

Staying Healthy

WINTER 2017

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Sick of being sick?

Tips to getting better and kicking that cold to the curb

From obligations at work to errands and chores and making time for family and friends — your plate is fuller than ever and, unfortunately, getting sick can throw a major wrench into your marathon of activities and greatly hamper your productivity.

Despite how frustrating it can be, your busy life doesn't come to a halt when you're sick. That's why you need to do everything you can to start feeling better faster so you don't fall too far behind. Take these five steps to help you get back to conquering your full to-do list in no time.

Get plenty of sleep

With all of the hustle and bustle of your day, taking the time for sleep may seem impossible, but an established sleep schedule is one of the most important things you can do

to support your health.

Getting eight hours of sleep is always optimal especially when sick; however sickness can often disrupt our sleep. To help combat symptoms like sinus pressure or a stuffed nose from keeping you up, you can make easy changes like propping yourself up in bed and moisturizing the air with a humidifier or vaporizer. You may find you breathe — and sleep — easier.

Combat your worst symptoms

When your cold and flu symptoms become too much, get some real relief. The best plan of action? Turn to your pharmacist for expert advice and medicine recommendations.

Don't be afraid to exercise

If your symptoms are primarily in your

head and neck, you're generally still healthy enough to exercise. Nevertheless, consider a lighter workout to get the benefits of exercise without putting too much stress on your already-suffering body.

A brisk walk for 30 to 45 minutes each day while sick is recommended to help you recover. However, be sure to dress appropriately for the climate.

Binge on super foods

We all know about the benefits of getting plenty of Vitamin C when sick, but you can also complement its effects by increasing your intake of Vitamins A, E and B6, as well as iron and zinc to help you recover faster.

These helpful nutrients can be found in fruits and veggies, like sweet potatoes and carrots, whole grains and lean meats or fish,

so don't be afraid to add more of these foods to your diet when you don't feel well.

Drink up

Water, broth or herbal tea — the more hydrated you stay, the better. Fluids not only soothe your throat, but they also ward off dehydration, thin your mucus and help your body systems function adequately — which, in turn, helps your immune system function at its best.

With that said, not all drinks are created equal; stay away from caffeinated or alcoholic drinks. These beverages will actually increase dehydration, not relieve it.

Being sick can be painful enough without the fear of missing out on important activities, so follow these tips to get back on your feet as fast as possible. ■

—BPT

County health officials warn flu activity widespread in Bay Area

Urge residents to get vaccine as influenza season peaks in winter

BY PLEASANTON WEEKLY STAFF

Alameda and Contra Costa health officials joined colleagues across the North Bay this month in urging residents to get vaccinated for influenza as the flu has reached "widespread levels" in California and areas with the most flu activity in the state include the Bay Area.

Throughout the Bay Area, public health

officials are urging everyone over 6 months of age to get vaccinated. The officials have said this year's vaccine is effective since it protects against the season's most active strains.

"Influenza vaccination is a safe and effective way to protect you and your family from the flu," said Contra Costa Health Officer Dr. William Walker. "It's not too late to get vaccinated."

Flu cases peak in December through February and may continue into May in the U.S., according to public health officials.

The people most vulnerable are those 65 years old and older, children 5 years old and younger, pregnant women and people with some medical conditions such as asthma, heart disease and weakened immune systems.

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue, county officials said.

Medical providers may prescribe antiviral medications that reduce the severity and duration of illness. Antibiotics are not effective against the flu, officials said.

Vaccinations are available at pharmacies, doctor's offices and some employers offer vaccinations.

In addition to getting the vaccine, county

health officials recommend people take steps to protect themselves and others from the flu:

- Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue.
- If you do not have a tissue, cough into your elbow.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Stay home when you are sick, and stay home until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

California Department of Public Health officials said as of Jan. 7 there have been nine flu deaths in the state. None have been reported in Alameda County.

For more information on flu prevention, visit the Alameda County Public Health Department website at www.acphd.org. ■

Editor's note: Information from the Bay City News Service was used in this report.



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STAYING HEALTHY – WINTER 2017

10 smart swaps to make baking and cooking healthier

Healthy cooking: Ingredient substitutions and smart food swaps

Creamy sauces, cookies, casseroles and cakes — as temperatures drop, it's natural to crave favorite comfort foods. However, it's easy to overindulge on rich dishes and decadent desserts, especially if you're hosting a gathering of friends and family. How can you enjoy amazing foods while bumping up the health quotient?

"Remember, when you're cooking or baking, you're in control. With a few smart ingredient substitutions and food swaps, you and your guests can enjoy favorite dishes and get more vitamins and nutrients," registered dietitian Lyssie Lakatos said.

She and Tammy Lakatos Shames, also a dietitian, are known as the "The Nutrition Twins." Together, they share their favorite strategies for cooking healthier, including clever ingredient swaps you won't even detect in the finished dish.

Eggs: When baking, eggs are a common ingredient, but not all eggs are created equal. Look for eggs that are locally sourced and come from hens fed an all-vegetarian diet consisting of healthy grains, canola oil and supplements like alfalfa and vitamin E, such as Egghand's Best.

Sour cream: Swap full-fat sour cream for plain Greek yogurt in recipes, dips, sauces and garnishes. Plain Greek yogurt tastes surprisingly similar to sour cream but



These stuffed sweet potatoes feature smart cooking ideas for a delicious, nutritious meal. BPT

offers higher levels of protein.

Butter in cooking: Cooking smart means choosing healthier fats and using them in moderation. Instead of butter, try olive oil. While 1 tablespoon of butter has about 7 grams of saturated fat, olive oil only has 2 grams of saturated fat.

Butter in baking: Oil can cause baked goods to get soggy, so a better butter alternative is applesauce or pumpkin puree for half of the called-for amount. The addition of applesauce or pumpkin puree reduces the fat content while keeping baked goods

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Stop waking up exhausted

Improve quality of sleep to wake up refreshed

It's no secret that finding time for the recommended eight hours of sleep is easier said than done. More often than not, your time asleep is limited by your busy schedule. If you are lucky enough to squeeze in a full eight hours of shut-eye, you are still not guaranteed to wake up feeling refreshed.

While some responsibilities are hard to shake, setting yourself up with the right routine can vastly improve your quality of sleep and combat the issues keeping you up at night.

Lighten up

If it's never light in your bedroom, you may be confusing your body's circadian clock. The circadian clock regulates how alert you are due to the light and darkness in an environment.

If you keep your bedroom dark during the day or use black-out curtains, this can act as a signal to your body that it should be asleep. Swap out your curtains for a lighter color or keep your shades partially open — natural sunlight in your room can help you wake up in the morning.

Out with the old

Approximately half (49%) of Americans have had their mattress for five years or more, and while people struggle with sleep for a variety of reasons, their mattress could be keeping them from getting a good night's sleep. A quality mattress, such as Beautyrest Platinum Hybrid Mattress, can give you the support you need to wake up feeling refreshed.

Tune out

Everyone's guilty of binge-watching their favorite TV shows from time to time. While you may satisfy your curiosity by catching the ending of your favorite series, you may not be so happy when you wake up groggy after staying up too late.

Set an alarm for 30 minutes before you want to go to sleep and when the alarm goes off, turn off your TV and get ready for bed. Limiting screen time before you fall asleep can also avoid disrupting your body's level of melatonin, which controls sleep cycles.

If you snooze, you lose

Hitting the snooze button even once in the morning can make you feel groggy throughout the day. By hitting snooze, you are prompting your body to start another stage in your sleep cycle without giving it enough time to fully recover.

Try downloading an app with a smart alarm to make sure that you are waking up during a lighter stage of your sleep cycle.

Cut the caffeine

While there is nothing quite like coffee for an afternoon pick-me-up, having caffeine after 2 p.m. can impact both your sleep quality and quantity. Instead of having a cup after lunch, take your coffee break earlier in the day or consider switching to decaf. ■

—Family Features



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This year can mean a healthier you

Tips to start and maintain an improved lifestyle

While many of us feel inspired to make goals each year to improve our health, happiness and well-being, we often find the changes hard to sustain, and sometimes end up reverting back to old practices.

Check out these tips for starting and maintaining a healthier lifestyle.

Baby steps

Many people start a new year hoping to improve their fitness routines and eating habits, and quickly become discouraged when results aren't immediate. Instead of canceling your new gym membership and opting for a box of chocolates by Valentine's Day, set achievable and realistic goals to stay on track.

If losing weight is the objective, aim for 10 pounds instead of 50. If you succeed at losing the first 10, celebrate and make a new goal.

Instead of adopting an extreme diet, cut back on one snack a day or incorporate a smoothie as a healthy meal replacement. Use ingredients like fresh fruit, dark leafy greens, flax or chia seeds — even savory vegetables like beets — the possibilities are endless.

Fuel up to get fit

Sticking to fitness goals takes the right

fuel. Eating whole foods instead of processed foods will give you more and longer-lasting energy. Plus, a whole-food diet is more simple and sustainable than restrictive calorie counting or elimination diets.

Powering your body with snacks like low-fat yogurt topped with granola, fresh hummus and whole-grain pita, or an apple and peanut butter, will carry your body through a workout and help you feel fuller longer. To make delicious homemade nut butter, throw three cups of roasted, unsalted peanuts or cashews into a high-powered blender like a Vitamix machine and blend for a minute or so. The result is a gooey, good-for-you treat that will provide ample energy for healthy pursuits.

While grocery shopping, stick to the outer perimeter of the store and pick up nutrient-rich and versatile ingredients like avocados, chickpeas, bananas, nuts and spinach, that can stand alone or be mixed into everything from healthy salads to frozen desserts.

Indulge your sweet tooth

Being healthy and eating whole foods doesn't mean you have to sacrifice your sweet tooth. Before you plunge into a tub of cookie



STATEPOINT

Whip up a simple sorbet to indulge your sweet tooth healthfully.

dough, consider other ways to curb cravings. Make your own, customized whole-food ice cream without artificial colors, flavors or preservatives using a blender. Varieties like apple pie and spiced strawberry will delight without guilt.

Or try a simple sorbet: Blend two peeled oranges, two tablespoons sugar and four cups of ice. Use a blender with special settings for this purpose.

Looking for something that feels even more decadent? Find recipes like chocolate hazelnut spread and more at vitamix.com/Find-Recipes.

For a healthier new year, focus on small, attainable goals, and use whole foods to get creative with your diet. ■

—StatePoint

COOK

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moist and delicious.

Bacon: Bacon adds flavor to any dish, but a ton of fat. To get the flavor-boost of bacon without the excess fat, try using Canadian bacon, lean prosciutto or turkey bacon. Whether beside scrambled eggs for breakfast or crumbled into a casserole, these tasty alternatives will satisfy.

Salt: Use less salt and add herbs to recipes to get succulent flavor. Whether fresh or dried, herbs satisfy the palate and add beauty to any dish. Have fun mixing and matching herbs to customize a recipe perfectly to your taste.

Sugar: All those amazing glazes and desserts require sugar, but you need not rely solely on refined white sugar. For baked goods, lessen sugar and add vanilla or cinnamon to intensify sweetness. For glazes, try alternatives like maple syrup or fruit purees.

Breading: Classic comfort foods often require breading. For a healthy alternative to traditional white bread crumbs, try whole-grain bread crumbs, rolled oats or crushed bran cereal (or a mixture of them all).

Flour: Rather than using entirely all-purpose refined white flour for recipes, try swapping half of the amount with whole-wheat flour. You'll still get the desired consistency out of baked goods, but you'll be eating more whole grains.

Lettuce: Iceberg lettuce is a popular option for salads and recipes, but to get more important vitamins (and more flavor), use arugula, collard greens, spinach, kale or watercress instead. Insider tip: Try buying a bag of mixed greens to enjoy a variety of nutrient-dense alternatives. ■

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