AIR

Well, the best air to breathe for optimum health is oxygen-rich, negatively charged air. The negative charge in air is usually attached to oxygen. Air molecules can gain or lose electrical charges due to sunlight, cosmic radiation, and moving air and water. Negative ions tend to concentrate near rivers and waterfalls due to their movement. They also exist in places like beaches, forests, mountains, and interestingly enough, areas that have just been struck by lightning. All of these places have something in common, other than the profusion of healthy negative ions: they all seem to congregate in the outdoors; specifically, the wild and natural outdoors

Negative ions are also referred to as “happy ions” because they contribute to better moods, more energy, and an overall sense of well-being. Have you ever noticed your mood after leaving a sunny day at the beach or after hiking to a grand, rushing waterfall? Maybe you noticed that you feel refreshed, calm, and happy. There’s a reason for that happiness: studies show that people who spend time in environments with a high negative ion concentration are less likely to be depressed. They sleep better and have more energy, too!

When we breathe, we don’t move nearly all the air in our lungs. An interesting way our body tries to remedy this is through a sigh. We sigh because our brains want to flush out some of the stale air in our lungs, and so we’re periodically triggered to take in a deep breath, i.e. a sigh.

It’s much more helpful to go somewhere we can find a higher concentration of negatively charged particles and intentionally take 3-5 very deep breaths of that clean air.

Afterward, bend over at the waist and cough at the end of the expiration.. The result of rising oxygen levels is a clearer mind.

! Take it a step further and grow a few plants indoors—they can be used to “grow” your own fresh air. Some of the best plants for this are plants with a large surface area, such as ferns, palms, and lilies.

EXERCISE

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), only 23% of Americans get any regular light to moderate physical activity. In light of this information, is it any wonder that we are in the middle of an obesity epidemic? Regular physical activity decreases our risk for many diseases including: obesity, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, osteoporosis, many cancers, anxiety and depression. An ongoing study, (which began in 1984,) has been monitoring the difference between two groups of people at Stanford University: the ‘ever-runners’ and the ‘never-runners’. The health of these two groups has been tracked for nearly three decades. Not surprisingly, the data has shown that exercise is critical to health. Over the years, compared with the never-exercisers, people who exercised regularly showed improved aerobic capacity, better heart health, and increased bone mass, less inflammation, less physical disability, and even improved thinking, learning and memory. They also lived significantly LONGER

The Increasing your physical activity after the age of 50 has tremendous benefits. Not only can it add 2-4 years to your life, but a recent study has shown that people who remain physically active remain disability-free for an additional 5.7 years.

So you will not only live longer, but the quality of your life will be better for a longer period of time. Of all the health habit choices we can make, maintaining physical fitness is the most important. It has been shown that burning as little as 500 calories per week has positive health benefits— That is the equivalent of walking only 5 miles/week. However, this is a case of “If a little is good, more is better.” We recommend walking 2-3 miles/day six days a week

NUTRITION

Over the last several decades, we’ve been trained to want a “faster” and “easier” mode of doing everything.. The goal for those of us trying to maintain or improve our health is to prepare most of our foods from ingredients that are healthy. Ideally, many are products that we grew in our own gardens, or from a farmers market, or, at the very least, aren’t packed full of chemicals and disease. We like to tell people to shop at the edges of the store because that’s where a lot of the good stuff lives. Things like fruits, vegetables, nuts, and grains are often found around the edge. Ironically, the things in boxes often live in the center of the store. These are often highly processed and their origins, as well as their nutritional value, can be ill-defined. In our fast-paced society, we need to develop strategies that reduce prep time. Cooking can be a social thing, but usually people just need to get it done and move on. By eating more of our foods raw, we can obviously reduce prep time while getting the highest nutrition possible from that product.

Remember to consume plenty of water. Consume 10 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Eat a level handful of nuts each day. 20% of all calories now come from snack foods—eliminate snacks. Choose whole grains—whole wheat bread, whole grain cereals, and brown rice Avoid sugar-sweetened beverages, including fruit juice. Eat more legumes. Learn to read food labels. The subject of nutrition can be confusing and appear daunting, especially with the conflicting opinions people throw around on the Internet and TV. This program is designed to be simple and easy to follow, given your dedication to bettering your life. In our desire to live longer and feel better about ourselves, remember that good nutrition is one of the best ways to get there, and you can get there.

REST

**Have you ever stayed up all night studying for a test? Have you ever wondered why our bodies  
convince us to close our eyes and drift away for 8 hours every night? Why do we sleep? What would happen if we just decided to stop sleeping? How long would we be able to last? The world record for living without sleep is 11 days. Lab rats actually die from sleep deprivation faster than starving to death! Like breathing, eating, and moving, sleep is an instinctual, critical component of our lives that can be carried out in an unhealthy or healthy manner. We’re going to talk about the effects of both. Most, if not all, of us can feel the effects of not getting enough sleep. It hits us hard the next morning like an overindulgent meal—we feel foggy and drained, our memory doesn’t work so well, and we can struggle to carry out even the simplest of tasks. A recently published study reported that if you regularly sleep less than 7 hours each night, your immune system would suffer for it, making you three times more likely to get sick. People with little sleep also tend to be more overweight and have shorter lifespans. Research has actually shown that sleeping less alters the metabolic pathways that regulate appetite, making you feel hungrier as a result. Quality sleep on a regular basis is necessary for a robust immune system.**

**So how much sleep do we need? It has been shown that for those adults sleeping less than 7 hours, their risk of dying increases by 21% in women and 26% in men.**

1. **Turn off the lights. Light suppresses the body’s natural release of melatonin.**
2. **Avoid electronic devices. Television viewing, computers, and mobile phone use just before bedtime hinders our natural ability to fall asleep. The sleep that we get before midnight is much more beneficial and can be worth almost twice as much as that after midnight.**
3. **Relax and get comfortable. Drinking a glass of water at this time has been shown to reduce your risk of heart attack that night by 50%–make it part of your routine. Your bedroom should be a sanctuary of calmness and peace.**
4. **Say no to drugs. Sleep aids, such as sleeping pills, should be avoided. They increase your risk of many diseases as well as shorten your lifespan**
5. **Watch what you eat. If your stomach is still churning away, you can imagine why it may be hard to go to sleep and to stay asleep. It is best to eat your lightest meal in the evening and then nothing after that.**
6. **Be thankful. Closing the day by contemplating the day’s blessings and spending time in prayer is another way to get peaceful sleep. Forgive those who you need to and make amends with the people you have wronged.**

SUNLIGHT

It's warm, it's bright—the sun is generally thought to be a pretty happy component in our everyday lives. But why do we need it? What makes it indispensable to our lives? Two words: Vitamin D. There is a cholesterol-like compound in our blood that transforms into Vitamin D when exposed to sunlight. This Vitamin D is then converted to its active form by the liver and then by the kidneys. Well, that begs the question, why do we need Vitamin D? What happens if you don't have enough? For years we've understood Vitamin D's role in regulating calcium levels and how a deficiency can cause both rickets and osteoporosis. Today, we know that Vitamin D also has an important role as a steroid hormone in gene modulation. This means Vitamin D can help turn on health promoting genes while suppressing bad genes, especially oncogenes, a gene-group that promotes cancer. Spend more time in the sun. It's an easy step towards making your life a little bit better (and brighter).

TEMPERANCE/SELF-CONTROL

Think about it, too much of anything is bad. Even drinking too much water can be deadly. Wouldn’t you agree that we need to keep our habits in check? Take the sun for example. Sunlight is a great example of moderation for health. It only takes a few minutes of full exposure in the middle of the day to convert adequate amounts of vitamin D. Yet, while enjoying 20-30 minutes in the sun can have an amazingly positive influence on our mood, spending too much time in the sun can lead to sunburn, and even cancer. Some of you may associate the word “temperance” with the Temperance Movement of the 1800s, which, among other things, urged or prohibited the consumption of alcoholic beverages. But temperance is much more than avoiding alcohol or limiting yourself to one lump of sugar in your tea. Try to think of temperance as a state of mind wherein you seek to practice balance with your body and your passions. It’s really an age-old conflict, stretching back to Ancient Greece and even to the dawn of mankind. If you remember the story, the first humans Adam and Eve struggled with intemperance in diet and wound up eating the forbidden fruit. So how do we practice moderation in our own lives? As mentioned earlier, we need to figure out how to control our bodies and our actions. An extremely challenging place to do this is in our diets. Obesity in much of the advanced world is becoming a widespread public health issue that if left unchecked, will soon become the leading cause of death. So when it comes to your food choices, think and choose temperately. Eat enough to sustain your physical needs, and choose nutrient rich foods that will make your body happy. Other products that stimulate our senses like nicotine, caffeine, and depressants like alcohol are another subject I’d like to touch on. Historically, temperance had a strong association with alcohol.

The true key to living a temperate lifestyle lies in our minds. We need to learn to safeguard our thoughts and carefully monitor our emotions. If you’re the type to give rise to anger easily, take a few deep breaths and learn the power of forgiveness. If you’re prone to bragging, give way to more humble conversation. If you’re the judgmental type, give compassion or empathy a try. Think of your mind as a springboard for all of your actions. If you can learn to use your mind carefully and wisely, you will have won the battle against intemperance.

TRUST

The health benefit of regularly attending religious activities is comparable to not smoking! Well, for starters, different studies have shown a connection between a lack of religious service attendance and the likelihood of having respiratory disease, infectious disease, or diabetes. The health risk extends so far as having high blood pressure, depression, suicide, lung cancer, coronary heart disease, chronic obstructive lung disease, and hospital admissions. It is also more likely to become physically disabled and suffer from weaker immune systems. In contrast, regular church attendees were more likely to stop smoking, increase their physical activity, become more social, and stay married.

Organized religion usually provides a social support system that’s been shown to improve overall health. In a study of cardiac surgery patients, people with low social support who did not depend on their religious faith for strength had a mortality rate that was 12 times higher than people who did have a strong religious support network to rely on.

Ever consider the phrase “power of prayer”? Academic studies show that prayer has beneficial health effects, particularly for the person who is doing the praying. Studies of ‘petitionary’ prayer, in which a person prays for his or her own health or peace of mind, show tangible statistical results. Science backs up the benefits of praying for your own health, especially when it comes to mental health like clinical depression. So, does God change our brains? Or, as our creator, does God know what makes us the most healthy?

I believe that God wants to be in a relationship with us. When we allow him into our lives, our brains are ‘turned on’, our bodies are made more efficient, our immune systems are strengthened, thinking becomes clearer, and, well, we feel great. In our goal to live longer, healthier lives, being rooted firmly in God and fellowshipping with likeminded believers has been shown to be one of the most effective strategies.

WATER

Today, I am going to tell you about a product that will reduce your risk of heart attack. It is at least as effective as maintaining an ideal body weight, reducing high blood pressure, reducing cholesterol or stopping smoking. It is virtually free and there are no side effects in healthy people. This product, if taken in recommended amounts, will cure or significantly reduce the incidence of many diseases. This includes kidney stones, gall bladder disease, constipation, urinary tract infections, high blood pressure, glaucoma, and venous blood clots. Although not yet proven scientifically, this product is thought to be important in reducing or improving most diseases known to man. On top of that, there are no adverse effects in healthy people. In fact, overall health and well-being are improved. Have you figured out what we are talking about? Two hydrogen atoms bound to one oxygen atom forming H2O. (Or water).

A study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology showed that those who drank more than 5 glasses of water per day had significantly less death from coronary heart disease compared to those who drank less than 2 glasses per day. Dr. Chan, the principle investigator, wrote, “Basically, not drinking enough water can be as harmful to your heart as smoking.” Drinking over 5 glasses of water per day will cut the risk of coronary heart death in half. This has an equal or greater effect than any other well-known preventive measure. The researchers also noted that if people drank anything other than pure water their risk for coronary heart deaths actually increased. This includes tea, coffee, soda, and even fruit juices. Dr. Chan noted, “People need to be made aware that there is a difference, at least for heart health, whether they get their fluids from plain water or from sodas”.

It is helpful to drink at least one glass of water as soon as you wake up in the morning as well as a glass of water at bedtime. This has been shown to significantly reduce your heart attack risk for that night. Your body is 75% water and your brain is 85% water. Water is more than a simple solvent— it is important in many body functions. With all of these benefits, why don’t we hear more about water? Could it be, because you cannot patent water, there is no profit in its research or its promotion? As you can see, in our goal to live longer, better, healthier lives, we need to develop the habit of drinking generous amounts of water, in conjunction with reducing (or eliminating) the consumption of tea, coffee, soda, and fruit drinks.