

MEN TODAY

Thursday, June 27, 2024

Healthy Habits

>> Daily practices that can help men improve their overall health

Food & Fitness

>> What you know about eating before a workout

Recipes Redone

>> Simple tweaks that can make meals more nutritious



Daily habits that can help men improve their overall health

No two men have the same exact makeup, so a health and wellness routine that works for one will not necessarily work for another. It's important that men looking to turn over a healthier leaf keep those nuances in mind as they begin what will hopefully prove a successful journey to a healthier version of themselves.

Health care professionals often say the best approach to a healthier lifestyle is the one that an individual will stick to. That philosophy reflects that each man is different, but there are some simple daily habits all men might want to consider as they seek to improve their overall health.

- Drink more water. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that drinking enough water each day provides a host of health benefits, including preventing dehydration. Dehydration can adversely affect mood and lead to confusion. Dehydration also can contribute to the formation of kidney stones, which the National Institutes of Health notes are more likely to affect men than women due to men's diets and differences in urine chemistries. Symptoms of dehydration also mimic signs of hunger, which means men might overeat under the mistaken impression that they're hungry when all their body really wants to do is hydrate. The U.S. National Academies



of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine determined that men should consume about 15.5 cups of water per day.

- Eat breakfast. On-the-go guys may skip breakfast, which can cause a ripple effect throughout the rest of the day that ultimately harms their overall health. The Cleveland Clinic notes that the body is most insulin-sensitive in the morning, making mornings a great time to consume fiber-filled carbohydrates that can help to lower cholesterol levels. Eating breakfast also kicks metabolism into gear and can reduce the likelihood of

overeating later in the day.

- Get up and walk around throughout the workday. Men who work in office settings or other environments that require them to sit for long periods of time should make a concerted effort to get up and move around during the workday. A 2016 study published in the International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity found that workers who avoided sitting for six uninterrupted hours reported feeling more energetic throughout the day than those who were not active. In addition, the study found that those who rose for hourly five-minute walks reported greater happiness, less fatigue and smaller cravings for food than on days when they took a single 30-minute walk.

- Cut back on screen time. Parents may work hard to ensure their children are not spending too much time on their devices, but men also can benefit from spending less time staring at screens. The Mayo Clinic notes that cutting screen time can encourage men to be more physically active, improve their sleep quality and make strong social connections. Each of those things can improve overall health.

Some simple adjustments to their daily routines can help men improve their overall health.

Did you know?



Health screenings are a vital component of preventative health care. Specific screenings for older adult men can help them stay healthy. Healthline and WebMD recommend older adults schedule these routine tests. The frequency of the screenings may depend on individuals' health histories, so each test should be discussed with a physician during adults' annual checkups.

- Blood pressure check
- Blood test to check cholesterol and triglyceride levels
- Colorectal cancer exam starting at age 50
- Weight screening to check for gains or losses
- Prostate cancer screening for age 70 and older
- HPV tests at the recommended intervals advised by a doctor
- Hearing test
- Osteoporosis test
- Shingles and pneumococcal vaccines
- Eye exam
- Periodontal exam once per year



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Make meals more nutritious with simple changes

Does the idea of eating healthy make you think that you have to give up all of your favorite foods? While it is true that certain foods may not make the healthiest choices, substitutions can add nutritional value to some beloved yet traditionally unhealthy dishes.

The United States Department of Agriculture Dietary Guidelines for Americans emphasizes the need for people to reduce the amount of added sugar, sodium and fat they consume, all the while increasing fiber consumption. Subtle changes may make it possible to boost beneficial nutrients and reduce the caloric load of various dishes. Here are some substitutions to keep in mind when aspiring to eat healthier.

Original: Butter and oil

Swap: Applesauce, mashed avocado

or
mashed banana

Plant-based alternatives can add moisture to baked goods without increasing saturated fat. Even swapping out a portion of the butter or oil with these alternatives can make the item healthier.

Original: Frying in fat

Swap: Different cooking methods
Baking, broiling, grilling, or roast-



ing can produce delicious results.

Many people utilize air fryers that employ convection to simulate frying without the need for all the oil frying requires.

Original: Sugar

Swap: Maple syrup or mashed dates

Many people think they need to give up on sweets when eating healthy. Sugar is an added ingredient in so many foods, so reducing consumption can help. In addition to slashing the amount of sugar recommended for recipes, swap out sugar with maple syrup, honey or even mashed fruits. These are better options than refined sugars.

Original: Salt

Swap: Herbs and other spices
Omit half of the salt recommended in a recipe. Replace the salt with spices or herbs to add flavor. Nutritional

yeast can add a salty umami flavor to many dishes and also provide additional nutrients.

Original: White rice

Swap: Brown rice, quinoa or cous-cous

Add additional fiber and/or protein to dishes by swapping processed white rice with whole grains. Similarly, swap regular pastas with whole grain, and white bread with whole grain bread.

Original: Breadcrumbs

Swap: Almond meal or milled flaxseed

Breadcrumbs impart flavor and texture, but they add calories with no nutritional value. Consider breading foods in almond meal or milled flaxseed to provide omega-3 fatty acids.

Substituting certain ingredients for others and embracing new food preparation techniques can add nutritional value to some beloved foods.

4 stretches that can help to alleviate lower back pain

Lower back pain is a big problem. Though that's likely no surprise to people who suffer from lower back pain, the scope of the problem is perhaps wider than many may realize.

A recent study conducted by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington found that lower back pain affects 619 million people across the globe. Researchers behind the study, which was published in The Lancet Rheumatology in 2023, estimate that 843 million people will suffer from lower back pain by 2050.

Lower back pain can have an adverse effect on quality of life. The good news is that people are not helpless against lower back pain. In fact, the American Asso-

ciation of Neurological Surgeons notes roughly 90 percent of lower back pain cases are temporary and treatable without surgery. Stretching can help individuals alleviate lower back pain, and the following are four stretches that can be performed at home without expensive equipment.

1. Knee-to-chest stretch: This stretch is straightforward. Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Grab one leg beneath the knee with both hands, interlocking your fingers, while keeping the other leg flat on the floor. Pull the knee up toward your chest, holding the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds. New York Presbyterian advises keeping the lower back pressed to the floor for the duration of the stretch, which can

be repeated with the opposite leg. Perform the stretch between two and four times for each leg.

2. Trunk rotation: When beginning a trunk rotation, lie on your back and bring the knees up toward your chest. The online medical resource Healthline notes the body should be positioned as if you're sitting in a chair. Extend arms out to the sides fully, with palms facedown on the floor. With knees together and hands on the floor, roll both bent knees to one side and hold for 15 to 20 seconds. Return to the starting position and then do the same for the opposite side, repeating several times for each side.

3. Cat-cow: Various yoga exercises, including the cat-cow, can help to



BACK PAIN >> PAGE 3



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What to know about eating before a workout



want to eat a large meal before a workout. Doing so will undoubtedly affect performance in a negative way, particularly if you're eating shortly before a workout. The HSS notes that the further away a workout is from the time a person eats, the larger and more mixed that meal can be. According to the HSS, the general guideline around eating and exercise is:

- A full meal three to four hours before exercising
 - A higher carbohydrate snack two hours before exercising and/or a small, easily digested carbohydrate right up until the start of a workout
- What makes for a good pre-workout snack?**

If you won't be eating a full meal before a workout, various mini snacks can provide energy without adversely affecting performance. Pre-workout snacks that are low in fat and fiber are ideal, as the body can digest such foods quickly. The HSS notes half a banana, a small serving of applesauce or a handful of crackers or pretzels are a good pre-workout mini snack. A larger snack eaten a little further away from a workout can include some hummus or peanut butter. The Mayo Clinic notes yogurt, a fruit smoothie or a low-fat granola bar also make good pre-workout snacks.

Should I eat during a workout?

The HSS notes it can help to consume some carbs during workouts that last 60 minutes or longer. Doing so can help individuals prolong their endurance and can even help with their timing and concentration.

The relationship between eating and exercise is complicated. Individuals who want to learn more are urged to work with a nutritionist.

Each person approaches exercise in their own unique way. Some can't wait to get to the gym every day, while others exhibit significantly less enthusiasm about exercise. Some medical professionals say the best approach to exercise is the one that inspires a consistent commitment to physical activity, but various factors, including food, merit consideration when designing a workout routine.

Food provides energy for the body, so it makes sense to eat before a workout. But eating prior to a workout may not be so straightforward for all exercise enthusiasts. An examination of the dynamic between eating and exercise can help athletes find a formula that works for them.

Why eat before exercise?

The Hospital for Special Surgery recommends eating before exercise if it's been two or more hours since your last meal or snack. Doing so can help to restore energy stores prior to an intense or lengthy workout. The HSS notes this approach is especially beneficial for individuals who work out early in the morning, before lunch or after school or work, each of which are times of day when it's typically been awhile since a person has eaten.

How much should I eat before exercising?

It's unlikely anyone is going to

Laketrans announces New Sports Express service to Cleveland Browns Stadium for Home Games

Laketrans is thrilled to announce the launch of its new Sports Express bus service, providing convenient transportation to all 2024 Cleveland Browns home games, including preseason competition. The service kicks off on Saturday August 10, when the Cleveland face off against the Green Bay.

This season, Laketrans STS buses are offering a round trip ticket for just \$25 per person, making it easier for fans to catch a ride to Cleveland. Buses will depart Lake County from the Mentor Park-n-Ride, located at 8650 Market Street in Mentor, two hours before game time. The downtown Cleveland drop-off point is at the northeast corner of St. Clair St. and E. 9th St., near the Galleria. After the game, buses will leave 45 minutes following the final whistle, providing a hassle-free journey home.

The Sports Express service is

limited to 134 tickets per game, so fans are encouraged to purchase their tickets early to secure their seat. Given the high demand and limited availability, tickets are expected to sell quickly.

Some Cleveland fans may remember taking Sports Express to games over 20 years ago. Laketrans previously operated a similar Sports Express service from 1985 to 2006, catering to fans of both the Cleveland Browns and today's Cleveland Guardians.

"We decided to bring the service back starting with the Browns because there's just 10 home games," explained Laketrans CEO Ben Capelle. "If the ticket sales go well, we may look into starting service to the Guardians in the spring."

Ticket sales are on sale now at www.laketrans.com. For more information, call Laketrans at 440-354-6100.

Back Pain

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alleviate lower back pain. The British Heart Foundation recommends beginning slowly when attempting to alleviate lower back pain, doing the cat-cow 10 times, once or twice a week. Kneel on all fours with hands flat on the floor and arms positioned straight under the shoulders and knees directly below the hips. Breathe in as you drop your stomach toward the floor, arching the back and looking up to the ceiling. Hold for one to two seconds, then reverse. Breathe out as you pull your stomach back toward the back, rounding your back upwards and dropping the head toward the floor.

4: Seated hamstring stretch: The seated hamstring stretch can be beneficial because Healthline notes tight

hamstrings are believed to be a common contributor to lower back pain. Stretching the hamstring muscles helps to release tension in the spine. Sit on the floor with one leg out in front of you and hook a bath towel around the heel of your foot. Gently bend forward at the hips, brining the belly down to the thighs. Keep your back straight as you grab the towel so you can bring the belly closer to your legs. Healthline advises keeping the stretch until you feel mild tension in the lower back and the back of the leg. Hold for 10 seconds, rest for 30 seconds and repeat three times for each leg.

Lower back pain is a common but treatable problem. These stretches and more can help people overcome lower back pain and improve their quality of life.

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