

Health WellNews

Summer

Walk Your Way to Better Health

Starting a new fitness routine can be a little daunting, but improving your health doesn't have to be complicated. In fact, it can be as simple as putting one foot in front of the other!

Why walk?

Walking is an effective, easy, and low-impact way to improve your health. In fact, regular physical activity such as walking can provide major benefits, including:

- Reduced risk of heart disease
- Weight loss
- Lower blood pressure and cholesterol
- Reduced risk of developing diabetes
- Stress relief

Getting started

Set aside some time in your day, choose a safe route, invest in some comfortable walking shoes, and go! While it's ideal to get at least 45 minutes of moderate exercise a day, any amount of activity can be beneficial. Remember, start slowly and work your way up if you haven't been exercising regularly. Aim to walk a short distance three times a week, and increase your distance and speed gradually.

Stay motivated by walking with a partner, listening to music, or choosing a route that you really enjoy. Try carrying a pedometer to keep track of how far you've gone. As your body adjusts to the new activity, you may find that you have more energy, your moods feel more balanced, and you feel healthier overall. If you set realistic goals and stick to them, you'll be amazed at what a simple daily walk can do for your health!



Cool-Out Summer Salad

- 6 medium tomatoes
- 2 small cucumbers
- 4 radishes, sliced
- 2 scallions, minced
- 1 large dill or sour pickle, minced
- 1 bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup green olives, sliced
- 1/2 cup red onion, minced
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, minced
- 3 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 - 2 tbsps. fresh lemon or lime juice
- salt and pepper to taste

- Allow salad to marinate for 1 hour.
- Cut tomatoes in half, squeeze, discard seeds, and cut into 1/2 inch pieces.
- Toss all ingredients together. Serve cool or at room temperature.



From the Enchanted Broccoli Forest (revised) By Mollie Katzen



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The Season of Summer

Ahh, summer...



time for long, sunny days, warm weather, and brightly-blooming gardens. But the season is also significant in another way. According to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), the body's Organ systems are most accessible during specific times of year. During the late summer, the Spleen and Stomach are most active and most open to influence both positive and negative.

The Spleen and Stomach are associated with the Earth element, as well as certain colors, sounds, times of day, and other correspondences (see table). The Earth element is related to security, feeling grounded and the natural rhythms of life.

The Spleen performs many functions, including:

- Transforming food and fluids into energy
- Transporting energy to muscles, flesh and limbs
- Ensuring that blood circulates throughout the body
- Producing a "lifting" effect, keeping the internal organs in place
- Governing our capacity for thinking and concentration

The Stomach is paired with the Spleen, and helps to digest food and transform it into energy. When the Spleen and Stomach are in balance and Qi ("life energy") is flowing freely through them, the body will have physical energy and vitality, good muscle tone, a healthy appetite and good digestion. The Spleen and Stomach can be affected by many factors, including poor diet and eating habits, lack of exercise, excessive concentration, worry and stress.

If your Spleen and Stomach are out of balance, you may experience uncomfortable symptoms (see table on front). Even if you're not experiencing symptoms, it's an especially good time to receive preventive acupuncture care. Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine provide a natural approach to restoring and maintaining balance. When we strive for optimal balance, we achieve good health throughout the year.

By allowing Qi to flow freely, acupuncture can help your body heal itself and help you make the most of all the energy and fun of summer!

Food for Body, Mind, Spirit

Acupuncture and the Heart



Research has shown that acupuncture can improve the health of patients who experience severe heart problems by dramatically reducing the activity in the sympathetic nervous system that regulates heartbeat and blood pressure.

The study conducted through the Los Angeles School of Medicine suggests that acupuncture can be used "successfully with long-range results in improving hypertension, and it may also be beneficial in lowering sympathetic nerve activity."

Overactivation of the sympathetic nervous system is common with patients who suffer from heart problems. Over time, this may cause the heart to work harder, forcing blood to flow through blood vessels that are constricted due to heightened nerve activity.

The study showed that sympathetic nerve activation was significantly reduced in those individuals who received acupuncture care compared to those who only received a placebo. The lead physician in the study, Dr. Middlekauff, suggests, "that more study is needed before acupuncture can be recommended, but acupuncture has been used successfully and with long-range results in improving hypertension, and it may also be beneficial in lowering sympathetic nerve activity."

Middlekauff HR. Acupuncture in the treatment of heart failure. *Cardiol Rev.* 2004 May-Jun;12(3):171-3.

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Stay Healthy in Bed: Eight Rules For Improving Health After Waking Up

Stay Healthy in Bed: Eight Rules For Improving Health After Waking Up

Did you know that you can start improving your health before even leaving your bed?

After a deep, restful and relaxed sleep, your mind and muscles gradually begin to wake up. The eight rules introduced here are beneficial for improving and maintaining a healthy life and will help you slowly assimilate into a new day.

1

1 Eyeball Roll – With your eyes open, slowly roll eyeballs left to right, up and down and in circles to the right, then the left. This can improve the function and strength of the optic nerve, reinforce vision, and prevent eyestrain. Repeat nine times.

2

2 Ear Press – Place the palms of your hands flat against your ears, and your fingers at the base of your skull. Tap lightly with your pointer finger so you will hear a slight drumming sound. This can resolve fatigue, prevent dizziness, and activate important acupuncture points at the base of your skull. Repeat nine times.

3

3 Belly Breath – While lying on your back, inhale deeply into your abdomen, a few inches below your navel. Fill your belly and then your chest with your breath. Exhale forcefully, relaxing deeply and letting go of any worries that you have for the day. Repeat nine times.

4

4 Butt Awareness – Focus your attention around your anus. Tighten and hold the muscles around that area for 10-30 seconds, and then loosen. This can improve circulation around the anus and prevent prolapse and hemorrhoids. Repeat nine times.

5

5 Hip Raise – While lying on your back, stretch your arms out over your head and your toes away from you. Press your heels into your mattress, clench your buttocks, and raise your hips slightly off the mattress. Relax and lower your buttocks and hips, and repeat several times. This can stretch your muscles and help strengthen the back.

6

6 Teeth Bump – Close your lips. Gently bump your teeth together 36 times, while placing your tongue at the roof of your mouth, just behind your upper teeth. Any saliva that is produced from doing this should be swished around your mouth and swallowed in three swallows. This opens up acupuncture meridians along the chest and back, improves blood circulation to the mouth, teeth and gums, and increases saliva that clears the mouth of bacteria.

7

7 Head Rub – Run your fingertips through your hair 36 times from forehead to neck and ear-to-ear, from temples to crown. This stimulates blood circulation to hair roots, decreases gray hair, promotes shiny hair, and exercises your scalp.

8

8 Eye Rub – Make your hands into loose fists. Rub starting at the inner corner of your eyes. This can help clear the head, awaken your senses and provide clear vision for a new day.

Try these simple techniques to begin each day. Over time, you may experience a new sense of well-being and freshness when starting your days. Smile, and have a pleasant and peaceful day!



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Summertime Foods

As the weather grows warmer we often become more active and participate in a variety of outdoor activities. An ideal summer diet is light and filled with fresh foods with high water content, and brightly colored with summer fruits and vegetables.

Each organ has a specific flavor that affects it. Foods with a bitter taste stimulate the function of the heart. These include green leafy vegetables such as endive, escarole, lettuce and watercress, coffee, tea and chocolate. These foods can nourish the heart, but consumed in excess do more harm than good.

Raw fruits, fresh salads, cool soups and lightly cooked meals of grains and vegetables are adequate this time of year for healthy, vigorous adults. Sprouted vegetables and grains can be mixed in with a



variety of dishes to help maintain a cool body temperature.

You can even add a bit of spicy, pungent or fiery flavors. At first, spicy, fiery foods may raise the body temperature, but ultimately they can draw body heat out to the surface where it can be dispersed. For this purpose you can cook with red and green hot peppers, fresh ginger, red pepper, black pepper or cayenne. But don't overdo it. Keep your summer spice intake to a minimum.

If you are sautéing foods, use high heat for a short period of time. When simmering or steaming foods, do it as quickly as possible so you can retain the fresh tastes.

Consuming heavy foods on hot days can make you feel sluggish and slow down your digestion. Such foods include eggs, grains, seeds, nuts and meats. As a rule of thumb, eat heavier meals in the morning or evening. This type of summer diet can help you feel lighter in the heat of the day, maintain your energy, and aid in weight loss.

For better digestion and assimilation of nutrients, avoid mixing too many foods together at one sitting. Fruits and juicier foods are best eaten alone or between meals. Summer heat along with too many cold drinks can weaken digestive organs and impair digestion; too much ice cream and iced drinks are best avoided.

Summer invites us to become more active. Just be sure to stay hydrated by consuming enough water, juices and herbal teas.

Foods for a Summer Diet

BEANS

Adzuki
Garbanzo
Green
Kidney
Sprouted

FRUIT

Apricot
Avocado
Banana
Blackberry
Blueberry
Cantaloupe
Grapes
Grapefruit
Lime
Mango
Nectarine
Orange
Papaya
Pineapple
Peach
Pear
Plum
Raspberry
Strawberry
Watermelon

GRAINS

Brown rice
Millet
White rice

NUTS

Almonds

HERBS

Chili pepper
Chives
Cilantro
Fennel
Green tea
Mint
Parsley
Peppermint

SEEDS

Pumpkin
Sesame
Sunflower

VEGETABLES

Beets
Cabbage
Carrot
Celery
Chard
Collard greens
Corn
Cucumber
Green peas
Lettuce
Parsnip
Radish
Rhubarb
Spinach
Squash
Sugar peas
Sweet potato
Tomato
Yams
Zucchini



For more information on seasonal eating, see The Seasonal Food Guide poster and booklet published by Celestial Arts, Berkeley, CA.

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