

[IMAGE]

Healthy Living 101: 4 Steps to a Healthier, Happier You

By Editorial Staff

What do your 2015 New Year's resolutions look like? If you're like most people, your resolutions cover a broad range of health and wellness habits, from eating better to exercising more; from going to bed earlier to taking more vacations (or even just one). Let's package all those healthy habits into one collective list we'll call Key Principles of Health and Wellness. Study, learn and adopt these principles and watch your health, spirits and enthusiasm for life soar!

1. Early to bed, early to rise: They say nothing good happens after 2 a.m.; that maxim actually applies the longer you stay awake, especially after a long day. If you're waking up at 6:00 the next morning, make sure you're in bed by 10:00 p.m. at the absolute latest the night before, ensuring at least eight hours of sleep. The longer you stay up, fighting fatigue, brain-fading to late-night television programming or reaching for the snack drawer, the less chance you can achieve restful, restorative sleep.

2. Take one drug a day: laughter: Laughter is indeed the best medicine, particularly when you consider the vast array of side effects attributable to just about every drug - prescription or over the counter - on the market. The more you laugh, the more you smile - the more you release some of that pent-up stress, anger, resentment or frustration we all experience at one point or another. Just try laughing and feeling stressed at the same time. You'll lose - which is a big win for your overall health and wellness.

healthy living - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *3. Use your voice:* People who talk - about their fears, their joys, their frustrations, their dreams, etc. - tend to experience a heightened sense of well-being compared to those who keep it all inside. No one deserves to absorb stress day after day, and the body certainly can't handle it over time; thus the connection between long-term stress and disease, including cancer. So talk about what's on your mind to a friend, family member; anyone you can trust and who appreciates, like you do, that good conversation is an essential component of healthy living.

4. Eat out occasionally: Not only does eating out occasionally boost your spirits and allow you to celebrate the healthy decisions you've made all week long, but it means you're eating home-cooked meals the rest of the time (unless you're a microwave-meal addict). Prepare the majority of your meals using raw, fresh,

whole foods and you'll find yourself invigorated and ready to take on life. Then celebrate it with a special, once-a-week meal prepared by someone else.

Healthy living is really about making a commitment to healthy behaviors you know are good for you.

Unfortunately, too many of us push the limits and end up paying the health consequences. Adopt these and other health and wellness habits starting today; then reap the benefits all year long.

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