



 *healthy inside & out*

The Experts' Guide to Feeling Great This Year

Top docs reveal the little health moves that can make you stronger, smarter—even happier.


By *Jamie Beckman*




TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM:

“Take 1,000 IU of vitamin D a day. D greatly affects your immunity, in addition to enhancing bone density.”

—*Roberta Lee, MD, vice chair of the Department of Integrative Medicine at Beth Israel Medical Center*



SO YOU'VE RESOLVED TO kick your healthy living up a notch in the new year. Good for you! Where to start? "It's a combination of lifestyle habits that makes the difference," says Susan Love, MD, president of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation. So we polled top docs for totally doable tricks that offer big benefits.

TO KEEP YOUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM HUMMING

"Eat more fiber. That small move may help prevent colon cancer and ease constipation and irritable bowel syndrome. And the benefits go beyond the GI tract: Think lower cholesterol, higher energy, weight loss, and possibly even a lower risk of heart disease."

—Roshini Rajapaksa, MD, assistant professor of medicine at the NYU School of Medicine and Health's Medical Editor

TO FIGHT CANCER "Eat a cup or more each day of organic blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, or black raspberries. These dark berries contain a number of phytochemicals that may protect against cancer in general, and recent research suggests they may specifically help prevent esophageal, colon, and mouth cancers. On top of all this, they're delicious!"

—Andrew Weil, MD, director of integrative health at Miraval Arizona Resort and Spa

TO SHARPEN YOUR MEMORY "Take tech breaks. Digital technology has increased our ability to scan and get just the essence of something, but that also leads to an inability to retain information. Set a hard and fast rule that all tech goes off at 7 p.m., or that there's no tech happening during family time. During the break, you'll be able to digest all of the information you've been taking in, think about what's important, and plug it into your memory."

—Wendy Walsh, PhD, co-host of The Doctors and an adjunct professor of evolutionary psychology and human mating strategies at California State University Channel Islands



TO REDUCE BREAST CANCER RISK

"Exercise. Start a running or walking group, or an exercise group, with friends. You will stick with it because you don't want to let your friends down, it will help with weight control (which is key for breast cancer prevention), and the support will help you deal with stress."

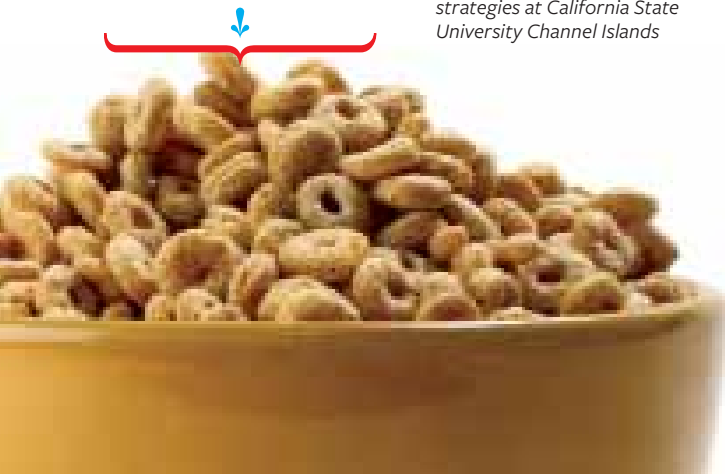
—Susan Love, MD

TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE "Walk at least 10,000 steps a day [track it with a pedometer]. Take the stairs, walk around your office, walk to work, or park your car farther away from your train platform or office building. Do this regularly for a few weeks, and your blood pressure tends to go down."

—Nieca Goldberg, MD, medical director of the Joan H. Tisch Center for Women's Health at NYU Langone Medical Center

TO PREVENT DIABETES "Floss your teeth once a day. It decreases the reaction that makes your blood vessels more vulnerable to diabetes and inflammation."

—Michael Roizen, MD, chief wellness officer at the Cleveland Clinic





TO GET CLOSER TO YOUR PARTNER

“Spend 20 minutes a day talking. It can be like oxygen for your relationship. Involve touch, too, to create a connection. It’s more important than you may think: People in long-term, healthy relationships tend to live longer, have better health, and report higher levels of happiness.”

—Wendy Walsh, PhD

TO LIVE LONGER

“Make sleep a priority—aim for seven to eight hours a night. There’s a fair amount of literature that says that chronic sleep deprivation impacts insulin resistance, and people who have shorter sleeps tend to die younger.”

—Nancy Collop, MD, director of the Emory Sleep Center and professor of medicine and neurology at Emory University School of Medicine

TO EASE BACK PAIN

“Strengthen your core. A lot of back pain is not just about weak back muscles; it’s about having weak core muscles. I tell my patients to get a 10-minute core workout

DVD and do it three or four times a week. That way, you’ll get the variety of exercises you need, without focusing too heavily on one area, like the abs.”

—Roberta Lee, MD

TO DE-STRESS FAST

“Do the 4-7-8 breath exercise. Numerous studies have been published on the health benefits of breathing exercises, especially for people who are experiencing significant stress, anxiety, or pain. Sit or lie in a comfortable position and place the tip of your tongue just behind your upper teeth throughout the exercise: • Exhale completely through your mouth, making a gentle *whoosh* sound.

- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose for a count of four.
- Hold your breath for a count of seven.
- Exhale completely through your mouth to a count of eight. Inhale and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.”

—Andrew Weil, MD

TO STOP A MIGRAINE

“Have sex! Many people say a headache is a reason to not have sex. In fact, there’s data that in 66 percent of women, having sex at the initiation of migraine symptoms prevents the headache from coming.”

—Michael Roizen, MD

WHAT THE DOCS DO

Our experts reveal the one health habit they stick to every day, no matter what:

- **DR. WEIL:** “I make a cup of green tea each morning. It’s healthy, and the ritual helps me prepare for the day ahead. I usually drink high-quality Japanese green tea, such as matcha and gyokuro.”
- **DR. LEE:** “I walk my two dogs every day. Having a pet makes you more active and increases your levels of the feel-good hormone oxytocin.”
- **WENDY WALSH:** “I bend over and touch my toes and hang there for a good minute and a half. My spine feels better, my neck feels better...it’s my secret pleasure.”
- **DR. GOLDBERG:** “I’m one of the lucky people who can walk to work, so I do.”
- **DR. COLLOP:** “I know it sounds corny, but I really do try to get eight hours of sleep a night.”
- **DR. RAJAPAKSA:** “I always try to have at least a couple of servings of fruit or vegetables, even when I’m traveling.”
- **DR. LOVE:** “Exercise! I’m an avid runner.”
- **DR. ROIZEN:** “I call my wife. She’s my best friend, and a best friend is the best stress reliever.”