



CPBC SPRING HEALTH AND WELLNESS MOMENT

With spring right around the corner, it is time to shed the winter doldrums – and any unwanted health habits we may have picked up over the past few months. Just as we spring clean our homes and gardens, here are a few tips to get your body, mind, spirit and environments recharged.



MOVE MORE/Sit less – Try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week, including muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 days a week.

Consider gardening - Not only does it make your landscaping pretty, but gardening also burns approximately 250 to 350 calories an hour. For the most benefit, try gardening around three times a week for an hour at a time. Anything that makes you sweat qualifies as exercise, such as, mowing the lawn, pulling weeds, or hauling mulch. Rotate tasks every 20 minutes or so to give all your major muscle groups a workout and to avoid overstraining one set of muscles.

Walk Every Day – It will get you into the fresh air, away from your desk and provide that moderate exercise doctors keep recommending. Regular walking helps reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, stroke, and some cancers. It helps people lose weight and feel less stressed, and it's *FREE*.



EAT NUTRITIOUSLY - Make nutritious food choices like fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats. Cut back on sugary, salty and fried foods. Make half your plate vegetables and fruit and the other half your lean protein and whole grains (no more than ¼ each). Talk with your health professional about supplementing to address any nutrient deficiencies.

Boost Your Brain - Assess your diet and ensure you are getting enough of the right foods to aid brain and cognitive functions. Top “smart foods” include blueberries for antioxidants and vitamin C, black currants for vitamin C, oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, and sardines for omega-3 fatty acids. Nuts and seeds for vitamin E and wholegrain foods to give the brain a steady supply of energy through slow glucose release.

Lighten Up - Spring is the time for expanding energy, not storing it. Therefore, heavier, slow-cooked winter meals should increasingly be replaced with briskly-cooked fresh ingredients. Instead of eating root vegetables, try eating more of the veggies that are popping up above the soil like beans, asparagus and spring onions. Replace soups and roasts with lightly steamed or stir-fried ingredients that still have a bit of their crunch.

Think Global, Eat Local - Some of the healthiest vegetables come into season in spring. Seek out local community farms to access in-season fresh vegetables, fruit, flowers, and eggs while local farmers get a guaranteed income base. Asparagus is high in protein, low in calories and a rich source of various vitamins. It contains high levels of potassium, which may help to control blood pressure. Spinach is rich in iron, which is important in helping red blood cells transport oxygen around the body. It is an excellent source of many vitamins, including vitamin K, which can contribute to maintaining bone and cartilage. A lack of vitamin K has been linked to osteoarthritis.

Add SPRING Flavor - Springtime is also a time to support your liver. Try adding some sour foods like vinegar and lemon into your dishes. Spruce up meals with mint, spring onions, ginger, horseradish, mustard, and pepper. Fend off the brisk spring winds with gently warming herbs like fennel, oregano, rosemary, caraway, dill and bay leaves which will keep you thriving until the summer heat hits full-force.



RETHINK YOUR DRINK - [Drink more water](#). Substitute **WATER** for sugary or alcoholic drinks, and reach for drinks that contain nutrients e.g., plant based milks like almond, soy, coconut or 100% fruit juices (no sugar added) or coconut water. Add flavor to water - Add berries, sprigs of mint, slices of lime, lemon, cucumber, or fruit. Add Fizz with sparkling water



GET ENOUGH SLEEP - Adults need at least 7 hours of sleep at night. Kids 6-12 need 9-12 hours of sleep a night. Teens 13-18 need 8-10 hours of sleep a night.



QUIT SMOKING - You can do it! Talk with your doctor. Get support. Call 1-800-QUIT- NOW for free support.



SPRING ALLERGIES (Hay Fever) - As plants release pollen, which can travel for miles, millions of people start to sniffle and sneeze. Pollen counts tend to be higher on breezy days when the wind carries allergens through the air, while rainy days wash away the allergens.

There's no cure for springtime allergies, but you can limit their impact by seeing your health professional; using either over-the-counter (OTC) or prescribed medications; natural remedies, and by following some specific personal and household habits.

Common allergy medications include nasal corticosteroid sprays to reduce swelling and mucus in the nasal passageways, decongestants that shrink the blood vessels in the nasal passageways to relieve congestion and swelling and antihistamines to reduce sneezing, sniffing, and itching.

Natural remedies for allergies include nasal irrigation using a combination of warm water, salt, and/or baking soda to clear out mucus and open sinus passages. This can be done using a Neti Pot (looks like a small teapot), a squeeze bottle or even the much advertised electric Navage nasal care kit. The irrigation device you choose will have instructions included. Please be sure to use distilled, sterile, or previously boiled water to make up the solution. It's also important to rinse the irrigation device after each use and leave it open to air dry. Other natural remedies include plant and OTC medications that act on the nasal passages without some of the side effects of other medications.

Tips to Keep Pollen at Bay

- Stay indoors whenever the pollen count is very high - it usually peaks in the mornings.
- Keep your doors and windows closed during the spring months to keep allergens out.
- Use an air purifier in occupied rooms.
- Clean the air filters in your home often. Also, clean bookshelves, vents, and other places where pollen can rest and collect.
- Wash your face and other exposed skin after going outside, because allergens can collect there. If possible, also wash your hair.
- Vacuum twice a week and wear a mask when doing so because vacuuming stirs up pollen, dust, and mold that may be trapped in your carpet.



SUN SAFETY – We get Vitamin D from the sun, but don't overdo it. Cover exposed skin when outdoors for long periods: Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and use broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15. Wear sunglasses that block UVA and UVB rays.



MAKEUP REFRESH

Like most products, cosmetics expire. It is recommended that you replace eye makeup and mascara every 3 -4 months, and lipsticks and foundations at least every 12 months. So please toss it. This way, you will be able to minimize your risk for eye infections or bacteria-induced breakouts. While cleaning out your makeup, make sure to clean your brushes as well.



PILLOWS AND MATTRESSES

Some experts estimate that, after five years, up to 10 percent of a pillow's weight is made up of allergy or asthma-provoking bacteria, such as pollen, fungi, mold, and dust mites.

Pillows – run them through the dryer with no heat; or wash them and dry them *completely & thoroughly*. Use protective pillow covers (under the pillowcase) to reduce allergens and formation of bacteria.

Mattresses – While these cannot be washed the traditional way, mattresses need refreshing too. A simple method is to 1. Vacuum the mattress, 2, sprinkle baking soda all over the entire mattress, 3. Vacuum again. Flip the mattress and repeat steps 1-3 for the other side. Protect with a mattress cover and make up with your favorite freshly washed bedding! Sweet dreams!



SHOE SAFETY - Flip flops are convenient, but can be flimsy, making wearers more susceptible to injuries like stubbed toes, rolled or sprained ankles, tendinitis, blistering, arch pain, and stress fractures. Wear sandals that provide a measure of support and protection

Sources:

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