



MARY'S QUICK START GUIDE TO HEALTHIER-NESS:

12 Nutrition Tips to Make The BIGGEST Impact TODAY

Improving your health doesn't have to be hard. Here are 12 simple and easy ways you can make the biggest impact on your health right away.

1. Increase the variety of fruits and vegetables in your diet

Why:

A variety of fruits and vegetables is key for providing the body with a bevy of different antioxidants that enhance immune function, fight inflammation and help to quench "free radicals," those reactive molecules, which can damage cells.

How:

- Try a new vegetable each week or month to familiarize you with the vast variety that exists, especially on a seasonal basis.
- Make sure there are 2-3 different colors on your plate at every meal.
- Add extra veggies to sandwiches, soups and salads. Throw veggies into a scramble.
- Snack on crudité instead of crackers.
- Order a salad or veggie side dish at your next restaurant meal.
- Replace your brunch toast with a salad instead.

Download my *Eat The Rainbow refrigerator list* from marypurdy.co for inspiration

2. Add in more plant based proteins to your weekly menu

Why:

Beans, lentils, nuts, and seeds are rich in numerous vitamins and minerals and also offer fiber.

Fiber supports heart health and also helps you to fill up and reduces overeating, which can have a positive effect on healthy weight maintenance.

How:

- Have a black bean or lentil soup for lunch.
- Make bean and nut chili for dinner!
- Toss beans in your salad.
- Use a bean spread or hummus as a base for a sandwich.
- Enjoy a bean burrito for breakfast.
- Make black bean brownies. Yes... black BEAN brownies!

3. Include herbs and spices in meals more regularly

Why:

Herbs and spices offer an incredible boost of both flavor and nutritional value with very little caloric input. They are known to offer anti-inflammatory properties, enhance digestion and provide anti-bacterial compounds. Plus by making food taste better, they can add amazing flavor to those veggies and plant based foods you are trying to get more of!

How:

- Sprinkle cumin in your soup.
- Throw cilantro or dill in those scrambled eggs.
- Roast up those potatoes with rosemary.
- Sauté greens with a healthy dose of garlic.
- Toss a chunk of ginger in your fruit smoothie!
- Sprinkle coffee or that scoop of ice cream with cinnamon or cardamom.

4. Replace refined sugar with more natural sweets more often

Why:

Excessive amounts of refined sugar and carbohydrates is correlated with heart disease, inflammation and an increased risk of developing diabetes, not to mention weight gain.

How:

- Add more naturally sweet foods to your diet!
- Snack on dried fruits like dates, figs and apricots paired with a small handful of nuts.
- Enjoy a banana with a smear of almond butter.
- Roast coconut shreds for oatmeal.
- Sweeten plain yogurt with honey or maple syrup.
- Bake cookies with molasses.
- Include naturally sweet vegetables like sweet potatoes, squashes and pumpkin roasted with cinnamon.

5. Add teas to your daily diet

Why:

Teas—green, black, herbal, yerba mate, rooibus or herbal—are a great way to add nutritive value to your day. Many studies have shown positive benefits of the tea leaf, from cancer protection to metabolism boosting properties. Numerous herbs (like nettles, hibiscus etc) offer a host of vitamins and minerals. Plus, a warm mug of spicy tea is a great antidote to late night cravings for that sweet something.

How:

- Start your day with a cup of green or chai tea.
- Perk up your afternoon with a chocolate rooibus tea.
- Replace that post dinner dessert with a warm mug of spicy or fruity tea.
- Boil your grains with tea instead of water as your base.

6. Replace refined oils with healthy fats more often

Why:

Refined oils like soybean oil, corn oil, sunflower or safflower oil, and canola oil offer very little nutritional value but pack 120 calories in 1 Tablespoon.

Backing away from excessive amounts of processed oils like is one of the best things you can do for your health overall. These oils, which are sneakily hanging out in MANY food products (check your labels!) can be inflammatory and detrimental to your body in excess.

How:

- Add whole foods fats like avocados to salads or in place of mayo.
- Toss nuts/seeds into stir fries & salads.
- Heat up olives as an appetizer or create a tapenade in a blender/ food processor with garlic and figs to spread on a whole grain slice of bread or cracker as a snack.
- Sauté using broth instead of oil.
- Use unrefined olive oil and sesame oils in salad dressings.
- If you need to cook at a higher heat, try unrefined grapeseed oil or a small amount of coconut oil.

7. Eat mindfully and intentionally at one meal each day

Why:

Eating slowly improves digestive function, and it can help ensure that you don't overeat. It takes 20 minutes for your brain to get the message that you are full. Eating mindlessly can often lead to eating more than you need and making less healthy choices. If you eat something you feel is less healthy, eat it mindfully and truly enjoy it. Chances are you will eat less.

How:

- Take 3 deep breaths before you begin your meal to prepare your body to enter into "rest and digest mode".
- Chew 20-30 times for each bite.
- Light a candle or play music to indicate to your brain that this meal is something to savor and relax into.
- Put down your fork periodically.
- Taste your food.

8. Get more sleep

Why:

Sleep is a time for our bodies and cells to regenerate, revive, and recover. With enough sleep we make different eating choices, plus our body's natural rhythm is set up for enhanced metabolism and healthy blood sugar balance. A deficit in sleep usually means a deficit in energy and the body tries to make up for it by consuming more food (usually the carbs which provide that immediate burst). Sufficient sleep can also reduce inflammation and surprise!....give you more energy!

How:

- Shoot for 7-8 hours of sleep per night.
- Go to bed 30 minutes earlier.
- Get off your electronics (which can suppress the production of melatonin) at least 2 hours before you hop under the sheets.
- Create a nightly ritual that wires you brain for relaxation.
- Make your bedroom a sacred space for sleep with an environment that is conducive to your zzzzzz's.

9. Eat balanced meals throughout the day

Why:

Eating consistently and regular meals throughout the day helps to ensure that you don't wind up starving by the time that evening soiree comes around and you suddenly find yourself polishing off the desert platter because your body is craving a fast easy burst of energy.

How:

- Be sure to have protein and healthy fats and fiber (read: color and veggies) at every meal. Your body and brain will thank you!

10. Move your body more

Why:

Regular physical activity helps with energy, heart health, mood, metabolism, weight loss, sleep and goshdarnitt, just makes your body feel good.

How:

- Get up from your desk and walk for 5 minute every hour or two.
- Take a 15-minute walk first thing in the morning or after dinner.
- Meet a pal to walk instead of a meal.
- Do stretches or 10 jumping jacks at your desk.
- Try a new class at the gym.
- Dance around your living room when no one is watching.
- Take a cue from your cat or dog if you have one and stretch it out.
- Do 10 minutes of yoga before bed.

11. Eat a fermented or probiotic-rich food daily

Why:

Evidence shows an enormous connection between our gut health and our overall health. 60% of your immune system lies in your gut. Eating fermented foods provides both helpful bacteria and food for the microbes who already reside there. If we aren't eliminating properly (aka...pooping) our skin lets us know and makes its own little attempt at eliminating by expressing itself through our skin.

How:

- Try sauerkraut on eggs or sandwiches.
- Make your next soup using miso (fermented bean paste) as the broth.
- Enjoy some KimChi (fermented veggies and garlic) as a condiment.
- Use tempeh (fermented soy bean patty) as a meat replacement in meals or a chili.
- You can also take a high quality brand of probiotics which you can easily find at your local health food store: NOW, Natural Factors, Source Naturals, Garden of Life.

12. Eat breakfast more often

Why:

You've probably heard it a million times, but this is, indeed, the most important meal of the day. It sets your metabolism, your energy, your blood sugar and your mood for pretty much the whole day. It's best to get calories early in the day, especially ones that are nutrient dense from healthy fats, proteins and complex carbs.

How:

- If you aren't hungry in the morning, even starting with something small can be helpful: some nuts and a piece of fruit.
- If you are currently doing just a simple breakfast cereal, try filling it out a bit more: eggs and veggies, hot cereal with fruit and seeds and nuts, a fruit and veggie smoothie with protein powder.

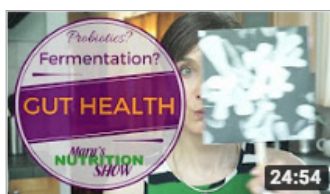
Start out by trying just one of these items. You can do it!

Pick the one that is easiest for you or most interesting. One by one, you can add in new healthy habits and your body will thank you. It's amazing how these small steps can add up to a big change. By trying one at a time, you can set yourself up for success and start getting the rewards of better nutrition.

To dive in deeper on these topics, check out the Mary's Nutrition Show episodes below:



Sweet Talk: Is Sugar Bad for Me? - Mary's Nutrition Show



Gut Health: Fermentation, Probiotics & How to Make



Why You Need to Eat More Antioxidants - Mary's



Boost Your Immune System with Food - Mary's Nutrition



Sleep Better: Dietary & Lifestyle Tips - Mary's



FAT: Friend, Foe, or Just Friggin' Delicious? - Mary's