

49 ways to stay healthy while staying home

You can make these small changes to improve your diet, fitness, mental health and more – all without leaving your house

Many of us are concerned about maintaining our health while staying inside more. Why not try one of these top tips to help you stay healthy?

Healthy tips you can try at home

Challenge yourself to try one of these tips today

1. Wash your hands

You might be tired of hearing it, but washing your hands is an excellent way to stave off infection and food poisoning. Check out our 'how to' guide to [handwashing](#) to help you get back to basics.

2. Lift weights

You don't have to go to the gym to boost your strength. Look online for bodyweight exercise tutorials that require no equipment at all. You can also use household objects as makeshift weights – from a tin of beans to a bucket of water.

3. Get 8 hours

A good night's [sleep](#) is crucial to feeling your best. Most people need a minimum of eight hours of good quality sleep every night, so make sure to have a set bedtime and stick to it.

4. Drink more water

Always aim to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. Staying hydrated keeps skin healthy, helps kidney function and boosts performance during exercise.

5. Practice yoga

Yoga helps bone health, increases blood flow, improves balance and boosts the immune system. Practice 1-2 times a week to feel the benefit. YouTube tutorials are great for when you're stuck at home.

6. Exercise with a friend

Working out with a friend can help you to put in longer hours and push your limits, and always makes exercising more fun. Consider a distanced outdoor workout (following the latest government guidelines) or set each other challenges to try separately - and hold each other accountable in a regular online catchup. You could even hold an exercise session together over video chat.

7. Keep learning

Whether cooking a new recipe or trying your hand at crafts, new experiences trigger neuron creation and keep your brain strong.

8. Improve your posture

Reduce back pain and alleviate muscle tension when sitting by resting your feet flat on the floor, with even weight at both hips, keeping your back straight and relaxing your shoulders.

9. Protect your skin

Sun protection shouldn't be limited to the beach. Around 80% of UV rays penetrate through clouds, making it important to protect your skin all year round even if you're just walking to the shops or doing some gardening.

10. Read more books

Whether you love the classics or are a true crime aficionado, 30 minutes of reading a day can reduce the chance of Alzheimer's disease and keep your brain strong. Many classic novels in the public domain are available online for free, so why not tick one off your bucket list?

11. Take a deep breath

Mindful breathing can keep you present, settle your thoughts and help you centre your attention. Download breathing apps to help you stay focused.

12. Meditate

Studies have shown that mindfulness meditation can help to reduce anxiety, improve your mood and lower levels of the stress hormone, cortisol. You can find an online class on YouTube, if you're not sure where to start.

13. Be a social butterfly

'Meet up' with friends and family on a regular basis. As well as a socially distanced catch-up, you can stay in touch over text, video chat, email or by calling them on the phone. Get creative – why not host a virtual game night, book club or quiz over video chat? Having a close social circle is not only a good excuse for fun days out, it can lift you up when you're feeling low at home.

14. Schedule a siesta

A NASA study found that pilots had a respective 34% and 54% improvement in performance and alertness after a 26-minute nap. Don't doze for longer than 30 minutes – otherwise you'll wake up feeling groggy.

15. Eat more fibre

Fibre reduces cholesterol levels and lowers the risk of heart disease and colorectal cancer. Your recommended daily intake of fibre is 30g.

16. Be savvy with salt

Adults should eat less than six grams of [salt](#) per day. Keep an eye on salt levels in ready meals, and avoid using salt at the table.

17. Look after your eyesight

Eyesight changes rapidly after the age of 40. Take frequent breaks if you spend a lot of your day looking at screens.

18. Drink coffee

Coffee is packed with antioxidants which may help fend off Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. Just three cups a day can lower the risk

of heart disease and other serious health conditions. Do be careful if you have a condition that's aggravated by caffeine – this may not be the right advice for you!

19. Exercise outside

Trees produce phytoncides, which work to lower blood pressure and calm your stress levels, so exercising in the great outdoors can boost your mental health.

20. Avoid blue light before bedtime

Electronic screens emit blue light, which suppresses the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin. Guarantee a good night's sleep by keeping your bedroom an electronics-free zone.

21. Eat more turmeric

Turmeric is packed with antioxidants and linked to reducing the risks of cancer, liver disease and Alzheimer's disease. Add it to your curries, soups and smoothies.

22. Grow green fingers

One hour spent gardening can burn up to 330 calories, lower your blood pressure and release stress.

23. Look on the bright side

Having a sunny disposition can boost your immune system and lower instances of depression. It can also result in lower blood pressure and improve sleep quality.

24. Get active

Aim to do 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise each week. Achieve your target by trying an exercise video on YouTube or having a dance party in your living room with the family.

25. Do your housework

Household chores like hanging up clothes and sweeping can burn 150 and 269 calories respectively within an hour. Plus, living in a clean and tidy environment benefits your mental health.

26. Let the sunshine in

Sunlight is a source of vitamin D, which helps our brains release mood-boosting endorphins and serotonin. Enjoy the sun for 30 minutes to two hours per day and use SAD lights in the darker months.

27. Take good care of your teeth

Maintain your million dollar smile by brushing your teeth twice a day, flossing after each meal and scheduling appointments with your dentist every six months (under normal circumstances).

28. Eat earlier

Eat earlier in the evening to allow plenty of time for digestion. This has many health benefits, one of which is improving your chance of getting a good night's sleep.

29. Manage stress

Managing stress effectively is central to mental wellbeing. Write down your stresses so you can prioritise the issues that need addressing.

30. Help others

Helping others can do wonders for your own self-esteem. If you're able, post your neighbours a letter offering to pick up groceries. If you can't get out and about, why not make a donation to a good cause, like a food bank or animal shelter?

31. Do things you enjoy

Whether it's baking, painting or watching your favourite TV show, find time to do the things you love. Enjoying 'me time' keeps you happy.

32. Enjoy extra-virgin olive oil

Consuming extra-virgin olive oil (or EVOO) has been shown to reduce your risk of heart disease, and its richness in antioxidants makes it a great addition to your dining table.

33. Cook from scratch

Have more control over what goes in to what you eat by preparing your own food from scratch.

36. Outfit organisation

Decluttering is beneficial to boosting self-esteem and reducing stress, so why not set up a donation pile for any unwanted clothes and shoes? Host a virtual clothes swap with friend and family and save any clothes your friends want for the next time you see them

35. Get vaccinated

Make sure that you are up-to-date with your vaccinations to keep you and your family safe.

36. Finesse your finances

Money worries can be very stressful. Keep a closer eye on the pennies by working out a weekly or monthly budget and use an app to track your day-to-day spending.

37. Couch to 5K

This nine-week programme is designed to help beginners complete a 5K. Not only can running help you lose weight, it's also a great way to improve bone density.

38. Watch your steps

From smartwatches to fitness bands, wear tech to monitor your steps, workouts, stress levels, quality of sleep and more. If you don't fancy an extra device, check your smartphone app store for suitable apps.

39. Try a digital detox

Set a limit on how much time you spend on digital devices. Stay present in your offline downtime by fighting the urge to check emails or social media notifications.

40. Cut down on sugar

Sugary snacks don't fill you up, and a sugar rush only causes you to eat more. Opt for fruit and nut snacks whenever you can.

41. Reduce your saturated fat intake

Eating saturated fats increases cholesterol levels and raises your risk of heart disease. Opt for simple food swaps such as lean meats and lower fat dairy products, though beware of added sugar in these.

42. Eat more fish

Have a little fishy on a little dishy at least twice a week. Oily fish such as sardines and pilchards are good sources of Omega 3 fats, which protect against heart disease. If you don't eat meat, you can find Omega 3 in walnuts, flaxseeds or chia seeds – try adding them to a meal.

43. Incentivise your workouts

Reward yourself for meeting workout milestones with incentives – such as days out with loved ones – to help you stick to your goals.

44. Check food labels

Pay attention to calorie, fat, salt and sugar content on labels when buying food, and use traffic light labelling to inspire healthier choices.

45. Eat slowly

The benefits of slow eating include better digestion and hydration, easier weight maintenance and increased satisfaction with your meals.

46. Be kind to yourself

We're living in unprecedented times and many of us are struggling with worry or stress. It is definitely not the time to punish yourself for not

reaching 10,000 steps everyday, or for treating yourself to an extra biscuit with your tea. Celebrate your health wins, but be kind to yourself and remember that you're doing a great job.

47. Ask for help

Talk to your friends and family if you're feeling low, or call the Samaritans for confidential support on 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline). Remember, we're all in this together.

48. Small changes can make a big difference

When considering lifestyle changes, make gradual adjustments that are easier to maintain, to ensure that new habits will stick.

49. Think positive

Speaking positive affirmations out loud can boost self-esteem, keep us motivated and put things into perspective. Start small with a few affirmations when you first wake up and reap the benefits of starting every morning with a positive mindset