

## RANDOM HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS TO KEEP YOU MOTIVATED

- Experts estimate that for every pound of fat lost, you will **gain 2 seconds of speed in running**. In other words, if you have 15 lbs of fat to lose and you lose them in a healthy way, you could run your next race at an 8:00 pace, instead of an 8:30 pace, without changing your run training!
- If you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes, a Canadian study found that **getting a pneumonia vaccine** lowers your risk of heart attack by 47%. Ask your doctor.
- People who eat oily fish at least once a week **reduce their risk of macular degeneration** by 50% according to European research.
- Scientists have discovered that **marinating meat before broiling** it reduces HCA's (suspected carcinogens) by an average of 71%.
- Vitamin b12 has been shown to **prevent brain shrinkage** as we age. B12 occurs naturally in meat, fish and milk.
- Eating 20 to 30 grams of protein at breakfast will cause you to feel full longer so that you will be **less likely to overeat** later in the day, according to nutritionists.
- Fast food chains have **increased the number of ounces** in all size cups knowing that most people will choose medium. Remember, 8 oz. is *one* serving, so count your 16 oz medium as two. A medium serving of Coke at Burger King is 225 calories.
- Navy researchers found that athletes who don't sweat a lot during exercise have an increased **risk of exercise induced asthma**.
- Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh found that **elliptical trainer's calorie predictors averaged 31 percent too high**. For a more accurate count of calorie burn, wear your own heart rate monitor that is set with your data.
- **Dehydration saps testosterone** according to a study in the Journal of Applied Physiology. Scientists found that men who were dehydrated prior to a workout had lower T levels compared with when they had consumed plenty of water beforehand.
- **Muscular strength can improve your life expectancy**, according to University of South Carolina researchers. The scientists found that total-body strength was linked to lower risks of death from all causes.
- **Endurance athletes perform better** on a diet that's 60% carbohydrate (CHO), and should eat 2.5 grams of CHO per pound of body weight. Not eating enough CHO (especially before and during a workout) will cause you to work out less intensely and therefore burn fewer calories.
- If you are **serious about losing weight or eating as healthily as possible**, you have to be accurate about your serving sizes and calories— you can't guess. Get accurate nutritional information at [www.nutritiondata.com](http://www.nutritiondata.com)
- In order to gauge your effort on **recovery days**, you should finish your workout feeling like you could do it again.
- In terms of aerobic "training effect", **roughly 3.5 miles of cycling equates to one mile of running** at the same intensity. But if you are training for a race, no amount of cycling can take the place of running.
- **Botox may erase the pain of plantar fasciitis**. Patients with plantar fasciitis who had 4 shots of Botox injected into their calves and heels had 74% reduction in pain.
- Columbia University researchers found that people with **moderate periodontal disease** were twice as likely to have diabetes as people whose gums were healthy.

- Garlic supplements may be nearly as effective as prescription meds at **lowering blood pressure**. In an Australian study, people who took 600 to 800 mg of garlic powder daily reduced their systolic blood pressure by 5 points.
- A tweak in your bike seat height can boost your endurance. A new study found that people who set their saddle height so that their knees are bent at a 25-degree angle from vertical at the bottom of their pedal stroke **felt less fatigued after a ride** than those who set their saddles at other heights.
- In a recent study at the University of Arizona found that runners who **trained with varied intensity, tempo, and heart rate performed better** in race situations. Use a 1-to-10 scale to rate how challenging your workouts are. Most runners hover around a 5 (not hard, not easy) day after day after day. Today's top runners avoid this gray zone by doing runs that are either truly challenging (8 and above) or very easy (3 and below). In general, no more than 20% of your weekly run should be done at 8 and above.
- Adding 22 milligrams of niacin to your daily diet **may decrease your risk of developing Alzheimer's**. In a recent study, subjects consumed 22 mg daily while the control group consumed 13%. The subject group had a 44% lower risk of Alzheimer's compared to the control group.
- **Before going out to dinner, check your restaurant's website online.** Many restaurants post their nutritional data. Who would have known that the Uno's Spinach, chicken and gorgonzola salad has 720 calories or that a Panera Pumpkin muffin has 680 calories? A University of Mississippi study found that people consumed 54 percent fewer calories when they used this simple strategy.
- **Heavy, low-rep lifting burns more calories** than doing higher reps with less weight, according to scientists at Furman University. What's more, athletes who lift the largest loads may also burn more fat after their workouts.
- "The **best increases in strength** are achieved by doing the up phase [of weight lifting] as rapidly as possible," says Gary Hunter, Ph.D., C.S.C.S., the lead University of Alabama study author. "Lower the weight more slowly and under control." There's greater potential for growth during the lowering phase, and when you lower with control, there's less chance of injury. And remember, athletes who strength train are able to maintain form throughout a long race.
- Any weight-lifting program will work when you're just starting out. The key is to **spend most of your time working your biggest muscles**. So start with a squat or leg press for the front of your thighs, then do a pulldown or row for your upper back, a deadlift or leg curl for the back of your thighs, a chest press, a shoulder press, and another back exercise. Throw in some crunches, biceps curls, and triceps extensions at the end. Do one set of eight to 12 repetitions of each exercise; as soon as you can manage 12 with the weight you're using, increase the weight the next workout. Do two or three workouts a week and don't exercise the same muscles 2 days in a row.
- As you prepare to lift, **contract the muscles you're working** and keep them that way throughout the entire move. For instance, on the bench press, imagine you're trying to bring your hands toward each other but don't move them at all, so your pecs are squeezed together. You won't be able to lift as much, but you will get more out of each lift.
- Downhill running is integral to the training of elite distance runners. Running downhill increases stress on your legs, which makes them better able to handle impact—as long as you don't overdo it. **Running downhill can help you go faster**, because your muscles will grow accustomed to the short, quick stride required. Once or twice a week, after completing an easy run, do four to six relaxed downhill sprints (not on a steep hill, just an easy grade) lasting about 20 seconds apiece. Recover between sprints by jogging slowly back up the hill.

- Running on a treadmill instead of on roads **reduces your chances of a stress fracture by at least 48 percent**, a study showed. In addition, people who exercised for 30 minutes on a treadmill boosted their levels of phenylacetic acid—a natural antidepressant—by 77 percent. Perfect for gloomy winter days.
- **Take Vitamin E and Aspirin Daily.** Researchers have found that this antioxidant-and-blood-thinner combination can reduce arterial plaque by 80 percent. The benefit of the two treatments together is so great that it may help men prevent atherosclerosis even if they can't lower their cholesterol levels.
- **Never Skip Breakfast.** A survey of more than 2,000 people who lost an average of 67 pounds and kept the weight off for more than 5 years found that 78 percent ate breakfast 7 days a week.
- A 14-year study found that men whose diets were highest in fruits and vegetables had a 70 percent lower risk of digestive-tract cancers. How to reach your quota: **Never eat a meal that doesn't contain a vegetable or fruit.** And no, French fries don't count.
- **Fruit 'juice' is sneaky fattening**—a 16-ounce bottle of cranberry-grape blend, for instance, contains about 275 calories. Dump half and store it, then refill the bottle with water. You'll barely notice the difference, and you'll be cutting half the calories.
- If you **wake unusually early**, dampen a towel with cool water and lightly wipe your arms, legs, and torso, then go back to bed. The body is very warm when it comes out of REM sleep. Back in bed, the body heats up even more. The result is a deep, restful sleep and more dreams. Called kur, this technique is standard at European spas.
- Squeeze in an a.m. run, ride or swim. In a recent Taiwanese study of 27 men, scientists found that the men's **production of thyroid hormones shot up** after the men ran on a treadmill. And once thyroid hormones are released, they'll remain in your bloodstream for hours, keeping your metabolism revved well after your workout.
- Here's another reason to hit the treadmill before you hop into the shower: An **early cardio workout will boost your mood** for the workday ahead, says Cedric Bryant, Ph.D., chief science officer for the American Council on Exercise. Aerobic exercise increases your brain's output of serotonin (a hormone associated with happiness) and dopamine (the hormone most closely linked to motivation).
- A couple of beers? Fine. A beer with dinner a few times a week? You may reap a host of health benefits. But when two beers turn into five or six, you may start to undermine many of your earlier efforts. "**Alcohol consumption decreases testosterone,**" says Glenn Cunningham, M.D., a professor of medicine at Baylor College of Medicine. Over time, decreased testosterone levels lead to an increase in obesity and fat tissue, and a decrease in muscle mass, libido, and erectile function. Plus, tipping the bottle a bit too much will make you more apt to double up on dessert. Cut yourself off. Don't keep beer in the fridge or use a cocktail napkin to scribble down everything you imbibe. Researchers at the Alcohol Research Group at the University of California found that people who record every drink consume less alcohol than those who don't keep track.
- **Buddies can make or break a diet** or workout plan, whether it's unconscious scarfing of nachos during the game or the lure of pumping beers instead of iron. Worse, some guys will deliberately try to sabotage your diet, just for sport. Eat a protein bar before meeting friends, so you'll feel fuller. Drink a glass of water for every glass of beer. A time-tested strategy: Recruit a friend or family member to diet or work out with you. Having someone to answer to is the best enforcement plan.
- Stress will spike levels of the hormone cortisol, which **tells your body to store fat.** Eating boosts insulin levels; combining that with cortisol leads to greater fat deposits. More stress, bigger belly. First, identify the type of stress you're under. Short-term stress will pass. Long-term stress may

require a permanent solution, like a new job. Fifteen minutes of explosive activity—hitting a speed bag or jumping rope—can alleviate anxieties after work.

- **Make healthy eating effortless.** Buy snacks that won't send insulin levels soaring: high-fiber energy bars or single-serving bags of almonds or cashews, small cartons of low-fat cottage cheese. Cook a large package of boneless, skinless chicken breasts and wrap in individual baggies for quick, healthy protein snacks.
- **Not getting enough deep, non-REM sleep** inhibits production of growth hormone, which might lead to premature middle-age symptoms—abdominal obesity, reduced muscle mass and strength, and diminished exercise capacity. In order to relax you must mentally disengage yourself before you hit the sack. Don't plot a 'staffing reorg' before bed. Establish a ritual that signals your body that the day is over 30 minutes before bedtime—turn off the computer, read, stretch, or set the TV volume low.
- **Keep a Food Journal** - it's an effective way to remind yourself how much you're eating over the course of a day. But it doesn't need to be complicated: University of Pittsburgh scientists found that dieters who simply wrote down the size of each meal (S, M, L, XL) were just as successful at losing weight as those who tracked specific foods and calorie counts.
- One useful addition: **Detail the motivation behind your eating habits.** Were you really hungry or just blowing off steam before bedtime? Recognizing that you weren't feeling true hunger reinforces the idea of listening to your body.
- **Understand your cravings.** In this case, the craving is less about the food and more about what the food signifies. Always order your pizza with double tomato sauce and light cheese. Men who eat a lot of tomato products tend to have less prostate cancer—probably because tomatoes are a rich source of lycopene. **Reducing the mozzarella by just one-third (you won't miss it) will save you 20 grams (g) of fat per pie.** That's as much as in a McDonald's Quarter Pounder.
- **Stop eating after 6 pm.** A lot of people feel stressed out and tired all day, and when they get home, they just want to relax and forget about their day with a bag of chips and the remote control. They feel like they've been in control and used restraint all day, and the chips are part of their reward for that good behavior.
- Don't eat for the wrong reason. It might not seem so bad in the short term, but over time, **emotionally driven eating is one of the primary reasons people gain weight.** To break the habit, go cold turkey: no food while the TV's on. Even healthy snacks won't help break the association between food and relaxing. Also, make sure you are eating enough during the day (and especially during workouts). Make sure your last meal of the day is heavy on protein (at least 2:1 carb: protein ratio)