.



When tasked with giving treats to other toddlers, those who gave the treats experienced a greater level of happiness than those who received the treats.⁵

This is proof that we are hardwired to be helpful, and there is nothing wrong with taking pleasure from that. Know that you are a good person and you are not helping others for selfish reasons. Feeling good about the action is just a perk.

⁵ Aknin LB, Hamlin JK, Dunn EW. Giving Leads to Happiness in Young Children. PLOS ONE 7(6): e39211. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0039211>.



Winter Wonders on a Plate

When the temperature drops and the days get shorter, our moods, energy levels and health can all drop. Taking special care to select the best foods for the season can help everyone in the family stay healthy and happy all winter long. The following is a list of just a few of the best winter wonders you can serve up!

Winter Squash

Winter squash is rich in vitamin A and carotenoids, which are involved in immune function, vision, cell growth and healthy skin. Winter squash is also an excellent source of fiber, which helps stabilize blood sugar levels, promotes intestinal health, aids in maintenance of healthy cholesterol levels and more.¹



Winter squashes tend to be sweet, which makes them kid-friendly. Oven-roasted squash is a great side item for any meal on a cold night. Squash is also picky-eater friendly, as it can be blended and added to nearly any soup or sauce for a nutritional boost.

Cabbage

Most varieties of cabbage flourish in cool weather, which makes them the perfect source of fresh leafy greens during winter. Cabbage is loaded with vitamin C, which is a potent antioxidant and immune booster—something everyone needs during peak cold and flu season.² Cabbage is also a good source of dietary sulfur and is essential to the production of glutathione, a sulfur-containing peptide that is the “workhorse” of the many antioxidants our bodies produce, and crucial to all living cells. Closely related to cabbage and containing many of the same winter-friendly health benefits are Brussels sprouts, kale and broccoli.

You can easily add cabbage to nearly any meal by making a quick “slaw” with it or using it as a substitute for (or in addition to) lettuce in many recipes. It is also a good addition to stir-fry dishes and soups.

Beets

Earthy, slightly sweet and distinctively red, beets are rich in potassium and vitamins A, B complex (particularly folic acid) and C, as well as antioxidants that may help fight against degenerative diseases.^{3,4}

Add beets to salads for a pop of color and nutrition. They also make excellent additions to seasoned lentils or roasted root vegetables. Beets can be turned into hummus, thrown on the grill, made into soup, mashed, sliced, pickled and more. They are a very versatile vegetable that adds much-needed color to many wintery dinner tables, as well as nitrate, which can be converted by our bodies to nitric oxide, one of the crucial signaling molecules of the body, responsible for maintaining healthy blood pressure and blood circulation.

Onions

Onions are known more for their ability to bring tears to your eyes than for their nutritional content, but they actually contain a wide variety of nutrients that can help keep your body healthy during the winter. Onions contain a range of compounds that have been reported to have anticarcinogenic properties, produce antibiotic and anti-asthmatic effects, and aid antithrombotic activity. The oils in onions have also been shown to help lower bad cholesterol (LDL) and raise good cholesterol (HDL).^{5,6}

Red and yellow onions contain different health-boosting compounds. Try to include both in your diet. This isn’t hard to do, as onions are ideal for flavoring anything from soups and salads to pastas and roasts, and everything in between. Onions are incredibly versatile in the kitchen, as there is hardly a meal that doesn’t benefit from one.



Oranges

Oranges, limes, kumquats, pomelos, grapefruit, clementines—winter is the season for citrus. Everyone knows citrus is a good source of vitamin C. They may not realize citrus fruits are also rich in fiber, folate, potassium, and a long list of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals that promote good health.⁷

Most citrus fruits make great snacks alone. They can be added to salads or even grilled over a fire for a delicious dessert. Citrus juices and zests (be sure to buy organic for making citrus peel zests, as pesticides and herbicides build up in the skins of agribusiness grown citrus) can be added to salad dressings, glazes and marinades. Let the bright taste of citrus lighten a dark winter evening.

¹ Office of Dietary Supplements—Vitamin A. NIH Office of Dietary Supplements. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d. Web. 02 Aug. 2017.

² Kataya, Hazem A. H., and AlaaEldin A. Hamza. Red Cabbage (Brassica Oleracea) Ameliorates Diabetic Nephropathy in Rats. Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine: eCAM 5.3 (2008): 281–287. PMC. Web. 2 Aug. 2017.

³ Joseph Kanner, Stela Harel, and Rina Granit. Betalains—A New Class of Dietary Cationized Antioxidants. Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry 2001 49 (11), 5178–5185. DOI: 10.1021/jf010456f.

⁴ Wang M1, Goldman IL. Accumulation and distribution of free folic acid content in red beet (Beta vulgaris L.). Plant Foods Hum Nutr. 1997;50(1):1-8.

⁵ Griffiths, G., Trueman, L., Crowther, T., Thomas, B. and Smith, B. (2002). Onions—A global benefit to health. Phytother. Res., 16: 603–615. doi:10.1002/ptr.1222.

⁶ Vidyashankar, S., Sambaiha, K., and Srinivasan, K. (2008). Dietary garlic and onion reduce the incidence of atherogenic diet-induced cholesterol gallstones in experimental mice. British Journal of Nutrition, 101(11), 1621–1629. doi:10.1017/S0007114508118748.

⁷ Nutritional and health benefits of citrus fruits1. Food, nutrition and agriculture 24 Nutritional and health benefits of citrus fruits1. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Aug. 2017.

Post Workout Nutrition

The four main post-workout nutritional goals are replenishing energy stores, increasing muscle size, repairing damage and protecting against spikes in free radicals generated during exercise.





The first is done by drinking water and restoring glycogen levels, the second and third are done with protein, and the fourth is accomplished with antioxidants.

These are only the four main goals. There are other reasons to choose your post-workout meal carefully. Eating the right foods after exercise can also help reduce muscle soreness, increase the body's ability to burn body fat, create more energy overall, improve recovery time and provide a boost to the immune system.

Energy

In the human body, energy is stored as glycogen, a complex starch-like molecule made from a simple form of sugar (glucose), one of the body's primary carbohydrates. Every action you perform is powered by glycogen; the more intense the action, the more glycogen is used. Hence, the body needs its energy reserves to be built back up after a prolonged workout. The body restores glycogen levels with complex dietary carbohydrates.¹

Complex carbohydrates are known to be excellent sources of long-lasting energy, which means they are actually great for both pre- and post-exercise meals.



Complex carbohydrates include oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, potatoes, beans, peas, lentils and whole grains. Foods made from these such as whole-grain (don't be fooled by similarly sounding whole-wheat) breads, cereals and pastas also count as energy replenishing foods, as they contain large amounts of complex carbohydrates.

Exercise makes us sweat. And sweating causes dehydration: a condition that can cause fatigue. Even mild dehydration from 30 minutes of exercise can contribute to headaches, fatigue and irritability. During more prolonged or intense workouts, it is possible to lose up to 6–10 percent of body weight through water loss from sweating.²

To prevent fatigue from water loss, it is important to drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise.

Muscle Repair and Growth

When we use our muscles during exercise (especially resistance-training exercises), the tissue is damaged at the microlevel. The word "damage" may sound scary, but it is actually a healthy and natural process of building and maintaining muscle mass. However, it does mean that the body must repair itself after a workout.

This rebuilding and repairing of muscle tissue occurs through the breakdown of old, damaged proteins and the construction of new ones (protein synthesis). This is called protein turnover. For this process to occur, the body needs to ingest protein.³

High-quality protein sources include lean meats, eggs and dairy products. But vegetarians and vegans have plenty of options as well—they just need to be aware that there are few (many researchers say no) plants that supply the entire spectrum of amino acids found in protein. Combining legumes such as beans, lentils and peanuts with grains such as brown rice and whole wheat creates a complete protein.

Therefore, a few tablespoons of peanut butter on whole grain bread is a quick, vegan-friendly snack that supplies the body with muscle-building protein. Other good combinations are black beans and brown rice, hummus with whole grain pita, bean soup and crackers, or a homemade snack mix of roasted nuts and seeds.⁴

Sports drinks that provide "free form" essential and branched-chain amino acids are also an excellent way to provide muscles with the building blocks they need for protein remodeling.



¹ Jentjens R, Jeukendrup A. Determinants of post-exercise glycogen synthesis during short-term recovery. *Sports Med.* 2003;33(2):117-44.

² Fit Facts. Healthy Hydration. American Council on Exercise. 2008.

³ Andrews, Ryan. All About Post-Workout Nutrition. *Precision Nutrition.* N.p., 05 July 2016. Web. 15 July 2017.

⁴ Shereen Lehman. Vegan? Learn How to Best Combine Proteins. *Verywell.* N.p., n.d. Web. 15 July 2017.



There is also evidence that consuming a light, protein-rich snack before bed may further help with muscle recovery. Researchers found that consuming a small amount of protein right before falling asleep can stimulate muscle protein synthesis and improve whole-body protein balance during post-exercise overnight recovery.⁵

A protein-rich breakfast the morning after a hard workout may also help. Not only can the additional protein continue to help with muscle growth and recovery, but at least one study has found it may also help curb “reward eating” the day after a big workout. It can be tempting to binge on a big meal or unhealthy snack after a hard workout. “I earned this” or “I burned these calories already so it won’t hurt” are ways we mentally justify overeating after working out. A protein-rich breakfast will help curb the appetite throughout the day, which can stop reward eating long before the temptation sets in.⁶

Research has shown muscle protein synthetic rate is elevated in humans by 50 percent four hours after heavy resistance training, and over 100 percent at 24 hours after training. Eating protein as soon as you can after exercise, and following that with a light protein snack before bed, can help maximize your exercise efforts.⁷

Antioxidant Activity

Free radical levels in the body can surge during exercise, causing damaging oxidative stress in the body. Research shows that this extra generation of oxygen free radicals and other reactive oxygen species may be the underlying mechanism for exercise-induced oxidative damage. To combat this damage, consuming extra antioxidants may be prudent after a workout.

Free radicals are highly reactive and unstable molecules that have lost one electron of a pair. When trying to replace the lost electron, a free radical will “steal” from another atom or molecule, thus creating a new free radical. The resulting chain reaction can damage proteins and sensitive cellular structures such as membranes. Antioxidants terminate or “quench” these chain reactions by giving up an electron while remaining stable.

Most fruits and vegetables contain at least some antioxidants—a general rule is the more vibrant the coloring of the food, the higher the antioxidant content.

Grapes, blueberries, cherries, dark leafy greens and sweet potatoes are among the most antioxidant-rich foods to choose from. Freshly brewed teas are also high in antioxidant content.

Post-exercise nutrition is needed most after weight-training, interval and endurance exercise of at least moderate activity lasting 45 minutes or longer. More casual activities such as walking the dog around the block or leisurely riding your bike to the store don’t leave your body with the same nutritional needs as does more intensive physical activity.

⁵ Res PT1, Groen B, Pennings B, et al. Protein ingestion before sleep improves postexercise overnight recovery. *Med Sci Sports Exerc.* 2012 Aug;44(8):1560-9. doi: 10.1249/MSS.0b013e31824cc363.

⁶ Leidy, Heather J. et al. Neural Responses to Visual Food Stimuli After a Normal vs. Higher Protein Breakfast in Breakfast-Skipping Teens: A Pilot fMRI Study. *Obesity* (Silver Spring, Md.)

19.10 (2011): 2019–2025. PMC. Web. 8 Aug. 2017.

⁷ MacDougall JD, Gibala MJ, Tarnopolsky MA. The time course for elevated muscle protein synthesis following heavy resistance exercise. *Can J Appl Physiol.* 1995 Dec;20(4):480-6.

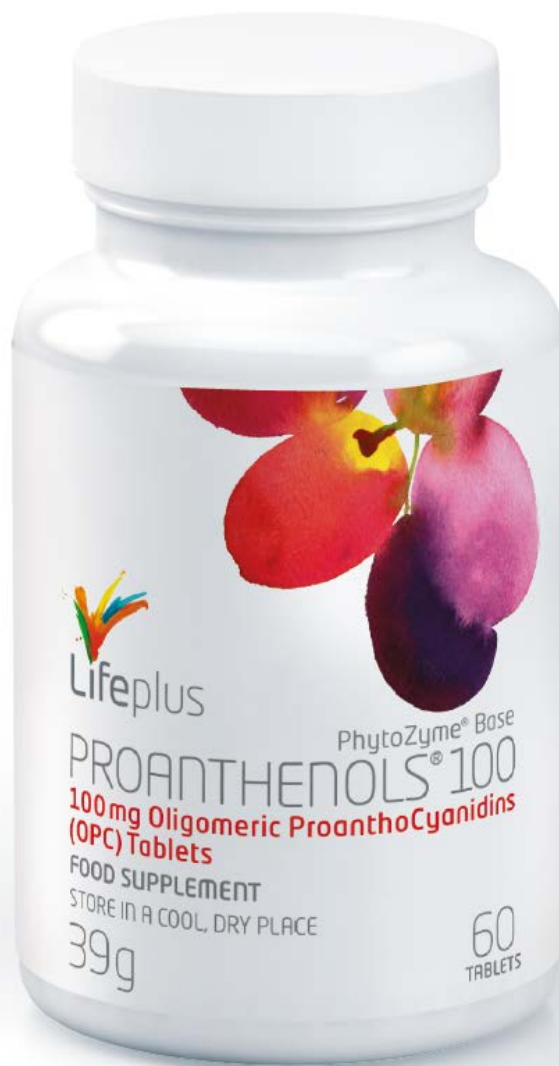
⁸ LiLi Ji. Oxidative stress during exercise: Implication of antioxidant nutrients. *Free Radical Biology and Medicine* Volume 18, Issue 6, June 1995.

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Food supplements should not be used as a substitute for a varied diet.



Periwinkle—The Powerful Purple Flower

Want to improve your memory or protect your brain from the effects of aging? Help may be found in a little purple flower.

Native to central and southern Europe, periwinkle has spread throughout the world as a popular option for groundcover due to its evergreen foliage, spring and summer flowers, ease of growing, and habit of smothering many weeds. Periwinkle is also known as creeping myrtle, church-flower, and Magdalena. Not only does the plant help keep spaces looking fresh and green during winter months, it may also help protect cognitive function, according to historic use and modern-day research.

The benefits of periwinkle, as with many other plants throughout history, were recognized by ancient healers. Periwinkle has a long history of medicinal use, mostly to support memory and brain health. However, it also has a long history of being used to support people dealing with diarrhea, tonsillitis, water retention and intestinal pain.

Periwinkle is also said to be an astringent herb, which is why it has been used to help soothe the pain of canker sores in the mouth in the same manner as witch hazel.

Modern research has found periwinkle contains more than 50 alkaloids.¹ Among these is vincamine, which is used to make the synthetic derivative vinpocetine, the focus of many brain health studies. Evidence suggests that the compound may help prevent damage from an injury such as a stroke.

Though much of the well-known scientific research on the power of periwinkle is focused on vinpocetine, vincamine is often used as a nootropic, or cognitive enhancer, as well.

Preliminary research has shown both compounds may have benefits for people struggling with dementia, Alzheimer's disease or short-term memory loss.

In one small trial focused on people with chronic cerebral vascular ischemia (inadequate blood flow to certain parts of the brain), researchers found that after participants had taken vinpocetine for 14 days, areas of the brain that needed it most saw an increase in blood flow.² A larger study found that people with the same condition scored better on cognitive tests after vinpocetine supplementation for 16 weeks.³

In terms of protecting an already healthy brain, vinpocetine was shown during a three-month trial in 2005 to help produce a wider blood vessel diameter, without affecting cognitive function.⁴

Multiple studies on people with various forms of dementia have shown that supplementing with the periwinkle-based compound led to improvements in cognitive performance and daily activity.⁵

These and other studies have led to widespread availability of periwinkle or its derivatives as dietary supplements. Periwinkle flowers are also turned into tea, often served with honey or other natural sweeteners, as it tends to have a bitter taste.

When damage occurs to the brain that impairs blood flow, dementia and memory problems often follow.

If compounds in periwinkle can help restore or improve blood flow, those little purple flowers may be much more powerful than they let on.

Just don't confuse periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) with Madagascar periwinkle (*Catharanthus roseus*), from which the powerful cancer chemotherapy drug vincristine, and its derivatives vinblastine, vindesine and vinorelbine, are derived. Periwinkle and Madagascar periwinkle may look similar, but they are of a different genus with different properties.



¹ Khanavi, M.; Pourmoslemi, S.; Farahanikia, B.; HadjiaKhoondi, A.; Ostad, S. N. (2010). Cytotoxicity of *Vinca minor*. *Pharmaceutical Biology*. 48 (1): 96–100. PMID 20645762. doi:10.3109/13880200903046187.
² Bónóczi P, Panczel G, Nagy Z. Vinpocetine increases cerebral blood flow and oxygenation in stroke patients: a near

infrared spectroscopy and transcranial Doppler study. *Eur J Ultrasound*. 2002 Jun;15(1-2):85-91.
³ Hindmarch I, Fuchs HH, Erzigkeit H. Efficacy and tolerance of vinpocetine in ambulant patients suffering from mild to moderate organic psychosyndromes. *Int Clin Psychopharmacol*. 1991 Spring;6(1):31-43.

⁴ Kemény V, Molnár S, Andrejkovics M, et al. Acute and chronic effects of vinpocetine on cerebral hemodynamics and neuropsychological performance in multi-infarct patients. *J Clin Pharmacol*. 2005 Sep;45(9):1048-54.
⁵ Nagy Z, Vargha P, Kovacs L, Bonoczk P. Meta-analysis of Cavinton. *Praxis*. 1988 September 15;7(9):63-8.

Man's Best Friend

Spending quality time with man's best friend can have a positive impact on your mood, health and social life. Dogs and other pets are loyal companions who come with a host of health-boosting benefits that any man can appreciate.

Dogs need exercise, and so do you! Dog owners are much more likely to get the currently recommended two and a half hours of regular physical activity every week because dogs require walks. Just two short walks a day quickly add up. Walking the pooch for longer, or more frequently, or stepping up the pace with regular runs, can help both man and pup even more.^{1,2}



All these walks add up even more. After years of dog-walking, older men tend to remain more mobile into their 70s and 80s than those who don't care for a pet—and they experience better overall health as well.

¹ How Much Physical Activity Is Needed? Choose MyPlate, United States Department of Agriculture, 21 June 2016, www.choosemyplate.gov/physical-activity-amount.

² Sturt, Kristen. The 10 Health Benefits of Dogs (And One Health Risk). The Huffington Post, TheHuffingtonPost.com, 23 Sept. 2016, www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-10-health-benefits-of-dogs-and-one-health-risk_us_57dad1b8e4b04a1497b2f5a0.

The journal *Gerontologist* reported that older adults who continued to walk their dogs had a lower body mass index, experienced fewer daily living limitations, went to the doctor less often and were able to engage in more frequent exercise. That's quite a few benefits associated with simply taking care of a furry friend.³

For older men who are unable to get out as often as they used to, pets make wonderfully loyal companions who can help increase feelings of happiness and satisfaction. According to a recent Harris poll, 95 percent of owners view their pet as a member of the family. With that feeling of kinship come many of the same benefits experienced with any family relationship.

Pets make great listeners, cuddlers and companions—traits especially important for single young men and older widowed men who may otherwise suffer from feelings of loneliness and depression.

Pets also give people a sense of purpose, because our furry friends rely so heavily on their owners for everything from feeding and exercise to comfort and guidance.

For men who perform stressful jobs (which is all too common in this day and age), cuddling up to a four-legged friend may be especially beneficial. Doing nothing more than petting your pet can help you relax a great deal because the action helps lower blood pressure, and prompts the body to release a relaxation hormone while also reducing levels of a stress hormone.

³ Angela L. Curl, Jessica Bibbo, Rebecca A. Johnson. Dog Walking, the Human-Animal Bond and Older Adults' Physical Health. *The Gerontologist*, gnrw051.

⁴ Staff. Owning a Pet May Protect You from Heart Disease.

Dogs are also good for helping single men socialize more often. Dog owners know that walking a dog invites social interaction from people on the sidewalk and at the park.

All of these pet-related benefits can end up bestowing on men healthier waistlines, more energy, better mood, reduced stress, lower blood pressure, reduced cholesterol and decreased triglyceride levels—and all of these happen to be factors that contribute to better overall cardiovascular health and fewer heart attacks. Perhaps even more surprising, dog owners who do suffer heart attacks have better survival rates.⁴

Heart.org, American Heart Association, 2 May 2017, www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/Owning-a-Pet-May-Protect-You-from-Heart-Disease_UCM_453586_Article.jsp#.WZMc3YIqzIU.



Dogs may be a boy's best friend as well, since studies have shown that children who grow up with dogs tend to have fewer allergies as adults—the protection is especially pronounced if both parents suffer from allergies.

Caring for a dog is also a great way for boys and young men to learn about responsibility, compassion and empathy.⁵



Owning a pet is a major responsibility—albeit one with major rewards—and should not be undertaken without consideration. Does your lifestyle allow a furry friend? Do you have the time and energy it takes to properly care for a pet? If the answer is yes, there are many adoption agencies that need more men to step up and adopt a new best friend. If you don't have the space in your life for a new furry roommate, volunteering at an animal shelter is a rewarding way to experience many of the same great benefits as owning one of your own.

⁵Bernd Holscher, Christian Frye, H. Erich Wichmann, Joachim Heinrich. Exposure to pets and allergies in children. *Pediatric Allergy and Immunology*, 2002 13:334–341.

Staying Fit with Age

We all know the benefits of practicing yoga as we age, but have you also thought about trying tai chi, walking clubs, swimming or meditation? Yoga may be one of the most popular low-impact, high-result fitness options for seniors, but it is far from the only one.

We can't stop the aging process, but we can significantly slow it down through regular exercise, proper diet, social connection and support, and a positive outlook. In a study of more than 5,000 adults, scientists discovered people who exercise regularly are younger on a cellular level than people who live slower, more sedentary lives. Telomeres, the protective end caps on chromosomes, are significantly longer in people who regularly exercise. Researchers estimate those shorter telomeres add 10 years of aging!¹

Telomeres can be thought of as like the little plastic sheaths at the end of shoelaces. They prevent the shoelace from fraying. Over time they degrade, and eventually the shoelace will fray and fall apart. In our case, when the telomeres degrade, the cell gets old and dies, which results in aging. Shorter telomeres have been linked to a wide range of age-related diseases, including strokes, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Regular physical activity has many benefits, in addition to fighting cellular aging.

Exercise helps maintain muscle mass, decrease fat stores, boost energy, improve mood, maintain mobility, reduce physical pain, improve confidence, prevent falls and so much more. In short, staying active allows seniors to keep doing the things they love for a very long time.

Finding the right activity for your goals and personality is essential. If you don't enjoy yoga, getting to class every day will be an impossible chore. If you prefer walking around the neighborhood with your friends, do that instead. Enjoying the activities you choose will greatly increase the likelihood that you continue your fitness routine.

The simple act of enjoying what you do for activity also helps you feel happier all day long. Physical activity prompts the body to release feel-good chemicals that can help you keep your thoughts and feelings aligned with positive aspects of your life. As we age, it can become harder and harder to keep our thoughts aligned with the positive aspects of life, especially if a lack of exercise has weakened our bodies. Staying fit and keeping a healthy mental outlook can help attract more positive feelings and experiences into our lives, no matter how old we are.

For the best results possible, try to incorporate several activities into your routine. This helps ensure you are working out all parts of your body for optimal fitness. The following are a few examples of fun activities you can choose from to stay fit as you age.

Tai Chi

Tai chi is similar to yoga in that it is slow, low impact and often performed in groups with a leader. Both are also especially beneficial for increasing balance and strength—two key factors in preventing falls and maintaining mobility as we age. Researchers studying the benefits of tai chi actually saw at-risk seniors reduce their risk of falling by nearly 50 percent by regularly practicing tai chi. Tai chi can also be adapted for seniors who cannot stand or walk without help.²

Swimming

Swimming, water-walking and water aerobics are all great choices for seniors who fear falling. The natural buoyancy of water creates a safe environment to work muscles. And the resistance of water helps build muscle mass and improve strength. Swimming combines aerobic and resistance training in one workout. It is gentle on the body, making it a good choice for anyone with arthritis or joint pains.

Walking Clubs

Walking is an easy and effective way to stay fit because it can be done anywhere, and requires no special equipment other than a comfortable pair of shoes. Joining a walking club can turn a good cardiovascular workout into a great one with added benefits for your brain. Walking with others may be safer because if an accident happens, there are friends nearby to help. It also creates accountability that will keep you lacing up your shoes even if you are feeling less motivated. Talking with friends while walking gives your brain a workout too. One of the best ways to maintain healthy cognition is to engage in conversations with other people. The social connection of walking clubs can also help prevent loneliness and boost overall mood.

Stationary Equipment

If you enjoy biking but don't feel safe on the road anymore, try a stationary bike. Biking at home or in the gym provides great exercise without the worry of tipping over or the uncomfortable jarring of riding over potholes. The same is true for stationary versions of skiing, stair climbing, jogging or rowing. These pieces of equipment offer most of the same benefits as the activities they are based on, but include safety features such as railings and heart monitors.

Weight Lifting

Most adults begin to experience age-related muscle loss in their late 30s or early 40s. People who are not active at all can experience up to a 5 percent loss in muscle mass every decade. Without intervention, this loss can lead to decreased mobility, loss of balance and increased risk of falling in later years. To prevent and reverse age-related muscle loss, all a person needs to do is engage in some form of resistance training. Whether that takes the form of lifting free weights at the gym, swimming or simply lifting canned goods from the pantry, seniors can easily replace lost muscle. Resistance bands are often a good choice for seniors because they allow seniors who have balance issues to engage in resistance training from a seated position.³

¹ Larry A. Tucker. "Physical activity and telomere length in U.S. men and women: An NHANES investigation." *Preventive Medicine*, July 2017, Vol. 100.

² Lomas-Vega, R., Obrero-Gaitán, E., Molina-Ortega, F. J. and

Del-Pino-Casado, R. (2017). "Tai Chi for Risk of Falls. A Meta-analysis." *J Am Geriatr Soc*. doi:10.1111/jgs.15008.

³ Sarcopenia With Aging. WebMD, www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/guide/sarcopenia-with-aging#1.



Through the Eyes of a Child

Children see the world and interact with it much differently than do adults. Because it has been so long since we've viewed the world through the eyes of a child, sometimes a reminder of how they see things is helpful in managing and setting expectations for our little ones.

Until about the age of 13, children do not see objects in a fully grown-up way. Children have to learn many of the simple things that we take for granted. For example, when looking at whether shaded images are convex or concave, adults assume the light is coming from the top unless there is an apparent reason to think differently. Children do not make this assumption, possibly because they have yet to make the connection that the sun always shines down and many lamps and lights are located near the ceiling.¹

Children may not be able to make these assumptions yet, but they are extremely curious about why things happen—something adults can often benefit from emulating.

Children use curiosity to learn and grow. There is no reason to stop learning and growing once you become an adult. And there are plenty of reasons to continue!

Adopting the curious nature of children can help protect your brain against cognitive degeneration.²

Engage in curiosity with your child and both of you will benefit. Children will gain a better understanding of how the world works and parents will help protect their cognitive abilities. Learning and exploring the world together also helps create family bonds and wonderful memories.

The more curious a child is, the more she will learn. Nurturing curiosity can help create a lifelong love of learning. Fostering curiosity can be as easy as rearranging the toys in your child's room when he or she is not looking.

Help your child discover all the changes, and then ask questions such as, "Do you think it looks better this way or the other way? Why is that?"

You can also model interest in the world around you wherever you are. Take a walk outside and ask your child questions about trees, buildings, cars and anything else you see. "Why do you think the leaves in that tree are turning color?" "Do you think a brick house or a wooden house is prettier?"

Questions drive curiosity—especially open-ended questions. "What do you think about ____?" "Why do you like ____?" Try to avoid questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no.

While you are out, follow your child's lead. Your child will learn much more when engaged in activities that capture his attention and imagination.

If you notice a preference for music, help foster that hobby by dancing, singing and playing music together. If your child is an obvious nature lover, take her camping or for long walks in the woods.

Children are also very trusting, unless early life teaches them not to be. Foster that trust by acting consistently, following through on promises and modeling trustworthy behavior. Of course, kids will always push limits, especially when your back is turned. This is a natural, healthy part of development.



¹ Pascal Mamassiana, Michael S Landy. Interaction of visual prior constraints. *Vision Research* Volume 41, Issue 20, September 2001.

² Sajeev, Gautam; Weuve, Jennifer; Jackson, John W; et al. Late-life Cognitive Activity and Dementia: A Systematic Review and Bias Analysis. *Epidemiology*. 27(5):732-742, September 2016.



You can use opportunities like this to teach about consistency by calmly explaining why inappropriate behavior is still inappropriate even when Mommy and Daddy are not looking.

Children are impressionable. By watching their parents, children learn how to navigate life. If they grow up watching their parents complain about life and focus on negativity, children will grow up aligning their thoughts and emotions to negative aspects of life. However, if parents model healthy, happy behavior and thought patterns, their children will grow up knowing how to use positive thinking to better their own lives.

For children, the world is a place of wonder and mystery. As parents and adults, we have a responsibility to help preserve that wonder while also providing key constants that make kids feel safe and secure.



Boost Your Winter Skin Care Regimen

The perfect skin care regimen that suits your personal needs will give your skin the nourishment and care it needs to stay healthy and vibrant all winter long.

A regular skin care regimen can help lessen the signs of aging by promoting and retaining a smooth and supple youthful appearance. It can also help prevent dry, irritated and itchy patches of skin during cold, dry winter months.

Your skin is as unique as you are, which means it has its own unique needs and requirements to look and feel as healthy as possible.

Every woman's routine will be slightly different, and it may take some experimentation to figure out the perfect combination for your needs. But in general, most women will find their skin improves with a regular routine of cleansing, moisturizing and feeding every day.

Don't just grab the same bar of soap you use in the shower. Cleansing your skin with warm but not hot water and a gentle, nonabrasive, alcohol-free cleanser morning and night is the first step to healthy winter skin. Because the air is drier during cold weather, skin tends to be drier as well. Cleansers with alcohol in them can exacerbate this problem.

When your skin is dry or irritated, it is also a good idea to skip exfoliating products. If you must exfoliate, do so gently with a physical product such as a brush rather than a topical product that uses acid.

Always moisturize after washing, because hot water can strip the moisture and oils from skin. A high-quality moisturizer can mean the difference between dry, patchy skin and smooth, youthful good looks.

Eating for your skin's health is something you can do year-round. But during the cold, dry winter months, it may also be prudent to increase the amount of certain nutrients you ingest.



Omega-3 fatty acids, hyaluronic acid and antioxidants such as vitamin C and coenzyme Q10 (often shortened to CoQ10) are skin-friendly nutrients many women would benefit from consuming more of during winter.



Vitamin C, CoQ10 and OPCs (Oligomeric Proanthocyanidins) help fight free radical buildup in the skin. CoQ10, in particular, works with other compounds to create a barrier that helps block free radicals from entering the skin. Vitamin C also works to stabilize the triple-helical structure of collagen, the main connective tissue in skin.^{1,2}

Omega-3 fatty acids have numerous health-boosting properties, including skin protection. They have been shown to help fight psoriasis, dermatitis and acne, among other skin issues that can be associated with winter (yes, even acne can be a winter phenomenon for some people). Omega-3 fatty acids are found in fresh, deep-ocean, cold-water fish, and in certain algae.^{3,4}

¹ Draelos ZD. Nutrition and enhancing youthful-appearing skin. *Clin Dermatol.* 2010;28:400-8. doi: 10.1016/j.clindermatol.2010.03.019.

² Shindo Y, Witt E, Han D, Epstein W, Packer L. Enzymic and non-enzymic antioxidants in epidermis and dermis of human skin. *J Invest Dermatol.* 1994;102:122-4. doi: 10.1111/1523-1747.ep12371744.

³ Balbás, G Márquez, M Sánchez Regaña, and P Umberto Millet. Study on the Use of Omega-3 Fatty Acids as a Therapeutic Supplement in Treatment of Psoriasis. *Clinical, Cosmetic and Investigational Dermatology* 4 (2011): 73-77. PMC.

⁴ Meagen M. McCusker, Jane M. Grant-Kels. Healing fats of the skin: the structural and immunologic roles of the ω -6 and ω -3 fatty acids. *Clinics in Dermatology*, Volume 28, Issue 4, Pages 440-451.



Hyaluronic acid is naturally present in the human body. However, it may be prudent to increase the amount in your skin during winter, because hyaluronic acid helps keep skin moist and supple by drawing in and holding water within the extracellular space. This can help hydrate and increase skin's volume and density.

Last but not least, be sure to drink enough water. Even though we tend to put emphasis on drinking water in the hot summer months when we sweat more, it is just as important to stay hydrated during dry winter months.



Many women find that all they need to do to improve the quality of their skin is drink more water.

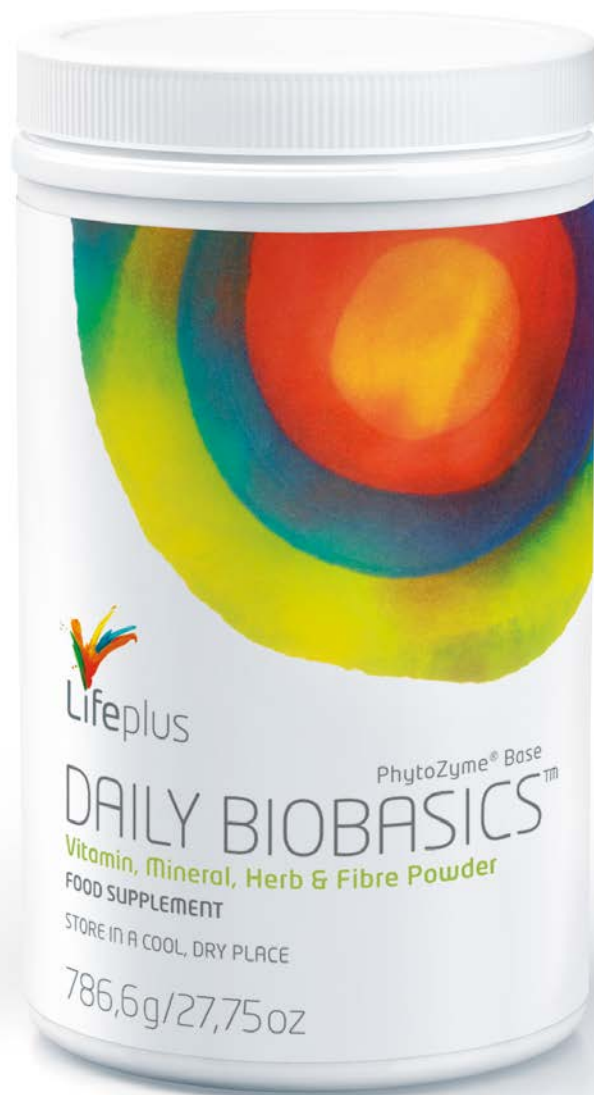
While a regular skin care regimen may sound like a time-consuming challenge, it will only add a few minutes to your daily routine. And the results will be worth it—youthful, glowing skin all year-round.

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Food supplements should not be used as a substitute for a varied diet.

Ask the Expert

How Does Being Cold Make a Person Ill?

Despite the widespread knowledge that the common cold is caused by the rhinovirus, the old wives' tale to bundle up or risk catching a cold persists. Perhaps this is due to the fact that noses tend to run in cold weather, mimicking symptoms of the common cold (although caused by much different actions in the body). Or maybe it is because cold and flu season corresponds to colder months. Regardless of the reason, it is simply not true that being cold will cause a cold. Science has shown that our immune system changes with the seasons, but this has nothing to do with temperature and everything to do with the amount of sunshine in a day (populations at higher latitudes with even less sun exposure experience even greater variance in immune function).

Sunlight is responsible for the formation of vitamin D in the body.

Vitamin D is essential for proper immune function. Hence, the longer the daylight, the more sun exposure is possible and the more immune-boosting vitamin D is produced.



Dietary supplementation with vitamin D is therefore often needed during winter months, as there is not enough ultraviolet light in the sun's rays to help us produce a significant amount of vitamin D at higher latitudes. While wrapping a scarf around your face to keep your nose from running may be warm and cozy, a better strategy for staying healthy this winter is to get outside more during the day, take a vitamin D supplement appropriate to your body weight or better yet to your blood level of 25-hydroxy vitamin D, and practice healthy hygiene by washing your hands frequently.

How Can I Avoid Caffeine Crashes?

Caffeine crashes tend to occur several hours after a person consumes a moderate to high dose of caffeine. In other words, after you start the day with a large coffee to get yourself going, the midafternoon slump slows you way down. Many people turn to caffeine for energy throughout the day, whether from coffee, tea, soda or energy drinks. A better strategy than drinking caffeine-containing energy boosters may be eating higher-energy foods. Starting at breakfast, choose sources of healthy fats and complex carbohydrates for longer-lasting energy. Scrambled eggs wrapped in a whole wheat tortilla is a portable breakfast that will keep you going. The same strategy applies for lunch: Eat whole, energy-dense foods instead of sugary, manufactured foods. And drink lots of water. If you find yourself in need of an energy boost later in the afternoon, try a handful of nuts or a spoonful of peanut butter with apple slices. Eating for energy rather than drinking caffeinated beverages, with or without extra sugar, helps to keep you feeling fuller, more satisfied and energized for a longer period, without a caffeine or sugar crash coming later.

How Do I Know if I Worry Too Much?

Worry is a form of stress that everyone feels from time to time. It can help motivate us to take action or it can weigh us down with associated headaches, mood swings and lethargy. Everybody has a different tolerance for the amount of stress and worry they can handle. The only person who can tell when you are worrying too much is you. Pay attention to your feelings by making it a point to check in with yourself several times a day. How do you feel when you do this? Happy and content or stressed and anxious? If your feelings are more aligned to the latter, you may be worrying too much. If this is the case, it may be prudent to engage in your preferred relaxing activity. Massage, meditation, sports, exercise, reading—it doesn't matter at all what the activity is, as long as it helps you shed stress and worry so that you can realign yourself to more positive thoughts, emotions and experiences.



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