

50 *free*



Fitness Food Relaxation TIPS

Strengtheners *Energizers *Soothers *Breathers



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Dear friend,



Can you

- **Strengthen** your spine at work?
- **Grow dendrites in your brain** by moving your garbage can?
- **Stimulate** your senses with an energetic snack?
 - **Relax** by taking your shoes off as soon as you get home?

Sure you can. It just takes some conscious thought and the help of these 50 concise but powerful tips. Small steps that have a big payback to your overall health and well-being.

Enjoy the inspiration.

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I'm at Work

Energizers, strengtheners, re-awakeners



1. Do **ten shoulder presses** at your desk. To increase difficulty, lift a book.

Benefit: This exercise strengthens your shoulders and upper back. Flex your elbows so your hands are in front of your shoulders, fists clenched, palms forward. Extend your elbows, hands moving skyward. Slowly return.

2. Take a break and put your hands behind you on your lower back. Lean backwards slowly, pause, and return.

Benefit: This backward bend strengthens one of the large abdominal muscles, your **rectus abdominus**. It's good to do if you've been hunched forward in front of a computer. Do it twice.

3. **Wall push-ups**. Take a work break and strengthen your upper body by doing ten push-ups against the wall.

Benefit: Wall push-ups develop your shoulder, chest, and triceps muscles. Put your palms on the wall a bit wider than your shoulders. Inhale elbows bend, body forward, nose to the wall. Exhale PUSH the wall away.

4. Take a desk break, stand up and **lean with your back against a wall**.

Benefit: Sitting for too long compresses your spine and weakens your hip flexors. Standing proud against a wall extends your spine, lengthens your body and improves your posture.

5. At your desk, inhale and bring your arms shoulder level, palms forward. Stretch your arms horizontally.

Benefit: This **horizontal stretch** lengthens the arms and expands the chest. Try to keep your back, neck and head aligned. Hold the stretch, breathing normally for 20–30 seconds.

6. **Buy yourself a little plant** and put it on your desk or window at work.

Benefit: You brighten up your day and the environment when you add something living to a space filled with metal, steel, paper, and plastic.

7. Lay a large newspaper sheet on a flat surface. Start at one corner and crumple it into a ball with your dominant hand.

Benefit: This cool exercise builds **strength in your forehand and fingers**. It's particularly good if you play tennis or racquetball. Take 20 -30 seconds. Do it again with the other hand.

8. Stand up. Bend your right elbow and make a fist. Punch that arm up towards your chin and feel your bicep contract.

Benefit: These **boxing uppercuts** strengthen your arm muscles. Exhale strongly as you punch upwards. Do twelve reps and repeat with other arm.

9. Sitting, place fingertips on eyebrows. Inhale, raise face and arms, upper back arches, exhale lower chin to chest.

Benefit: These **forward and backwards bends** keep your spine limber and strong. Keep your torso erect. As you arch, your elbows point in front of you. Exhale and return. Repeat 3 – 5 times.

10. Stand up, arms by your side, palms back. Swing arms straight back, and then bend your elbows forward, hands to shoulders.

Benefit: This exercise works **your triceps muscles**. Exhale as you swing arms back. Do 12 reps. For added intensity, on the last rep keep arms back and pulse lightly ten times.

11. **Walk across the room on your toes**. Keep your abdominals contracted and your body erect.

Benefit: Toe walks strengthen your calf muscles and improve balance. Stand next to a wall so you can hold on if you need to. Keep your chest up, and try not to bend at the waist.



I Love Food!



I want to eat

healthier

1. Bring a few **dried apricots** to work for a delicious, nutritious treat.

Benefit: Apricots are high in magnesium and potassium, which supply us with energy, stamina and endurance. They contain iron and silicon, are convenient, and won't spill.

2. Use a dash of **lemon juice** today instead of salt to perk up fish, poultry, grains, and rice dishes.

Benefit: Lemons are ultra-rich in Vitamin C, and high in potassium and vitamin B1. They aid digestion by stimulating saliva flow. Add to greens to increase iron absorption.

3. Reduce your fat intake and **steam some vegetables** today, releasing more of their essential nutrients.

Benefit: Cooking food in a covered container, over and not in water, infuses it with moist heat generated by the steam. Food tastes fresh, and you lose less vitamins and minerals in the liquid.

4. Add a little **spicy cayenne Chili Pepper** to your food today and strengthen your immune system.

Benefit: Capsaicin, chili peppers' fiery compound, can help stop sickness before it starts. More antibodies mean fewer colds and infections. Add to dressing, omelets, veggies.

5. Prevent free radicals getting you sick by eating **tomatoes**

Benefit: Test subjects who ate tomatoes had healthier infection-fighting white blood cells than non-tomato eaters. Lycopene in tomatoes is the free-radical-fighting antioxidant.

6. **Eat a piece of fruit 30 minutes before a meal**, and aid your digestive system and calorie intake.

Benefit: Fruit is abundant in enzymes. Eating it before meals helps the function of your gastrointestinal system and blood sugar levels. This helps prevent you from overeating.

7. Eat some **turkey** today because it's protein-rich, and delicious.

Benefit: Next to beef and pork, turkey wins for being low in fat, cholesterol and calories. Rich in B Vitamins, it contains Tryptophan, a key source of niacin. A Thanksgiving fact!

8. Toss some nutty and nutritious **radishes** in your salad today, or pop in your mouth as a snack.

Benefit: A member of the cabbage family, radishes have antibacterial and anti-fungal properties. Full of vitamin C, potassium and trace minerals, they are also good in dips.

9. Stimulate your appetite and flavor your food with **mustard** today.

Benefit: Of all the commonly used spices, mustard is highest in magnesium. It stimulates body energy, circulation, and heat. Use it in salad dressings, on vegetables, meat or fish.

10. Substitute a juicy **Portobello mushroom** for a beef or lamb burger today and decrease your saturated fat intake. Benefit: Portobellos are meaty and delicious, grilled or sautéed. Fiber and protein-rich, they are full of zinc, riboflavin, niacin, phosphorus, potassium, copper and selenium.

(Melt cheese, add roasted red peppers. So good.)

I Need some Exercise



Tone



Balance



Build Muscle anywhere!

1. Before breakfast, exercise the muscles of your waist by doing ten **side bends**. It's a good way to wake up your body.

Benefit: Side bends keep you limber and strengthen your oblique muscles. Arms above your head, hand over hand. Lean to the right, and straighten up. Do ten on each side.

2. **Build your balance**. Hold on lightly to a wall. Stand on one leg for 10 counts. If you feel comfortable, let go of the wall. Switch legs.

Benefit: Balance is vital to prevent falls. This exercise trains your body to the correct balance responses while standing still. It's also weight-bearing, and builds bones.

3. Instead of walking forward and backward, **walk side to side** across the room, five times.

Benefit: We walk in many directions in a day, and this exercise strengthens your lower-body muscles, agility, and balance. Your brain gets to activate a new walking pattern.

4. Do ten **wide squats**, wake up your thighs and exercise your entire lower body.

Benefit: Wide squats strengthen your adductor (inner thigh) muscles and lower-body joints. With legs spreads wide and toes pointed out, gently bend your knees - not too far down – and come back up.

5. Lie on your back, arms at your sides, heels down and knees up, and do five **Bridge** exercises.

Benefit: The Bridge builds strength, tone, and stability in your lower body muscles. Lift your hips up towards the ceiling, squeeze your butt and hold for 10 seconds. Slowly lower down.

6. With feet shoulder-width apart and torso erect, do ten **quarter knee bends**.

Benefit: Knee bends are great for strengthening your quadriceps, hamstrings, and gluteal muscles. Keep your feet flat on the floor, inhale as you bend down, pause, and exhale as you come up.

7. Do two sets of ten **'low-to-the-ground' jumps** and build your bones.

Benefit: When you jump up and down, the muscle-tendon connection stimulates bone growth. You don't need to jump very high to benefit. Plus, you get to elevate your heart rate.

8. Stand near a wall, with your hands on. Extend your right leg straight behind you, squeeze your butt, and return. Switch.

Benefit: These **Hip Extensions** tone your hamstring and gluteal muscles, and gently exercise your posture. Stand tall, and keep your abdominals tight. Do ten on each side.

9. Get onto your hands and knees. Raise your right arm out in front of you, hold for five seconds. Switch arms.

Benefit: This **bird-dog exercise** stabilizes your core muscles. Contract your abdominals, keep your back straight, and your neck down in line with your spine. Do three sets.

I'm out shopping



STIMULATING Food Tips to whet your appetite

1. Pick up a **mango** today for a nutritious delicious fruity treat.

Benefit: Just one cup of mango supplies $\frac{3}{4}$ of your daily vitamin C, $\frac{1}{4}$ of a day's vitamin A, potassium and fiber. Buy a fresh one, or get frozen mango chunks and use in smoothies.

2. Buy some **alfalfa sprouts** and add a nutritional powerhouse to your salad or sandwich.

Benefit: Tasty alfalfa sprouts contain calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, manganese, phosphorus, sulfur, silicon and zinc. Plus cancer-blockers daidzen and genistein.

3. Saute up some dark, green leafy **Swiss Chard** today in garlic and oil and help your heart.

Benefit: Swiss chard is rich in potassium and magnesium, minerals that help control blood pressure. Fiber, vitamin A, lutein and zeaxanthin add to its heart-healthy profile.

4. Buy and eat **lean grass-fed beef** instead of corn-fed beef and shrink your belly fat.

Benefit: Grass-fed beef contains fewer hormones and antibiotics than regular beef, and it has more conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) which reduces abdominal fat and builds lean muscle.

5. Boost your brainpower with some **white beans** for a high fiber, protein-rich versatile legume.

Benefit: White beans are one of the best food sources for Phosphatidylserine, proven to slow memory decline and increase attention span. Non-fat white beans are great in soups and salads.

6. Pick up a packet of healthy **pistachio nuts** - a snack that's fun to eat.

Benefit: Compared to other nuts, the pistachio is a superior source of protein, calcium, and vitamin A, and full of potassium and iron. It also tones the liver and kidneys.

7. Discover non-sweetened **coconut** for a tasty, warming, energetic flavor.

Benefit: Coconut is a rich source of medium-chain triglycerides, instant body fuel. Though high in saturated fat, use sparingly and sprinkle on vegetables, curries, fish, and grains.

8. Pick out some **parsnips** today for a sweet and tasty tuberous treat.

Benefit: Parsnips are a root vegetable high in silicon, calcium, potassium, vitamins A, C, and fiber. Nutty and sweet, they are great in soups, roasted or mashed like potatoes.

9. Stock up on **fresh or frozen cherries** for a sweet, nutritious dessert.

Benefit: Packed with Vitamins A and C, cherries are full of healthy antioxidants that reduce inflammation. Eat alone as a snack or indulge with thick creamy yogurt.



Tips to * Relax * Stretch * Breathe



1. **Take your shoes off** as soon as you get home.

Benefit: It might surprise you just how much this simple action can help you de-stress. Put on a comfy pair of non-work shoes or slippers and take a breath. Relax.

2. Lie down on your back, bring your knees into your chest, and gently roll them to the right. Hold ten seconds. Switch.

Benefit: Do this gentle exercise in the morning, or at night. It stretches your waist, gives your **spine a gentle twist** and relaxes you all at the same time.

3. Take five **deep Tai Chi breaths** to bring your stress level down.

Benefit: Tai Chi breathing calms your mind. With your arms by your side palms up, inhale and raise your arms up to shoulder level, exhale and bring your arms down in front of your body.

4. Do a **Mountain pose** by standing with your feet together and parallel, hands together in front of your heart.

Benefit: The Mountain pose integrates the muscles in the body, increases awareness of your skeleton, and improves posture. Stand tall, relax your shoulders and breathe easily. Do this for three minutes.

5. Lie down on the floor with your **legs vertically against the wall** and feel stress melt away.

Benefit: This pose will relax you after a hard day on your feet. With hips close to the wall, and legs up, rest your arms by your side. If your upper back is stiff, use a pillow. Breathe easy.

6. **Turn off all electronic devices during dinner** today, including the phone.

Benefit: It is hugely relaxing to eat a meal without the distraction of noise. By turning off the TV, computer and telephone, you have peace and quiet during your meal.

7. Gently **massage your feet and shins** with some lotion or cream, lie down and feel your stress melt away.

Benefit: Our feet get used so much and are often tired and sore. Use moisturizer or peppermint foot cream to rub into your feet and calves for some rejuvenation. Lie down and relax.

8. Sit quietly and **read something aloud**: a poem, a book passage or an interesting article.

Benefit: Reading aloud promotes interaction of the right and left brain and activates normally unused pathways. It allows you to project your voice, centers you and calms you down.

9. Sit still and **listen to an easy piece of music**—cool jazz, slow blues or instrumental.

Benefit: Music has the power to instantly change your mood after a stressful day. Sit in a comfortable chair, close your eyes, relax your shoulders and let sound surround you.

10. **Soothe and refresh your tired eyes** by putting green, black or chamomile teabags over them.

Benefit: The astringents in these teas constrict blood vessels and make skin taut. Steep two bags and cool. Wrap each in a cloth, lie down and place one over each closed eye for 5 to 15 minutes.

Bonus **BRAIN** Health



- **Move your garbage can to a new permanent home and stimulate your brain.**

Benefit: The sensory and motor pathways in your brain are programmed to throw things in a certain direction. As soon as you redirect your actions, your mental program is reactivated.

- **Buy a magazine today on a subject that you know nothing about.**

Benefit: Your brain is challenged when it delves into areas that are unknown to you. Let your imagination loose and your brain expand as you consider a new activity, sport or hobby.

- **Eat a meal backwards today and boost your brain power.**

Benefit: By starting with dessert and ending at the appetizer, you stimulate your cortex and memory circuits. Your brain is primed to deal with this strategy. Plus, it's fun!

- **Take a different route to or from work today.**

Benefit: We don't realize that we get stuck in the same old routines, but our brains do. Studies show you can grow dendrites in your brain by taking an unfamiliar route. Construct a new mental map!