

You've got the **POWER**

You can't get a better deal than this, folks! With this miracle cure, you can reduce your risk of stroke, heart disease and reduce your stress levels. It will help you live longer and the best part is it's completely free and takes effect immediately.

And what could this be? Exercise!

Yes, it's true and we all know it, but many of us struggle with getting into the fitness habit. We work all day, then there are chores at home and by the time we have a chance to relax, it's time to go to bed.

The first thing we have to do is overcome this feeling that exercise is too difficult to fit into our routines. Here are some of the most common reasons we tell ourselves we can't start daily exercise and ways to overcome these reasons:

1. It's too hard!

Sure it is, if we set impossible goals for ourselves. And impossible goals include "going to the gym for an hour a day". **Start with a goal that is really easy like five minutes of exercise a day.** That's right, five. Work your way to 10 minutes after a month, and gradually increase it every month. Before you know it, one hour a day is part of your routine.

2. I don't know what I should do

This you have to be specific on. Don't just say you are going to exercise; say "I am going to take



a walk around the block," or "I am going to bike to work." It will make a difference.

3. No one cares but me

Other people do care. Our loved ones want us to stay healthy and look after ourselves. The best way to find this out is to use your social media outlets. If you are on Facebook or Twitter, report your progress, or tack your accomplishments up on the fridge. You will be pleased with the reaction and support you will get. It's a great motivator.

Experts say it takes two to three weeks to form a habit. Commit to five minutes per day and see what happens. You've got the power to do it!

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Eating three squares a day is more than just a simple pleasure, it is a necessity. Our bodies need nutrition and it's up to us to ensure we supply it with the best food possible.

The right balance of food comes from a variety of foods that should be consumed in the right portions and in the right amounts every day. If done well, many common ailments can be reduced or completely prevented. It's important to know that the vitamins, fiber, and disease-fighting elements found in fruit and vegetables cannot be duplicated in other foods.

Citrus fruits, for example, are an extremely important part of our diet. Recent studies, including one performed by Cornell University, have reported a direct link between the nutrients found in citrus fruit and reducing cancer risk. Researchers at the National Cancer Institute have long maintained that a low-fat diet high in vitamin C-rich foods may help reduce the risk of some types of cancer.

Citrus fruits contain so many important vitamins and minerals that it would be impossible to list them all. Vitamin C is probably the most well known nutrient provided by citrus fruits like oranges and grapefruits.

Vitamin C is thought to play an important role in keeping us healthy. It plays a vital role in keeping skin and gums healthy, and since vitamin C is not stored in the body like fat soluble vitamins are, it is important to eat foods high in vitamin C every day. Fortunately, it is easy to get the vitamin C you need each day from citrus fruits. For instance, a single orange contains over 150 percent of the recommended daily allowance of vitamin C.

Peel yourself an orange, or enjoy a glass of freshly-squeezed orange juice. It's tasty and it's good for you.

editor's zone

Feeling better is just one piece of fruit away . . .

It doesn't take much to "get off our butts and do something". We just need the right motivation, or so I've been told.

Luckily, my publisher gave me a new assignment called the Wellness Zone. He asked for a publication that is designed for all of us out there who would like to start (or continue) a healthier way of living, and need some information to help do it.

"Sure," I said, putting down my blueberry danish. "I can do that."

So, I began my research and I started to gather some fascinating facts and tips that I look forward to sharing with you. The most important thing I have learned is that wellness is about choices. Some of these choices are easy to make, others are not so easy, but no one is saying we have to start at the top and run marathons.

The best place to start is at our local grocery store. Choose to pick up some oranges or a grapefruit. Choose to have the grapefruit for breakfast rather than the danish. You'll start to feel better. I did.

Here's the part where I should tell you that in addition to vitamin C, oranges, grapefruits and other citrus fruits also contain significant amounts of fiber. Fiber plays an important role in digestion, and it is thought to have protective qualities against heart disease and some forms of cancer.

The Wellness Zone is written to provide tips and info to help all of us on our way to a healthier lifestyle. Start with one small choice - a piece of fruit, or a glass of fresh orange juice. You will feel the difference a healthy choice can make!

- Kate Peeren

Up your stress tolerance level

We hear the word "stress" bantered about so often, it almost becomes a joke. She's stressed about the upcoming meeting; he's stressed about the mortgage, and the kids are stressed about performing well at school. Heck, even the dog is stressed because there have been no "walkies" for a week.

But stress is no laughing matter.

According to www.helpguide.org, stress is a normal physical response to events that make you feel threatened or upset your balance in some way. When you sense danger – whether it's real or imagined – the body's defences kick into high gear in a rapid, automatic process known as the "fight-or-flight" reaction, or the stress response. The stress response also helps you rise to meet challenges.

Stress is what keeps you on your toes during a presentation at work or sharpens your concentration when you're driving. The stress response is the body's way of protecting you. When working properly, it helps you stay focused, energetic, and alert. In emergency situations, stress can save your life – giving you extra strength to defend yourself, for example, or spurring you to slam on the brakes to avoid an accident.

However, there comes a point when stress stops being helpful and starts causing major damage to your health, your mood, your productivity, your relationships, and your quality of life. Everyone has different stress levels and only you

can be in tune to yourself to determine when you have reached your "stress"-hold. Your ability to tolerate stress depends on a number of factors including your general outlook on life, your emotions and even genetics.

Here are some things that influence your stress tolerance level:

■ **Your sense of control** – If you have confidence in yourself and your ability to influence events and persevere through challenges, it's easier to take stress in stride. People who are vulnerable to stress tend to feel like things are out of their control.

■ **Your attitude and outlook** – Stress-hardy people have an optimistic attitude. They tend to embrace challenges, have a strong sense of humor and accept that change is a part of life.

■ **Your ability to deal with your emotions** – You're extremely vulnerable to stress if you don't know how to calm and soothe yourself when you're feeling sad, angry, or afraid. Learn to bring your emotions back into balance to help you bounce back from adversity.

■ **Your knowledge and preparation** – The more you know about a stressful situation, including how long it will last and what to expect, the easier it is to cope. For example, if you go into surgery with a realistic picture of what to expect post-op, a painful recovery will be less traumatic than if you were expecting to bounce back immediately.

Good to know

Did you know that taking a 20-30 minute nap could improve your daily performance? It's true! Here are some tips:

- Set an alarm to wake you up in 20-30 minutes.
- Nap in the late morning or early afternoon. If you nap late in the day you may disrupt your nighttime sleep.
- Minimize sleep distractions with a dark and quiet place to nap.



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Take the time to drink

Thirsty? It's very likely that you are even if you don't feel like having a drink. Some believe that dehydration can't affect us as we are surrounded by water, but it is a problem if we don't drink it.

Chronic dehydration is a common condition and affects everyone who does not drink enough fluids. Here are several symptoms:

- **Exhaustion, lack of energy.** Dehydration reduces tissue enzymatic activity.

- **Constipation.** Normally the food getting to the intestinal tract contains much water. The intestine walls absorb the water and also absorb the nutrients dissolved in the water to supply the body with both. The rest of the food that was not absorbed turns into the stool. If you don't drink water enough, the intestine takes too much water from the stool that leads to constipation.

- **Gastritis, gastric ulcer.** To protect the stomach wall from injury by gastric acid, the stomach is lined with mucous membrane which contains 98% water. Its structure is deteriorated in the case of dehydration leading to poor protective action.

- **Extra weight and obesity.** We often overeat because we need water contained in food. Thirst is often confused with hunger.

- **Eczema.** Your body requires minimum one liter of water daily to dilute the toxins and skin irritants.

- **Cholesterol.** When the cells are losing water, the body tries to stop this loss by producing more cholesterol.

- **Rheumatism.** Because dehydration increases the concentration of toxins in the blood and cellular fluid, the more toxins, the stronger the pain.

A regular intake of fluids, water in particular, can help avoid such conditions. According to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, the average woman requires 11.5 cups of total water per day to stay hydrated, while a man needs up to 16 cups of total water per day. Approximately 80% of your daily fluids should come from beverages.

To help reach your water intake goals try incorporating the following tips into your daily habits:

- **Eat water-based foods—**Add water-based foods, such as lettuce, cucumbers, celery, melons and tomatoes to your meals. It will increase your daily water intake and help your waistline as well.

- **Carry a water bottle—**Keep a water bottle with you at all times to avoid the first sign of dehydration: feeling thirsty.

- **Slow down your mealtimes** by drinking a mouthful of your favourite beverage after every bite of food. This will help you reach your required amount of water for the day and can help cut down on calories consumed during each meal.

Stand up and sit down!

Pssst. Are you sitting at your computer right now? How long have you been sitting there? A couple of minutes, or a couple of hours? Have you moved at all? Sitting still for long periods of time, the way you sit, type and hold the phone, all can have serious effects on your body. Your muscles and joints need some activity.

And it's not only carpal tunnel syndrome you should be worried about. Neck and back problems can occur all because of improper sitting and lack of movement.

It's time to stand up and sit down. That's right, just stand up and sit down – without using your hands. You will be surprised how challenging it is if you stand up and sit down several times in a row without using your hands for support.

Here are a few other tips, courtesy of Angela Smith, MD, orthopaedic surgeon at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia:

- **Inhale deeply and shrug your shoulders,** lifting them high up to your ears. Hold. Release and drop. Repeat three times.

- **Shake your head slowly, yes and no.** Ask yourself silly questions to enjoy this little exercise more: "Does my co-worker really think that sweater fits?" Move your head up and down, "Yes, yes, yes." Side to side: "No. No. No." (Shedding tension is as much mental as physical).

- **Grab the seat of your chair to brace yourself and extend your legs straight out** in front of you so they are parallel to the floor. Flex and point your toes five times. Release. Repeat.

- **Instead of emailing a colleague and copying 25 people who don't want to be copied anyway,** walk over to the colleague you really want to talk to.

- **Instead of a lunch meeting at your desk,** walk together to a neighborhood sandwich shop. Talk while you walk -- it's more efficient and productive. You're getting more oxygen to the brain, you have no distractions, and you're more likely to remember what is said.

Apps help in quest for health

Smart phones and tablets are fast becoming part of our daily accessories. With this little device in the palm of our hand we can find out what the temperature is outside, where the traffic jams are and if the trains are on time.

Of course, our well being is not ignored in the "app" world. Here are a few worth checking out:

MyFitnessPal (iPhone and Android)

Tracking exercise and caloric intake is something that can be frustrating and difficult for many people. MyFitnessPal is an app that allows you to easily and quickly enter this information. You can monitor all aspects of your daily food intake, share progress with others, get motivation and

set exercise, weight and dietary goals.

Runkeeper (iPhone and Android)

By utilizing the GPS functionality of the phone, Runkeeper is able to track your exercise. Things such as distance, calories burned and heart rate can all of the monitored with this program.

Smokebreak (iPhone)

For many people, quitting smoking is a difficult task. It needs to be up to the individual to finally make this decision and stick with it. Smokebreak is a unique app in that it tracks and monitors your progress towards a particular goal. If an individual simply wants to limit the smoking he does, then this app is perfect.

Supporting sustainability

If it's good for the environment, it's good for us. These words are spoken by many people in our communities who are choosing the path to sustainable living, including employers and business owners.

It really doesn't take much to adapt your habits to "green" ones. Here are some ideas you can try at home with your family. Involve everyone in the decision making. It's more fun for the kids to take an active role in sustainable living.

- **Turn off the water while brushing your teeth.** Fill a cup with water and use it instead of running water. This applies to shaving as well. Partially fill the sink bowl to rinse your razor instead of running the water.

- **Thinking about repainting your house?** If you live in a cold climate, paint your house a dark color. **Dark colors reflect as little as 3 percent of sunlight, thus absorbing more heat.** If you live in a warm climate, paint your house a light color that will reflect up to 90 percent of sunlight and keep your house cooler.

- **Before discarding empty latex paint cans,** leave the top off and allow the remaining paint to dry completely. Latex paint is not hazardous once it is solidified.

- **Use your microwave.** Cooking and reheating with a microwave is faster and more efficient than using the stovetop or oven, thus reducing up to 70 percent of energy use.

- **Use a toaster oven for small jobs.** It will use a third to half as much energy as a full-size oven.

- **Arrange furniture to take advantage of natural light from windows.** Place desks and reading chairs next to windows to cut down on the need and use of supplemental, artificial light during the day.

Give yourself a minute or two

When we wake up in the morning and think of our busy day ahead, sometimes it's important for us to take a few minutes or call a "personal time out".

The Internet is filled with tips and blogs about how to do this. Here are a few ideas that could be beneficial:

- **Allow yourself time to sit quietly,** whether that's at your desk, on your favorite chair at home, or outside on a park bench. **For five minutes each day, create time and space to sit, breathe, and simply be.** It can be hard to find that space, but it's there. Get up five minutes earlier, go to bed five minutes later, or make it a lunch time routine. No matter when in the day you do it, you'll reap the benefits. You'll be energized, more aware, and in tune to your day.

- **Develop a personal practice.** Consider reading a book before bed, or taking a regular

walk in your neighborhood. Find a practice that nourishes you, beyond your roles and responsibilities, one that enables you to escape and reconnect with yourself.

- **Allow yourself to say no.** Being able to know your own capacity for commitments stems from self awareness. **It's not easy to say no, and requires diligence to execute. It requires you to look at your responsibilities objectively and remove the items that don't fit there.** If a commitment, action, or responsibility doesn't better you, your profession, your life ambitions, or family, then it might not be a good fit. If all it does is add to your to do list and offers nothing of substance in return, then it's time to let it go, and move your focus forward.

- **Give yourself a break. Believe that you can afford to take this time out.** You will be able to face your daily challenges with a better outlook.

Nutrition is critical for our children

Between extra curricular activities, school and the playground, kids need proper nutrition now more than ever. However, achieving these nutritional goals can be difficult, especially when parents are just as busy as the kids.

While it may be easier to go through a drive-thru on our way to the next activity or meeting, often it is not the most nutritional choice. A visit to <http://www.foodfacts.info/> provides you with details about the items found on most fast food menus. Some of the numbers shown may be shocking.

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, even drinks can provide challenges.

For instance, energy drinks and sports drinks are placed alongside fruit juice and water, giving them the impression they are healthy choices. This isn't the case. In fact, sports drinks are only

needed after an hour of heavy exertion, while energy drinks contain significant levels of caffeine and should be avoided in kids' diets altogether.

Here are some tips to keep your kids well-fueled:

- **Include your children in planning snacks,** so they are more likely to eat them when the time comes.

- **Freeze a batch of low-fat muffins** so you always have some on hand to include in a lunch box for a quick and delicious snack.

- **When choosing a restaurant, be sure to do your research ahead of time and know where the healthier options are located. A few different choices from the menu could make all the difference.**



recipe
zone

It's time to enjoy the crispness of the fall weather in our food preparations. Whether you are picking them fresh from your own backyard garden or visiting the weekly farmers' market make sure to use produce that is both fresh and seasonal.

A few seasonal salad ingredients to look for this time of year include fruits such as apples, pears, cranberries and grapes, and vegetables such as fennel, cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli.

Take a spin around the internet to find some interesting fall salad recipes. For a delicious apple salad recipe visit: <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Autumn-Apple-Salad-II/Detail.aspx>. How about something with cranberries? Check out: <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Missys-Candied-Walnut-Gorgonzola-Salad/Detail.aspx>

Do you have a recipe you would like to share with our readers? Email: editor@skilven.com and become part of our Wellness Zone healthy eating recipe book!