



Four Weeks of Healthy Living Tips

Try one tip a day for four weeks to improve your heart health.

Week One

- **Park and walk.** How many times have you circled the parking lot to find “the” spot? Spare yourself the stress and gain more energy by parking far away (or even in a remote lot) and walking farther to your destination.
- **Shake up the after-school routine.** Limit screen time, including TV and video games, to less than 2 hours a day. Join your kids for a bike ride or shoot some hoops before starting on their homework. They’ll feel better and think better!
- **Warm up before you work out.** If you plan to run, start by walking. Then walk fast, and then speed up to a jog to increase your heart rate. When you aren’t active your muscles are cooler and tighter. Go easy on them by letting them get gradually loose and warmer instead of making them go straight from cold to hot.
- **Dance!** Do it in a ballroom, at a club or even in your living room. Just clear some space, put on some upbeat music, and shake a leg. You’ll burn calories and gain a new skill.
- **Stretch after every workout** to help prevent injury or strain. Pick two or three of your favorite songs to play while you stretch — and don’t stop until they’re over. The minutes will speed by and you’ll get all the stretching you need.

Week Two

- **Get active at work.** Many adults spend the majority of their day at work. Add some physical activity to your work day by taking 5 minute stretch breaks throughout the day, scheduling walking meetings when possible, or standing during conference calls.
- **Don’t get stuck in a workout rut.** Incorporate a new physical activity every few weeks to stay motivated and make sure your workout is working. Try different activities and sports to keep your body guessing and to improve your fitness.
- **Take the stairs.** The elevator may go up — but it doesn’t make your heart rate climb. Take the stairs instead. You may huff and puff at first, but over time, your body will thank you.
- **Get busy when you travel for business.** See the sights in new cities by walking, jogging or bicycling. If you’ll be spending a lot of time in an airport, walk while you wait! Many airports now have designated walking paths that travelers can use while they are waiting for their flights.
- **Keep it local.** Join a fitness center near your job. Work out before or after work to avoid rush-hour traffic, or drop by for a lunchtime workout.

Week Three

- **Water is your friend!** The harder and longer you work out, the more you need. Make sure to replace whatever water you sweat out after each workout. Your body needs it.
- **Snack smart!** For an easy pre- or post-workout snack that won't leave you feeling heavy, try healthy, easily digested carbohydrates such as fruits and vegetables, whole-grain cereal (with low-fat or skim milk), whole-wheat toast (with a little bit of almond or peanut butter), oatmeal, or low-fat or fat-free yogurt.
- **Tune into fitness during TV time.** Reject your inner couch potato. Walk, jog in place or use the treadmill at the gym while you watch your favorite 30-minute show.
- **Skip the cake,** say goodbye to pie and take a walk after dinner. You'll get a reward that's sweeter than dessert: more family time.
- **Step it up!** To increase your physical activity, wear a pedometer or fitness-tracking device to find out how many steps you take on average each day. Then every two weeks increase your daily average by 500 steps. Before you know it, you'll hit 10,000 steps a day!

Week Four

- **Slow down and stress less.** Try to pace instead of race. Plan ahead and allow enough time to get the most important things done.
- **Master the art of working while walking** by using a treadmill desk, phone headset or dictation app. Be creative to fit in fitness while you work!
- **Get enough sleep and cut the stress.** Try to get six to eight hours of sleep each night. If you can't sleep, take steps to help reduce stress and depression. Getting more physical activity may also help you sleep better.
- **Give up bad habits.** Too much alcohol, nicotine or caffeine can increase stress. If you smoke, decide to quit now.
- **Try the buddy system.** Enlist a physical activity accountability partner. The coworker who always holds you to your deadlines can serve double duty by helping you reach your fitness goals.