



6 Steps To A Healthy Life

Whether you live in the city or not, healthy living may not be as hard as you think. Just follow these golden rules towards a healthier you.

BY CHARLOTTE ROBERT

"I have no time to exercise, I have no time to cook, I never get enough sleep, I don't like drinking water." Sounds familiar?

Those are some of our greatest gripes. While most of us at some point may plead guilty to moaning about at least one of the above, we do harbour good intentions of exercising, eating right and getting enough sleep someday. Instead of waiting for someday though, now may well be the best time to make a conscious decision to lead a healthier life. Wellness consultant and certified colon hydrotherapist Wendy Tee of Pure Health Wellness Centre declares that it is easy to be healthy as long as we have the following six essential elements:

1. OXYGEN

Whether you realise it or not, you just took a breath while reading this line. The question is: did you take a shallow breath or a deep breath? According to Tee, most people today tend to take shallow breaths, which are not as beneficial as taking deep breaths. "Deep breaths expand the lungs and increase oxygen intake. Everyone can learn how to breathe deeply by practising breathing exercises. Practise taking deep breaths by breathing in (stomach out) and breathing out (stomach in)."

TIP: You can practise your breathing exercises anywhere, even while waiting at the traffic lights. Breathe in and out deeply 30 times each day or for as long as it takes the light to change.

2. WATER

It is a well-known fact that drinking plenty of water has numerous advantages, including weight loss. Consequently, inadequate water intake can contribute to illnesses. However, when faced with other drinks such as carbonated drinks, soft drinks, alcohol, coffee and tea, it is hard to be solely focused on water.

"You lose water by carrying out simple acts of breathing, perspiring and urinating. If you don't replenish the water lost, your

body will be dehydrated," explains Tee. She adds that some people drink just enough water to quench their thirst but that is insufficient to hydrate their bodies. "If they say they are not drinking because they are not thirsty, that just means their body has adjusted to taking in less water," says Tee.

An interesting point to note is diuretics such as coffee, tea, soft drinks and alcohol draw water out of your system. "If you consume a lot of diuretics, you have to drink extra water to replace the lost liquid," reminds Tee.

TIP: Drink two to three litres of water a day. Always keep a bottle of water with you—in the car, at the office and even in your handbag.

3. NUTRITION

Everyone needs essential nutrients such as vitamins and minerals but cooked and processed food does not give you enough of these nutrients. To ensure you have enough, you need to eat a minimum of five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day. "If you are not getting your required intake of fruits and vegetables, you have to take a nutritional supplement.

Many lifestyle-related diseases such as heart attacks and diabetes are related to lack of the right nutrients," says Tee.

Natural super-foods such as wheatgrass and spirulina are also extremely important to the body, emphasises Tee. She explains that wheat grass contains 70 percent chlorophyll. The molecular structure of it is

identical to that of human blood, which makes it capable of promoting the production of red blood cells. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body and nutrients to other parts of the body. Wheatgrass also contains a lot of antioxidant multivitamins which the body needs.

TIP: Take an apple or two to munch at work. During meals, increase your vegetable intake. Snack on carrot and celery sticks. At hawker stalls, order fruit juices instead of soft drinks.

4. EXERCISE

One of the main complaints of city dwellers is "I have no time to exercise". However, even those who do exercise, sometimes,

exercise wrongly. People either overdo it or do it inconsistently. Over exercising is bad because it can cause lactic acid to build up in your body, which in turn, causes joint soreness and body aches. If you are not careful, this can lead to permanent injuries and pain

to your body. Furthermore, by over exercising, you are not effectively burning fat in your body," says Tee.

TIP: Working out at a fast rate does not necessarily mean you are exercising right. Start out slowly, and as you build up your stamina, you can increase the intensity of your workout.

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5. SLEEP/RELAXATION

In trying to accomplish too many things in one day, sleep often gets compromised, which is bad because the body can only repair itself when you sleep. "When you sleep, your body automatically produces growth hormones which repair your cells, so it is possible that the longer you sleep, the younger you look. If you don't sleep enough, you actually age faster, become more prone to headaches and in the long run, stop your body from repairing itself," says Tee. She stresses that the organs in the body work all day, so it is essential for it to have time to repair itself.

TIP: Sleep is not a waste of time. Make sure you get eight hours of sleep each day.

6. DETOXYFY

The body needs to detoxify because everyone puts "rubbish" in their system. Most foods have additives, preservatives and colourants in them. Furthermore, just breathing in the air outside is enough reason to detoxify. "The body naturally detoxifies itself by defecating, urinating, perspiring and breathing. This natural method of detoxification will be sufficient if everyone ate natural foods but since we don't, toxin accumulates in the body to the point where it cannot cope. If you are feeling lethargic, chances are you have toxin build-up.

TIP: Accumulated toxin in the body is called "auto-intoxication". Symptoms include constipation or diarrhoea, stones in the kidney and foul-smelling urine. If you are displaying such symptoms, you should consider detoxifying your body.**mc**

FOODS THAT HARM THE BODY

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS: Artificial sweeteners can be harmful to the body. Studies have linked certain chemicals in artificial sweeteners to diseases such as cancer and conditions such as seizures, fits and headaches.

NITROSAMINES: These are nitrogen-based compounds found in cooked foods and can cause cancer. It is found in cured meat like salami, bacon, sausages, turkey and ham.

HYDROGENATED FATS/TRANS FATS: All food products in the United States are required to disclose the amount of trans fats they contain as this form of fats is

the most common source of food toxin today. Trans fats can be found in any oil or fat that has been heated in high temperatures. It is most commonly found in margarine, peanut butter, cookies and snacks.

DAIRY PRODUCTS: Eighty percent of the protein in milk comes from a substance called "casein". Casein is an allergenic substance which can cause a build-up of mucous and sinus problems. Many people, especially Asians, have intolerance to lactose in milk. If someone is lactose intolerant and consumes milk, they will experience indigestion and nausea.

UNFILTERED WATER: Unfiltered water is commonly consumed today either at restaurants or at home where tap water is only boiled before it's consumed. While water may look clear, it can contain harmful chemicals such as chlorine and impurities which include heavy metals. Always drink Reverse Osmosis (RO), filtered or distilled water to avoid exposing your body to water-borne toxins.

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