

LIST MAKER'S

TOP TO-DOS
FOR AN EVEN
BETTER YOU!

Get-Healthy Guide

- 
- The Ultimate 10-Minute Workout
 - 7 Foods That Fight Belly Fat
 - 8 Must-Have Hair-Care Products
 - 6 Great Memory Protectors
 - 7 On-the-Spot De-Stressors
 - A Great Night's Sleep in 6 Easy Steps
 - ... and Much More

From the Editors of

Prevention®

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BETTER YOU!

Get-Healthy Guide

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From the Editors of **Prevention.**

This book is intended as a reference volume only, not as a medical manual. The information presented here is designed to help you make informed decisions about your health. It is not intended as a substitute for any treatment that may have been prescribed by your doctor. If you suspect that you have a medical problem, we urge you to seek competent medical care.

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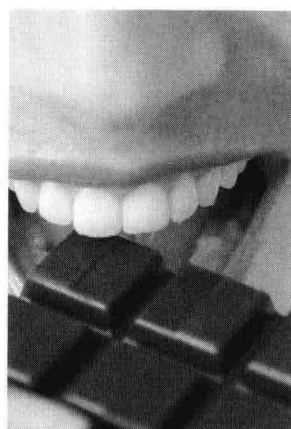
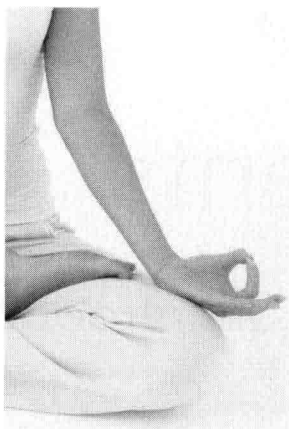
We inspire and enable people to improve their lives and the world around them.

LIST : TOP TO-DOS
: FOR AN EVEN
: BETTER YOU!
MAKER'S
.....
Get-Healthy Guide

To your best health



introduction



THIS IS A book of lists, so we can't think of a better way to lead off than with one. So here, then, are our top 5 reasons that a list is the perfect tool for helping you to shape and maintain a healthy lifestyle—however you define it.

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1 A LIST GIVES YOU JUST THE FACTS

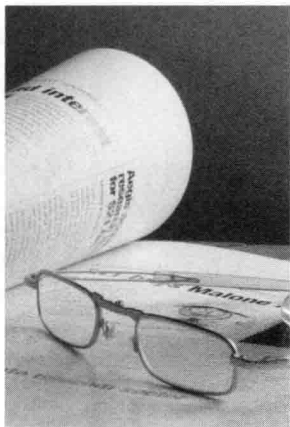
The universe of health information is constantly growing and evolving. That's a good thing, because it means that we're getting better at understanding how we can keep ourselves fit, healthy, and vibrant. The downside is that, as consumers, we can become overwhelmed by the dos and don'ts—especially when what was good for us last month, last week, or even yesterday suddenly turns out to be very, very bad (and vice versa).

With a list, we can weed out the distracters and focus on what's real and proven. As you read this book, some of the information may be familiar, which means that it's stood the test of time. But much of it is brand new, reflecting the latest science and expert thinking on a host of popular topics, from buying organic (page 12) to creating the perfect skin-care regimen (page 94) to getting a good night's sleep (page 146).

2 A LIST OFFERS CHOICES

Our nation's collective waistline seems to be growing in direct proportion to the number of diet plans and products on the market. This is true, at least in part, because no one dietary aid will work for everyone. We all have distinct genetics, family histories, personal preferences, and lifestyles. So we each need a self-care plan, whether we want to lose weight, lower our disease risk, manage stress, or improve our mental sharpness.

The beauty of a list is that you get to decide how much (or how little) you want to do in pursuit of a particular personal goal, based on the options presented to you. Pick your favorite advice from each list—or, for a challenge, see if you can use every tip in a list at least once. Try a few strategies and you'll discover which lists (and their components) work the best for you. Then use what you've learned to build a self-care plan that you can live with.



3 A LIST FEEDS A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

Most of us keep a to-do list of some sort, whether it's scribbled on a Post-it or keyed into a PDA. And nothing feels as good as being able to cross off an item. It's visible proof we've achieved something.

Some days, just making a critical phone call or remembering to pick up the kids at soccer practice is a minor triumph. We can benefit from applying this same philosophy to a healthy lifestyle.

By parsing our big-picture goals into bite-size bits, we begin to make them doable. Going back to our weight-loss example, the prospect of losing 20 pounds may be daunting. But incorporating a serving or two of fat-fighting foods into your daily meals and snacks—now that seems easy enough, doesn't it? Likewise, doing *everything* experts recommend to be eco-friendly can be both impractical and expensive. But just washing laundry with cold water is an easy change that adds up!

4 A LIST IS FUN

From year-end best- and worst-ofs, to seasonal sports rankings, to the nightly Top 10, lists entertain as well as they inform. In navigating this book, no doubt you'll turn to the topics most relevant to you first. But we do encourage you to read the rest of the lists when you have a chance. You're guaranteed to find a few delights and surprises—not to mention some fascinating facts that might help break the ice at your next business meeting or dinner party. (Did you know, for example, that 53% of women spend more time trying to tame frizzy hair than they do exercising? Really!)

5 A LIST IS FINITE

It doesn't demand a long-term commitment or up-front resources. You can read a list, glean from it what's appropriate for you, and then move on to the next one. In this book, you've got 96 lists to choose from, on the topics that we at *Prevention* know best.

We've had a blast crafting this collection just for you, in collaboration with a team of experts at the forefront of their respective specialties. Read the lists, absorb them, make them work for you. We think you'll agree: These lists make a healthy lifestyle as easy as 1, 2, 3!

—The Editors of *Prevention*



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top 10 superfoods

facts & figures

50
percent

The number of "vegetables" in kids' diets that are actually french fries, according to a study from Ohio State University.

WHILE ALL FRESH, whole foods have something to offer nutrition-wise, the 10 chosen for this list are especially noteworthy for their nutrient profiles. They may not be regulars on your dinner plate now, but consider that the simple act of broadening your food horizons can measurably improve your health. Colorado State University nutritionists asked 106 women to eat 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables daily for 8 weeks. Women who chose from 18 different varieties of produce reduced their rates of DNA oxidation, possibly making their bodies more resilient against disease, while those who ate the same 5 over and over again showed no change.

So don't be afraid to mix it up at mealtime! These top picks are a good place to start.

1 FRESH FIGS

Six fresh figs supply 891 milligrams of blood pressure-lowering potassium, nearly 20% of the recommended daily intake. In a 5-year study from the Netherlands, high-potassium diets were linked with lower rates of death from all causes in healthy adults age 55 and older. A serving of figs also has nearly as much calcium as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fat-free milk!

Shop for figs that are dry on the surface. Chop and add to yogurt, cottage cheese, or green salads, or cut open and stuff with a low-fat soft cheese.

2 TURNIPS

One-half cup of this old-fashioned root vegetable has only 18 calories but is rich in cancer-fighting compounds called glucosinolates. Blend or mash boiled turnips into your favorite mashed potato recipe for a lower-calorie, high-nutrient comfort food.

3 LYCHEE

Among all of the fruits tested for a French study, which appeared in the *Journal of Nutrition*, lychee had the second-highest level of heart-healthy polyphenols—nearly 15% more than the amount in grapes.

Serve lychee by peeling the outer covering; use a knife to remove the pit. Add to stir-fries or kebabs for a sweet, grapelike flavor.

4 SPINACH

This leafy green is rich in lutein and zeaxanthin, carotenoids that help stave off age-related macular degeneration as well as cataracts. What's more, the vitamin K in spinach is essential for blood clotting and bone health, while the B vitamins (especially folate) help promote heart health.

5 ASIAN PEARS

One large Asian pear has nearly 10 grams of cholesterol-lowering fiber, about 40% of the recommended daily intake. According to one recent study, people who ate the most fiber had the lowest levels of total and "bad" LDL cholesterol. They also weighed the least and had the lowest body mass index and waist circumference.

Choose firm pears with a fragrant aroma and blemish-free skin. Dice into salads or make a flavorful dessert by simmering 2 large peeled, cored, and quartered pears with 1 cup white wine, 1 teaspoon honey, 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger, and enough water to cover.

6 BOK CHOY

The glucosinolates in bok choy appear to be responsible for the potent anti-cancer properties of this vegetable. When it is cut or chewed, the glucosinolates get converted into isothiocyanates and indoles, compounds that in studies were able to inhibit or prevent tumor formation.

7 PAPAYA

Papaya is one of the top sources of beta-cryptoxanthin, which research suggests can protect against lung cancer. It also is rich in lycopene and contains the enzyme papain, which aids digestion. "Papain helps break down amino acids, the building blocks of protein," says Elisa Zied, RD, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association.

When shopping for papaya, choose a fruit with golden yellow skin that yields to gentle pressure. Cut lengthwise and discard the black seeds. Scoop out the flesh using a spoon and sprinkle with lemon juice.

8 SOY

Eating whole soy foods—such as tofu, soy nuts, and edamame (whole soy beans)—instead of high-fat proteins like steak and pork chops can reduce saturated fat and boost fiber in your diet. Soy protein may also help prevent the accumulation of belly fat in postmenopausal women, according to a study from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

9 WILD SALMON

Salmon is packed with the omega-3 fatty acid DHA, a major component of neurons. People with the highest blood levels of this mega-nutrient are 47% less likely to develop dementia, according to a study published in the *Archives of Neurology*. Choose wild salmon over farmed; the latter doesn't always contain high amounts of omega-3s.

10 WALNUTS

A diet rich in walnuts may be more effective than the traditional Mediterranean diet at lowering levels of LDL cholesterol and lipoprotein(a), a compound that increases blood clotting and can lead to stroke, according to a study published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

your list

7 staples for your pantry

mini LIST

A pair of pantry healers

When chapped skin or nighttime coughs strike, try turning to your kitchen cupboard instead of the medicine cabinet for relief.

1. Oatmeal. Researchers recently identified the avenanthramides in oats as the key compounds that calm inflamed skin. Put whole oats in a clean sock and seal with a rubber band. Drop into a warm bath, then climb in and soak for 15 minutes.

2. Buckwheat honey. When researchers from Penn State College of Medicine gave 105 children with coughs 1 to 2 teaspoons of buckwheat honey, cough medicine, or nothing before bed, those taking honey coughed less and slept more. For adults, try up to 3 teaspoons every 2 hours as needed. Don't give honey of any kind to children younger than 1 year.

TAKING CONTROL OF what you eat begins with taking control of what you buy. By stocking up on a variety of nutrient-dense packaged foods, like the ones in this list, you always have the makings of a good-for-you meal at your fingertips. Because these foods don't spoil as quickly as fresh, they can help save a little on your grocery bills, too.

Just one caveat: With certain canned goods, sodium can be on the high side. Be sure to read labels and choose low-sodium products whenever possible.

1 CHICKPEAS

In a recent study, adults who ate 3 cups of chickpeas (also known as garbanzo beans, or *ceci* in Italian) a week cut both total and "bad" LDL cholesterol by 7 points. Try cooking up crunchy chickpeas: Rinse and dry canned chickpeas, spray lightly with oil, dust with spices, and bake at 350°F until golden brown.

Other varieties of canned beans make great healthy staples, too, so check out what's available at your supermarket.

2 BEETS

The antioxidant betanin in canned or pickled beets may protect against cancer and heart disease. Try a colorful beet, walnut, and greens salad: Top baby arugula (or other tender greens) with sliced beets, then sprinkle with goat cheese, walnuts, and balsamic vinaigrette.

3 CANNED WILD SALMON

Canned salmon contains heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, plus a generous dose of calcium from the tiny bones. It also has fewer pollutants (like PCBs) than farmed salmon. Make a light and easy salmon salad by blending 1 15.5 oz can of salmon, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and dried dill and capers to taste. Use it as a filling for sandwiches and wraps, or serve on a bed of greens.

Other kinds of canned fish, including tuna and sardines, are excellent protein choices. By all means stock up!

4 ARTICHOKE HEARTS

These exotic little vegetable bites contain inulin, a prebiotic fiber that boosts gut health and may help control appetite. Try a Mediterranean artichoke omelet: Sauté garlic, drained artichokes, and spinach for the omelet filling; top with a bit of crumbled feta and oregano. Save the flavorful liquid from marinated artichoke hearts (sold in jars) to drizzle onto green salads or grainy breads.

5 NUTS

USDA researchers have cracked the secret to a younger brain. Simply adding about seven to nine whole nuts to your daily diet may improve balance, coordination, and memory, finds new research published in the *British Journal of Nutrition*. The scientists believe that the polyphenols and other antioxidants in nuts such as walnuts help strengthen neural connections and improve cognitive skills. In addition, people who consume nuts more than four times a week have a 37% lower risk of heart disease. Add a handful to hot or cold cereals, salads, and even casseroles.

6 WHOLE-GRAIN PASTA

Spaghetti is a simple, filling comfort food, but noodles made with white flour tend to come up short on fiber, among other nutrients. These days, 100% whole-wheat pastas are widely available. If you or other family members are skittish about eating "brown noodles," ease the transition by first trying a lighter multigrain blend. Even these provide 4 grams of fiber per serving, compared with the 2 grams in "enriched" pasta.

7 BOTTLED PASTA SAUCE

No need to keep an entire inventory of different tomato products on the shelf. Bottled tomato sauce not only can top a plate of pasta, it also can stand in for canned or pureed tomatoes in other recipes. Be sure to choose a sauce in a glass bottle, which doesn't require a potentially hazardous resin lining. Several brands, like Trader Joe's and Pomi, are sold in food-safe Tetra Pak boxes.

If you are using pasta sauce as a substitute for canned tomatoes, the sauce should have few or no added ingredients. Otherwise, you may need to adjust your recipe to accommodate the already seasoned sauce.



your list _____

5 must-haves for your freezer

mini LIST

Picking and preparing frozen produce

Frozen foods are a great convenience. These tips will help you turn them into great meals, too.

1. Choose Grade A. The Grade A designation means that the produce was carefully selected for color, tenderness, and condition. Grades usually appear on the back of the package, inside a symbol that looks like a shield.

2. Skip sauces and salt. When sauces are included, fat, sodium, and sugar levels typically skyrocket. The healthiest frozen food choices contain zero additives.

3. Top with flavor. Jarred tapenades or pestos are flavorful and coat veggies perfectly; most add a mere 40 calories and almost no sodium. Steam your favorite frozen vegetable, and toss with 1 tablespoon per cup of vegetables.

A LOT OF people think that fresh fruits and veggies are best, but believe it or not, frozen produce is even more nutrient-packed. That's because the moment fruits and veggies are harvested, they start to lose nutrients. Freezing slows that loss. A 2007 study found that the vitamin C content of broccoli plummeted 56% in 7 days when fresh, but dipped just 10% in a year's time when frozen at -4°F (-20°C). In addition, levels of disease-fighting antioxidants called anthocyanins and some minerals, including potassium, actually increased after freezing.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you should be eating about 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of veggies every day (1 cup is about the size of a baseball). Fortunately, hitting the mark is easier than you may think. Just 12 frozen baby carrots equal a cup, and with no chopping required, they're ready for nibbling in no time. From freezer to fork, most veggie side dishes or fruity desserts take less than 10 minutes to prepare. Here are some frozen staples to stock up on.

1 BLUEBERRIES

When researchers at Cornell University tested 25 fruits for antioxidant activity, they found that tangy-sweet wild blueberries (which are smaller than their cultivated cousins) packed the most absorbable antioxidants. Their levels exceeded those of nutrient-rich pomegranates and grapes. Look for frozen brands like Dole and Wyman & Sons. Defrost briefly before tossing into salads or mixing with ½ cup of low-fat ricotta and a drizzle of honey.

2 FRESH HERBS

You can have fresh, flavorful herbs all year round, and right at your fingertips. Wash and finely chop herbs such as parsley, oregano, and sage. Fill sections of an ice cube tray about halfway with herb pieces. Cover the herbs with water and freeze until solid. Pop the cubes from their trays, transfer to an airtight container (like a zip-close plastic bag), and store in the freezer. You can add the frozen cubes directly to the pot while preparing hot soups, stews, and sauces.

