

[IMAGE]

Start the Day Right

By Editorial Staff

For most people, mornings are a time to rush around, prepare lunches, inhale a quick breakfast and jet off to work. But the way you start your morning can set the tone for the entire day. Try some of these morning rituals to start the day right.

Eat breakfast. Starting off with a healthy, well-balanced breakfast regulates blood sugar levels and gets your body ready for the physical and mental stress of the day. Choose a combination of protein and fruit rather than the all-too-common caffeine and carbohydrates.

Listen to music. Depending on the type of music you listen to, hearing a few tunes first thing in the morning can energize, refresh, soothe or motivate you. Research suggests music therapy reduces stress and improves overall wellness.

Stretch in the shower. Stretching helps relieve tension and prepares your muscles for another day. The added benefit of stretching in the shower is hot water loosens the muscles for a better stretch and also promotes relaxation.

Write in a journal. Keeping a journal to document your emotions and fears aids in dealing with stress and increases self-awareness. A daily journaling session can help you focus, solve problems and process negative feelings.

A bowl of cereal surrounded by spoons. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark **Take a walk.** Walking in the first light of morning can help you feel good all day. Just a few of the many health benefits of walking include sleeping better at night, controlling blood pressure, managing weight, lowering stress, and reducing your risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and many other conditions.

Practice yoga. Yoga incorporates a variety of stress management techniques such as diaphragmic breathing, meditation, stretching, and more. A 10-15 minute routine of yoga poses like "sun salutations" can center you for the day ahead.

Prepare Ahead of Time: Particularly if you have kids, it's important not to leave everything until morning. Pack lunches (including your own) and coordinate showers/baths at night. You'll have more time to relax, eat breakfast and do one or more of the above activities if you're not frantically trying to get those things done right when you wake up.

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