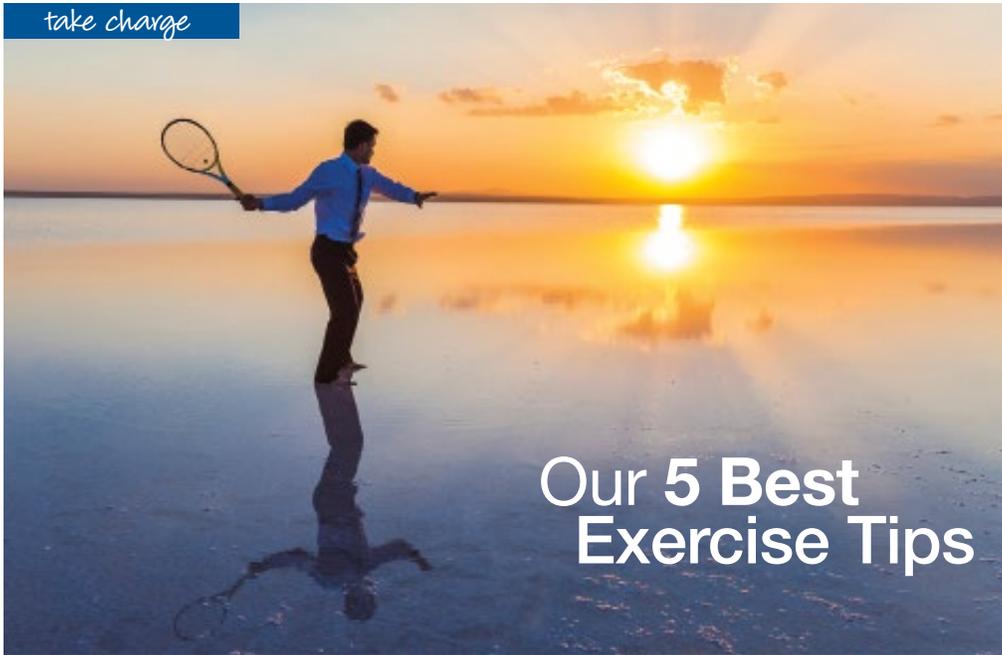


take charge



## Our 5 Best Exercise Tips

- 1. Topping the list is cardio exercise to help control weight.** If you do no other exercise this year, get in shape with sustained, moderate aerobic workouts for at least 30 minutes 5 days a week.
- 2. Next, muscle up.** Strength-building workouts 2 to 3 times weekly can help prevent and reduce symptoms of many age-related conditions, including: arthritis, back pain, heart disease, obesity, osteoporosis and poor balance.
- 3. Enjoy it.** List several activities that suit you. Vary your exercise – from swimming to golf to group aerobics – as you vary other interests in life.

➔ Continued on page 4.

## best bits

■ **It's not too late to get a flu shot.** While the best time to get vaccinated against seasonal flu is in October or November, getting a shot in January or later may still help. Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May. A new flu vaccine created without using eggs is also available for healthy adults ages 18 to 49. Talk to your health care provider about your vaccination needs – you may need other vaccines, too.

■ **Exercise when sick?** With a head cold you can usually maintain a soft or shortened workout, provided it doesn't make you feel worse. Note: For fever, chest cough or other miseries lower than neck level, rest until your symptoms subside. When in doubt ask your health care provider.

■ **Smoking raises the risk for colon cancer, especially in women.** A 14-year study of 600,000 Norwegians revealed women smokers, on average, were twice as likely as male smokers to develop colon cancer, and nearly 20% more likely than nonsmoking women. The study showed women who smoke even 10 or fewer cigarettes a day increased their risk.

“Don't be afraid to give up the good to go for the great.”

– John D. Rockefeller

## Genetic Testing: JUST THE FACTS

A genetic test examines DNA, the chemical database that carries instructions for your body to function. It can detect alterations in your genes that may suggest illness or disease. It is used to:



- Detect an inherited disease or its potential severity.
- Determine if you are likely to pass on any specific diseases to your children.
- Determine if you carry a genetic change that increases your risk for developing a disease, such as cancer or type 2 diabetes.
- Check for changes that may affect treatment for diseases such as HIV or some cancers.
- Screen all newborns for certain gene abnormalities that, if present, can result in immediate treatment – the most common reason for genetic testing.





## Top Health Hints for 2014

Reaching your health goals is the path to a longer, stronger future. Positive habits can help you avoid many chronic ailments that lead to premature aging and disability.

Here are 11 leading indicators to guide you.

| FOR BETTER:                | CHOOSE:  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Physical Fitness</b>    | daily exercise; weight control; strength training every other day; stretching exercises, especially for back, hips, legs |
| <b>Weight Control</b>      | cardio exercise; balanced meals; no super low-calorie diets  |
| <b>Bone Mass</b>           | weight-bearing exercise; strength workouts; no smoking   |
| <b>Sleep</b>               | a routine bedtime; avoid caffeine and alcohol; stress control  |
| <b>Immunity</b>            | sleep 7 to 9 hours daily; exercise daily; high fruit and vegetable intake  |
| <b>Arthritis Control</b>   | weight control; moderate exercise; or daily stretching   |
| <b>Asthma Control</b>      | active self-care to avoid triggers; proper use of medicine   |
| <b>Cholesterol Control</b> | monitor levels; weight control; no smoking; minimize saturated fat   |
| <b>Diabetes Control</b>    | monitor food intake, activity level and resulting blood sugar level  |
| <b>Mental Health</b>       | work-life balance; get help for lasting depression   |
| <b>Overall Health</b>      | tobacco-free; get help for quitting  |

*When changing health habits, start small and make steady progress.* Work with your health care provider on major challenges, such as tobacco cessation or weight loss.



## What's Causing Your Fatigue?

You know when your energy is low – your thinking slows down, physical actions become sluggish and the couch keeps calling. Some causes of fatigue are obvious, such as a strenuous day of sports or yard work, traveling, a sleepless night or an extra-long workday. But if the lethargy lingers, it can disrupt your daily life.

- > **The usual suspects include** sleep problems and poor nutrition as well as lack of muscular strength and fitness. Other sources include use of alcohol and some medications, fighting infection, dehydration and chronic pain.
- > **More subtle causes are emotional.** Ongoing depression and worry increase levels of stress hormones that may disrupt sleep and lead to numerous health problems.
- > **Age can be a factor, too.** By 50 or so you may find you tire more easily. But we can all regain that lost energy by getting adequate sleep, daily exercise and good nutrition, as well as managing stress management.
- > **Report persistent fatigue to your health care provider.** It may indicate a medical problem, such as heart trouble, sleep apnea or chronic fatigue syndrome.

*Finally, fatigue can be your body's way of saying slow down.* To balance your energy, manage your time. Set your priorities daily so you do what's essential and avoid pushing yourself too far.



### Cooking tip **Homemade salad dressings:**

Start with basic vinaigrette – about 3 parts oil to 1 part acid (such as vinegar or fresh citrus juice). To create a smooth consistency, add an emulsifier such as Dijon mustard, honey, yogurt or buttermilk; this may allow you to use less oil. Season with garlic and dried herbs. Taste test and refine.



## UPDATE: Obesity

**Obesity is having too much body fat.** It's a complex disorder affected by many things, including age, gender, genetics, general fitness, eating behavior, illness, medications, environment and socioeconomic status. And it's a common problem in the U.S. based on recent statistics from the CDC – more than 35% of U.S. adults are clinically obese.

**So how do health experts measure obesity?** You may have heard of **body mass index (BMI)**, a system used to classify weight. A BMI of 30 or more is considered obese; 25 to 29.9 is overweight. But BMI is no longer considered your best indicator of health risk because it is based only on weight. It does not

account for muscle, which adds weight and raises BMI.

**Nor does BMI measure body fat.** Excess belly fat, in particular, can be a warning sign for several health problems.

Your **waist circumference** indicates how much excess abdominal fat you have. To measure your waist place a tape measure snugly about your bare abdomen just above your hip bone. Keep that number healthy: Stay under 35 inches if you're a woman or under 40 inches if you're a man.

**To help offset weight gain, stay active.** Engage in moderate cardio activity (such as walking) for at least 30 minutes 5 days a week. This may not result in major weight loss, but it will improve your metabolism and your energy level. Also, reduce eating out and eat smaller portions.



## Coping Skills

The first step to controlling stress is awareness. Do you have healthful ways to cope so you can unwind and restore your good nature?

Take a breather and evaluate these statements:

1. I generally find satisfaction in my job.
  Yes  No
2. I accept change as a means for learning and opportunity.
  Yes  No
3. I tend to look for the humor in situations.
  Yes  No
4. I avoid eating to feel better emotionally.
  Yes  No
5. I don't use tobacco.
  Yes  No
6. I avoid using alcohol to calm down.
  Yes  No
7. I practice time management to stay organized.
  Yes  No
8. I usually get enough sleep.
  Yes  No
9. I exercise at least 30 minutes 5 times a week.
  Yes  No
10. I make time for solitude every day.
  Yes  No
11. I can usually rely on friends or family for emotional support.
  Yes  No

If you answered **yes** to at least 8 of the statements, you likely have a good outlook and ability to avoid stress. If you fall short, use the list above to develop new coping strategies that can help you manage your response to stress.



## Secrets of Salt

**The mineral sodium is the primary component of salt.** Sodium is also added to many packaged foods as a flavor enhancer or preservative base. If you've been advised to reduce sodium in your diet, removing the salt shaker isn't enough.

**What is?** Cutting back on processed and restaurant foods – the sources for about 90% of the sodium we consume. Other sources, such as cooking or the salt shaker, account for just 10% of sodium we eat.

We need a small amount of sodium for normal muscle functioning – far less than the 3,400 mg of sodium the average American gets daily. Guidelines recommend 1,500 to 2,300 mg a day. For many people, too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure, which is a risk factor for heart disease and other ailments.

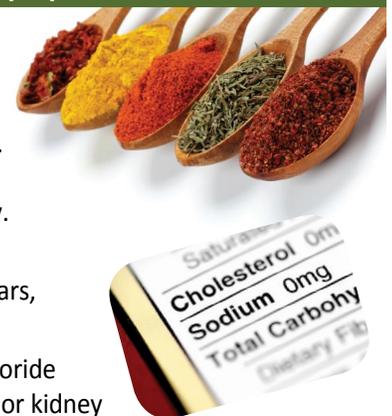
### Fortunately, cutting back is easy with a little preparation:

1. Eat fewer canned items, especially soups, pickled foods, deli meats, dressings, sauces, condiments and frozen entrees.
2. Check food labels to compare sodium content. Some brands have sodium levels significantly higher than other brands in the same category.
3. Cook from scratch more often. Add salt-free flavor enhancers such as citrus, flavored vinegars, garlic, onion, herbs and spices.

**Salt substitutes?** Those containing potassium chloride may not be recommended for people with heart or kidney disease, or those taking certain diuretics. Consult your health care provider.

**Sea salt or salts from exotic places?** They look pretty and offer different tastes and texture, but they contain the same amount of sodium as regular table salt.

*Decrease your use of salt gradually, and your taste buds will adjust.*



### Spinach Salad with Citrus Vinaigrette

- 4 cups **baby spinach leaves**  
 ¾ cup fresh **grapefruit segments and juice**  
 ¼ cup **red onion**, thinly sliced  
 2 tbsp slivered no-salt **almonds**
- Citrus Vinaigrette**  
 3 tbsp fresh **grapefruit juice**  
 1 tbsp fresh **lime juice**  
 1 tbsp **honey**  
 3 tbsp **olive or walnut oil**

Mix dressing and set aside for 1 hour before serving. Place spinach equally between 2 plates; top with remaining salad ingredients. Pour 1 tablespoon vinaigrette over each salad.

**Option:** Add a sprinkle of crumbled feta.

**New Year's Nutrition Goal:** *More Salad*



#### Salad makes 2 servings. Per serving:

122 calories | 3.8g protein | 4.1g total fat | .3g sat fat | 2.4g mono fat | .9g poly fat | 0.0mg cholesterol | 13.8g carbohydrate | 7.2g sugar | 3.7g fiber | 48mg sodium

#### Dressing makes 8 tbsp. Per tbsp:

67 calories; 5g total fat (.7g sat fat/3.7g mono/.5g poly); 6.4g carbohydrate; 6g sugar. Refrigerate leftover dressing in a sealed container.

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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### top safety

## Online Awareness

Nowadays, if you have a question, the answer is just a click away – on your tablet, phone or computer. However, how do you know what's safe to believe on the Web – especially when it comes to safety and health?

The Center on Media and Child Health advises readers to use questions such as these as a guide when determining if the site is valid:

1. Expertise: Who created the website and what qualifications or affiliations exist?
2. Purpose: Why was this site created? Who owns, funds or advertises on this site?
3. Impartiality: Is the information balanced, unbiased and valid?
4. Timeliness: Is the information current or outdated? When was it last updated? Check the bottom of the page for dates.
5. Accuracy: Is information true, correct, evidence-based and reviewed by experts? Who are the experts?
6. Clarity: Does the site avoid generalizations and presenting opinion as fact?
7. Validity: Do other sources confirm the author's credentials, facts and claims?
8. Relevance: Does the content describe and stick to the issue?



### expert advice

By Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

## Q: What is exercise physiology?

**A:** It's the study of the body processes we use when we participate in any kind of physical activity. Scientists in the field also examine how exercise can reduce or reverse progression of a variety of diseases. While some exercise physiologists are researchers, many of them work individually with clients. They may provide advice for general health and fitness, rehabilitation of heart disease and other disorders, treatment for disabilities, and guidance for athletes and sports enthusiasts.

**To find a qualified exercise physiologist:** Check with your state medical board. Many exercise physiologists have earned a degree in their field from an accredited college or university. Others are certified by the American Society of Exercise Physiologists after passing a specialized exam. Your provider is also a good source of referrals.

## Our 5 Best Exercise Tips

— Continued from page 1.

4. **Make it convenient.** Choose classes, a gym, a pool or a walking trail close by. At home, set up equipment in an area that's inviting and comfortable.
5. **Get your health care provider's advice,** especially if you have physical limitations. **Tip:** Ask about a personal trainer, who can help get you started with a customized routine.



This year make a difference in your health – give yourself time for exercise, and it will quickly repay you in added energy and better health.

