

## 10 Easy Self-Care Tips for a Healthier You

Are you so busy that you neglect your body? Here are some tips to help you feel better in your body, so you can have more energy, be more productive at work and have more leisure time to enjoy.

1. Incorporate a good breakfast into your morning routine.

Forget the processed carbs and go for **good protein**. This could include organic eggs from free-range chickens, whatever kinds of good quality animal protein you enjoy. Grass fed beef; pasture-raised chickens, turkey and pork; wild caught fish and seafood are all great choices.

You're **vegetarian** and don't eat flesh food? Then have grains that contain more protein such as quinoa and chia seeds. Learn what grains and beans eaten together make complete proteins and incorporate them into your daily diet.

**Vegetables** aren't just for lunch and dinner. Eat them as part of a healthy breakfast. You can eat dinner for breakfast. You'll find that you have more energy if you eat like a king or queen at breakfast. And rather than white potatoes, substitute sweet potatoes. Sweet potato home fries taste decadent, but are contributing beta carotene to your diet, which are great for your eyes.

**Fruit**, especially berries are wonderful ways to brighten up your breakfast. And berries are lower on the glycemic index than other fruits you might eat. If you drink juice at breakfast, consider substituting a cut up orange or half a grapefruit instead. It takes a lot more oranges to make a glass of orange juice than you can possibly eat at one sitting. Juice is much higher in fruit sugars than eating the actual fruit, and when you juice any fruit, unless you're drinking it right after you juice it, it turns acidic.

Do you drink **coffee or tea** at breakfast? Forget the sugar substitute. They're all bad for you. Sweet 'n Low causes cancer. Equal turns to a cousin of formaldehyde over 120°F. Splenda may start out as sugar, but it turns into a chemical in the processing. Even too much Stevia can mess with your thyroid function. If you're going to sweeten your tea or coffee, go natural. Use a little honey or natural cane sugar instead. Or better still, wean yourself from that sweet taste. You only need milk and sugar if the coffee or tea isn't great quality.

If you insist on that piece of toast or 2, try making it from Ezekiel Bread. It's made from sprouted grains, which have a lower glycemic index than un-sprouted flour, and it has a great flavor. If you use butter, go for butter made from grass-fed cows. Whole Foods carries it, probably Trader Joe's

does as well. Or better still, go to your local farmer's market. You can find wonderful produce at these markets. You'll be supporting local farmers and be eating much healthier in the bargain. And if you want to sweeten your toast, use raw honey from your farmer's market.

2. Look up from your computer screen and give your eyes a break. Vary the distance you're focusing on from time to time throughout your day. Our eyes work best if we do this. They weren't meant to fix on something, i.e., your computer screen for hours on end. Look out the window. If there's not one near you, get up and find one.
3. Stop and do some neck rolls. Bend your head from side to side. Shrug your shoulders up, hold for 3 seconds, and let them drop. Stretch your hands over your head – look up and reach for the ceiling with your hands. Clasp your fingers behind your back and let your shoulders fall open. You don't have to stretch hard. Gentle stretches work much better than forcing movement. Just a minute or two will help you clear your mind and get the blood moving in your arms.
4. Use your stress ball. Get those fingers moving, not just on your computer keyboard, but flexing and extending. Holding the ball in your hand, move your wrist in circles, first one direction, then the other. Bend your wrist toward your inner arm, then go the other way. Move your hand from side to side. Repeat these movements with your hand open with your fingers extended.
5. Eat a healthy lunch. Protein and vegetables are a great choice. If you eat sandwiches, make sure that bread isn't just providing your body with empty calories. It's worth it to find a vendor who makes sandwiches on good quality bread. And take a few minutes to look somewhere other than your computer screen while you're eating your lunch. Actually have a conversation with someone. Go out to eat, or at least eat somewhere other than at your desk. We are social beings, so use the time to interact with someone in person, not just on line.
6. Talk a walk at lunch-time. Don't just eat lunch at your desk while you work. Even if you get out and walk around the block, it will clear your mind, allow you to stretch your legs, get outside so you can breathe unprocessed air.
7. When you get the mid-afternoon blahs, do you reach for the caffeine of your choice? Reach for water instead. You're fuzzy brained, and sleepy, so you need to get up off of your chair, drink some water, and move your body. Jiggle your body by bouncing in place. Get your cells moving. Thirty seconds of jiggling will wake your body up.
8. When you leave your office, use the time that you're walking to the bus, subway or car to take a deep breath and let it out. Imagine that the tight

muscles in your neck and shoulders are like tiny little fists that are tightly clenched. Imagine that with each inhale, you're letting in light and fresh air, at each exhale, those little fists are letting go and relaxing just a little. Clench a fist, and let go in little increments with each exhale, as an example to those tight muscles. It may take 15 – 20 deep breaths and exhales before your hand is open and relaxed. Give your body a chance to let go of the tensions and frustrations of your day. Leave them behind on your way home so you can enter your home feeling better in your body.

9. **Hydrate** throughout the day. Nothing hydrates better than water. Many people believe that they drink lots of water, but they may not be giving their body the water that it needs. Do you glug or sip? If you drink more than 1 ½ to 2 ounces at a time, you're flooding your body with more water than it can use at one time. We have no water storage ability, so the excess water doesn't get absorbed by your cells. Instead, it goes straight to your kidneys and bladder. If you're a glugger, drink smaller amounts more frequently. According to what I've read and experienced, 1 ½ to 2 ounces every fifteen minutes works best. If you don't like water, add a slice of lemon, orange, lime, anything to help you drink the water your body needs.
10. Do you have a bedtime ritual? If you're one of those people who have a hard time getting to bed, experiment with things to relax your mind and body. Make yourself a cup of chamomile tea or Sleepy Time tea. While you're drinking it, reflect on what made you feel good during the day. Celebrate your wins and learn from your challenges. Acknowledge them and let them go. Put on some soft music and let it help you unwind from your day. Take a warm bath with some essential oils that are calming (Young Living and Do Terra both have good quality essential oils that you can use). Use whatever meditative practice appeals to you – pray, chant, breathe, count your blessings, ask your angels to help you get a great night's sleep.

These are only some of the tips in my toolbox. I trust that you'll find them helpful.

I wish you peace, harmony and many blessings,

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