

Basic Healthy Living Guidelines

Drink More Water

Each person's individual needs for water varies, depending on age, size, gender, activity levels, diet, and health status. But...most experts agree that a minimum of 1.5 litres of filtered water per day is a good guideline. The body is composed largely of water, so proper hydration affects our overall health greatly. Keep a water bottle with you throughout the day and sip away.

Switch to Whole Foods

Wherever possible, ditch the boxes, bags and cans with long lists of ingredients, some unpronounceable. Instead, load your cart with foods in their natural state! These whole foods are rich in nutrition – vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants, enzymes, essential fatty acids and phytochemicals to name a few. Aim to make whole foods in their natural state about 75% of your diet.

Eat a Rainbow

It's easy to get stuck in a rut, but including a variety and rotation of different foods is important. Consuming a wide range of foods ensures the body is receiving a variety of nutrients. This will also help to prevent the potential of developing food sensitivities or allergies to a particular food. Try to eat different foods during the week and not to have the same foods for more than three days.

Mindful Eating & Proper Chewing

Take a breath, slow down and enjoy the act of eating. Allow food to satisfy your senses and your soul. Practice being mindful when you eat – avoid distractions like the television, email and work. Create a few moments when you can just sit down to eat and do nothing else but enjoy your meal and the company of those around you.

Take a Trip to the Farmer's Market

Support our local agriculture industry and source out foods that are grown and available locally. This keeps us attuned to the changing seasons – our diet should change as the seasons do. This is also an economical choice and allows us to eat the freshest food possible.

Reduce Toxic Load

To decrease the body's burden of toxins, we must first reduce exposure. These toxins may come from food, air, water, household cleaners, cosmetics, plastic containers, and about a million other places. Opt for organic foods where your budget allows and limit foods like coffee and alcohol which place additional strain on the body. Check out The Environmental Working Group's Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen lists to help you decide whether to purchase organic produce items or not.

Don't Stress!

Don't sweat the small stuff. The long term goal with stress management is not necessarily to reduce stress (although this may be necessary sometimes) but rather to take charge of thoughts, emotions, the way you deal with challenges and your schedule. Develop coping mechanisms to help reduce the effect that stressors have on our daily lives. Some examples might be – taking a walk in nature, treating yourself to a relaxing massage, talking to a good friend or creating a to-do list. Find out what works for you and keep a positive attitude.

Move It - The Benefits of Exercise

Exercise enhances mood, boosts energy and confidence, helps manage body weight, promotes better sleep, as well as sharpens memory and brain function, among many other things. Create an exercise program that suits your fitness level, ability, lifestyle and personal preferences. Don't choose an activity that you really don't enjoy. Start slowly and gradually increase time and intensity as you feel able. Set achievable goals

and have fun with it.

The Importance of Sleep

Set your internal clock by going to bed and waking up at the same time daily. Aim for 7 hours of sleep per night, remove electronics from the bedroom, create darkness and quiet, and develop a relaxing night-time routine to help you wind down. Healthy sleep habits will ensure a better night's rest which will leave you feeling refreshed and ready for the day.

Practice Gratitude

Experiencing gratitude is one of the most effective ways to add some positivity to your day. Just for a few moments, consider the things you have in your life that you could be grateful for. People who regularly practice gratitude by taking time to notice and reflect upon things they are thankful for experience more positive emotions, feel more alive, express more compassion and kindness and even have stronger immune systems.