



Top Health Hints for 2014

Reaching your health goals is the path to a longer, stronger future. Positive habits can help you avoid many chronic ailments that lead to premature aging and disability.

Here are 11 leading indicators to guide you.

FOR BETTER:	CHOOSE:
Physical Fitness	daily exercise; weight control; strength training every other day; stretching exercises, especially for back, hips, legs
Weight Control	cardio exercise; balanced meals; no super low-calorie diets
Bone Mass	weight-bearing exercise; strength workouts; no smoking
Sleep	a routine bedtime; avoid caffeine and alcohol; stress control
Immunity	sleep 7 to 9 hours daily; exercise daily; high fruit and vegetable intake
Arthritis Control	weight control; moderate exercise; or daily stretching
Asthma Control	active self-care to avoid triggers; proper use of medicine
Cholesterol Control	monitor levels; weight control; no smoking; minimize saturated fat
Diabetes Control	monitor food intake, activity level and resulting blood sugar level
Mental Health	work-life balance; get help for lasting depression
Overall Health	tobacco-free; get help for quitting



When changing health habits, start small and make steady progress. Work with your health care provider on major challenges, such as tobacco cessation or weight loss.

Our 5 Best Exercise Tips

- 1. Topping the list is cardio exercise to help control weight.** If you do no other exercise this year, get in shape with sustained, moderate aerobic workouts for at least 30 minutes 5 days a week.
- 2. Next, muscle up.** Strength-building workouts 2 to 3 times weekly can help prevent and reduce symptoms of many age-related conditions, including: arthritis, back pain, heart disease, obesity, osteoporosis and poor balance.
- 3. Enjoy it.** List several activities that suit you. Vary your exercise – from swimming to golf to group aerobics – as you vary other interests in life.
- 4. Make it convenient.** Choose classes, a gym, a pool or a walking trail close by. At home, set up equipment in an area that's inviting and comfortable.
- 5. Get your health care provider's advice,** especially if you have physical limitations. Tip: Ask about a personal trainer, who can help get you started with a customized routine.

This year make a difference in your health – give yourself time for exercise, and it will quickly repay you in added energy and better health.



Genetic Testing: JUST THE FACTS

A genetic test examines DNA, the chemical database that carries instructions for your body to function. It can detect alterations in your genes that may suggest illness or disease. It is used to:

- Detect an inherited disease or its potential severity.
- Determine if you are likely to pass on any specific diseases to your children.
- Determine if you carry a genetic change that increases your risk for developing a disease, such as cancer or type 2 diabetes.
- Check for changes that may affect treatment for diseases such as HIV or some cancers.
- Screen all newborns for certain gene abnormalities that, if present, can result in immediate treatment – the most common reason for genetic testing.

QuikRisk™ Assessment: Coping Skills

The first step to controlling stress is awareness. Do you have healthful ways to cope so you can unwind and restore your good nature?

Take a breather and evaluate these statements:

1. I generally find satisfaction in my job.
 Yes No
2. I accept change as a means for learning and opportunity.
 Yes No
3. I tend to look for the humor in situations.
 Yes No
4. I avoid eating to feel better emotionally.
 Yes No
5. I don't use tobacco.
 Yes No
6. I avoid using alcohol to calm down.
 Yes No
7. I practice time management to stay organized.
 Yes No
8. I allow extra time to avoid needless rushing.
 Yes No
9. I usually get enough sleep.
 Yes No
10. I exercise at least 30 minutes 5 times a week.
 Yes No
11. I make time for solitude every day.
 Yes No
12. I can usually rely on friends or family for emotional support.
 Yes No

If you answered *yes* to at least 8 statements, you likely have a good outlook and ability to avoid stress. If you fall short, use the list above to develop new coping strategies that can help you manage your response to stress.



What's Causing Your Fatigue?

You know when your energy is low – your thinking slows down, physical actions become sluggish and the couch keeps calling. Some causes of fatigue are obvious, such as a strenuous day of sports or yard work, traveling, a sleepless night or an extra-long workday. But if the lethargy lingers, it can disrupt your daily life.

The usual suspects include sleep problems and poor nutrition as well as lack of muscular strength and fitness. Other sources include use of alcohol and some medications, fighting infection, dehydration and chronic pain.

More subtle causes are emotional. Ongoing depression and worry increase levels of stress hormones that may disrupt sleep and lead to numerous health problems.

Age can be a factor, too. By 50 or so you may find you tire more easily. But we can all regain that lost energy by getting adequate sleep, daily exercise and good nutrition, as well as managing stress.

Report persistent fatigue to your health care provider. It may indicate a medical problem, such as heart trouble, sleep apnea or chronic fatigue syndrome.

Finally, fatigue can be your body's way of saying slow down. To balance your energy, manage your time. Set your priorities daily so you do what's essential and avoid pushing yourself too far.

“Don't be afraid to give up the good to go for the great.” – John D. Rockefeller

Secrets of Salt

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Sodium is the primary component of salt.

Sodium is also added to many packaged foods as a flavor enhancer or preservative base. If you need to reduce sodium in your diet, removing the salt shaker isn't enough.

What is? Cutting back on processed and restaurant foods – they provide about 90% of the sodium we consume.

Salt added at the table or in cooking accounts for just 10% of sodium we eat.

While the average American gets more than 3,400 mg of sodium daily, guidelines recommend **1,500 to 2,300 mg a day**. For many people, too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure, which is a risk factor for heart disease and other ailments.

Fortunately, cutting back is easy with a little preparation:

1. Eat fewer canned items, especially soups, pickled foods, deli meats, dressings, sauces, condiments and frozen entrees.
2. Check food labels. Sodium levels vary among brands in the same category.
3. Cook from scratch more often. Use citrus, flavored vinegars, garlic, onion, herbs or spices instead of salt.

Salt substitutes? Those containing potassium chloride may not be recommended for people with heart or kidney disease, or those taking medications such as diuretics. Consult your health care provider.

Sea salt or salts from exotic places? They offer different tastes and texture, but they contain the same amount of sodium as regular table salt.

Decrease your use of salt gradually, and your taste buds will adjust.



Smart Moves toolkit is at www.personalbest.com/extras/Jan14tools.

Next Month: Add DASH to Your Diet