

SUMMER STEPS FOR HEALTHY LIVING



WebMD went to health experts in fields such as diet, fitness, stress, vision, and oral health and asked this: if you could only suggest one simple change this season to boost personal health, what would it be? Here are their top tips:

1. Give Your Diet a Berry Boost

If you do one thing this summer to improve your diet, have a cup of mixed fresh berries – blackberries, blueberries, or strawberries – every day. They'll help you load up on antioxidants, which may help prevent damage to tissues and reduce the risks of age-related illnesses. Blueberries and blackberries are especially antioxidant-rich.

2. Get Dirty – and Stress Less

To improve your stress level, plant a small garden, cultivate a flower box, or if space is really limited, plant a few flower pots -- indoors or out. Just putting your hands in soil is "grounding." And when life feels like you're moving so fast your feet are barely touching the stuff, being mentally grounded can help relieve physical and mental stress.

3. Floss Daily

Flossing reduces oral bacteria, which improves overall body health, and if oral bacteria is low, your body has more resources to fight bacteria elsewhere.

4. Get Outside to Exercise

Go on a hike, take a nature walk, cycle, roller blade, or swim to shed that cooped-up feeling of gym workouts.

5. Be Good to Your Eyes

When outdoors, wear sunglasses that block at least 99% of UV A and B rays – they can help prevent cataracts as well as wrinkles around the eyes.

6. Vacation Time!

Vacations have multiple benefits: They can help lower blood pressure, heart rate, and stress hormones such as cortisol, which contributes to a widening waist and an increased risk of heart disease.

7. Sleep Well

Resist the urge to stay up later during long summer days. Instead, pay attention to good sleep hygiene by keeping the same bedtime and wake-up schedule.

Sources: WebMD