



Be Healthy and Stay Well

Stay moving

Getting enough exercise each week is important to ward off many diseases, maintain a healthy body weight and stay flexible as you age. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends 2 ½ hours of moderately intense exercise each week, with strength training exercise twice each week. Strength training, like lifting weights, should consist of 8 to 10 exercises, with 8 to 12 repetitions of each exercise. Moderately intense activities should cause you to break a sweat and increase your heart rate, but shouldn't be so vigorous that you can't hold a conversation. Be sure to choose activities you enjoy—so exercise doesn't feel like a chore—or work out with a friend for motivation. Try swimming, walking the dog, dancing or new classes at your local gym or community center, like Zumba®!

Eat well

It's no secret that eating a well-balanced diet adds to good health and disease prevention. A healthy diet should include plenty of fresh produce, lean meats and fish, whole grains and low-fat dairy. You should avoid saturated fats and trans fats, and limit the amount of salt you add to food.

For women, certain nutrients are especially important to stay in top shape with age. Maintaining adequate calcium levels is necessary for women of all ages to help prevent brittle bones. Women need between 1,000 and 1,300 mg of calcium each day. One serving of milk or one cup of yogurt provides around 300 mg. Calcium can also be found in tofu, dark green, leafy vegetables and fortified orange juice.

B vitamins, like B12 and B9 (folic acid) are important for women, especially those who are, or may become, pregnant. Folic acid helps prevent birth defects and B12 is used in the production of new proteins in the body. When planning your meals, you should choose: dark green, leafy vegetables; lean meats, citrus; legumes; and fortified breakfast cereals.

Take advantage of your preventive screenings

The best treatment for illness is often prevention. The American Cancer Society recommends following a schedule of regular screenings to help limit your risk of developing cancer. Breast cancer screening should begin for women in their twenties and thirties, including self-examination as well as clinical examination during an OB/GYN appointment. Typically, you should begin receiving mammograms (in addition to breast exams) at age 40—but, they may be needed earlier, depending on your personal or family history.

Cervical cancer screenings should begin for women at age 21 and continue up through age 70. Colorectal screenings, including a flexible sigmoidoscopy and colonography, should be received once every five years, beginning at age 50, with colonoscopies once every 10 years. Fecal occult blood tests are also important and should occur annually, beginning at age 50.

To determine a screening schedule based on your own unique medical history, talk to your doctor or OB/GYN.

Your health isn't just physical

The stress that comes with life's ups and downs can weigh heavily on your health. Major life-changing events—either positive or negative—can result in added stress that can lower your immune response and affect your heart. Keep a support network in place, consisting of friends and family, and lean on them when you need someone to talk to or a shoulder to cry on. Regular exercise and adequate sleep can also help decrease stress or reduce depression. Consider trying a relaxation technique, such as deep breathing, yoga or Pilates. Also, you should never be afraid to seek out counseling services if you feel you need them.

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