



THE WELLNESS WEEK™ PLEDGE

7 HABITS FOR A
HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU

Wellness
 **Week**
Presented by SPAFINDER

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

I pledge to take charge of my health by taking these simple yet vital steps toward a happier and healthier life. By committing to achieve at least one of these activities each day of Wellness Week™, I will make taking care of myself a priority, enabling me to do more, stay healthy and live a longer, more vibrant and meaningful life.

I PLEDGE TO:

Change my **BREAKFAST**

Choose to **MOVE**

HYDRATE

Connect with **NATURE**

Make my **SLEEP** a priority

Embrace the power of **TOUCH**

Give myself the gift of **SILENCE**



Change my BREAKFAST

I will kick off my day with a healthy meal that includes foods like oatmeal, yogurt, fruit, seeds, nuts and whole-grain cereals and toast.

BREAKFAST - WEIGHT LOSS

Medical research confirms that the simple act of eating breakfast every day is a key to losing weight — lots of weight. Breakfast skippers increase their bodies' insulin response, which increases fat storage and weight gain and the risk of obesity and diabetes. And because breakfast skippers get ravenous by mid-morning, they replace calories all day with binge snacking, lunches and dinners. Eating breakfast is



proven to be a key habit of successful weight losers, as studies show that breakfast eaters eat fewer overall calories each day and exercise more regularly. Four in five people who have maintained a 30-pound (or more) weight loss for at least a year report eating breakfast every single day, according to the National Weight Control Registry.

MAKE SMART BREAKFAST CHOICES

High-fiber foods like fruits, whole grains and healthy cereals are very smart breakfast choices, so skip the fat-filled breakfast sandwiches and high-sugar cereals and pastries. High-fiber foods (which have lower “energy density”) fill you up, so you get to eat far more food, while consuming fewer

WHAT TO EAT?

FILL UP ON A NEW HIGH-FIBER CEREAL.



calories. Numerous medical studies report on the benefits of waking up to a high-fiber bowl of cereal: A Harvard study found that people who eat whole-grain

cereal every day were 20 percent less likely to die from cardiovascular disease than those who didn't; a Nielsen Survey showed that women who ate cereal on a regular basis weighed about nine pounds less than those who rarely/never did; and a study of girls ages 9-19 found that regular cereal eaters had fewer weight problems than infrequent cereal eaters, who were 13 percent more likely to be overweight. (Those who ate cereal only occasionally had a 13 percent higher risk of being overweight.)

BOOSTS ENERGY & MENTAL FOCUS

A healthy breakfast jumpstarts your metabolism and replenishes the glycogen stores that supply your muscles with instant energy, and eating a healthy breakfast is associated with increased physical activity, less fatigue during the day and a mental advantage. Cognitive studies, particularly on children, show that breakfast skippers lose focus and concentration, as well as the ability to think and problem solve.



Choose to
MOVE

Choose to MOVE

I will walk more by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking further from the store or taking a desk break to go for a five-minute stroll.

LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY KILLS

The medical evidence about the positive benefits of regular physical activity — and the costs of our increasingly cubicle-dwelling, couch-surfing, sedentary lifestyles could fill a library. And yet less than one-third of Americans meet the minimal recommendations for activity as outlined by the CDC, ACSM and AHA expert panels. Roughly 250,000 deaths per year in the U.S. are directly attributable to a lack of regular exercise, and many large studies show that exercise helps prevent cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and colon cancer; lowers weight, blood pressure and “bad” cholesterol levels; and improves mood and the immune system.

THE 30 MINUTES OF DAILY RECOMMENDED EXERCISE CAN BE TAKEN IN FIVE- OR TEN-MINUTE BURSTS

While the Surgeon General recommends a half hour of moderate-intensity activity on most (if not all) days of the week, it's been proven that shorter, repeated bursts of activity (...you can do the math: six five-minute or three ten-minute bouts...) do the trick. For instance: A study showed that multiple workout sessions as short as six minutes apiece helped sedentary adults reach fitness goals similar to those achieved by 30-minute workouts; another

that short walks after dinner were actually more effective than long exercise sessions in reducing fat and triglyceride blood levels after a hearty meal; while yet another revealed that short bouts of exercise helped lower blood pressure and shaved inches off the hips and waistline.

TOO BUSY? SPLIT EXERCISE INTO SHORTER TIME BURSTS.



People can get their 30 minutes of moderate daily exercise just by making a few little changes: by walking briskly for 10 minutes, or taking the stairs over the elevator. For instance, a new Canadian study found that not only does it take twice as long to get to a designated floor by elevator versus the stairs (taking the stairs saves on average 15 minutes per day), but that walking up and down seven flights (about 900 steps) knocks out 10 percent of the recommended 10,000 steps a person is supposed to take a day.



GET TO YOUR DAILY
RECOMMENDED
10,000 STEPS —
TAKE THE STAIRS.



HYDRATE

I will drink a glass of water before
breakfast, lunch or dinner.

OUR BODY'S ELIXIR

While the old maxim about drinking eight glasses of water a day has been widely debunked (because we get much of our needed water from the food we eat, especially fruits and vegetables) — there is still no doubt that hydration is key to good health. Water regulates body temperature, lubricates joints, lessens the burden on our kidneys and liver by flushing out wastes, protects body organs and tissues and carries nutrients and oxygen to our cells. Doctors now say “drink when you’re thirsty” is a better rule of thumb than the old, mandated eight glasses — but the problem is, Starbucks and soda-swilling Americans now consume a record amount of caffeine, and hence, 75 percent of Americans are now chronically dehydrated.

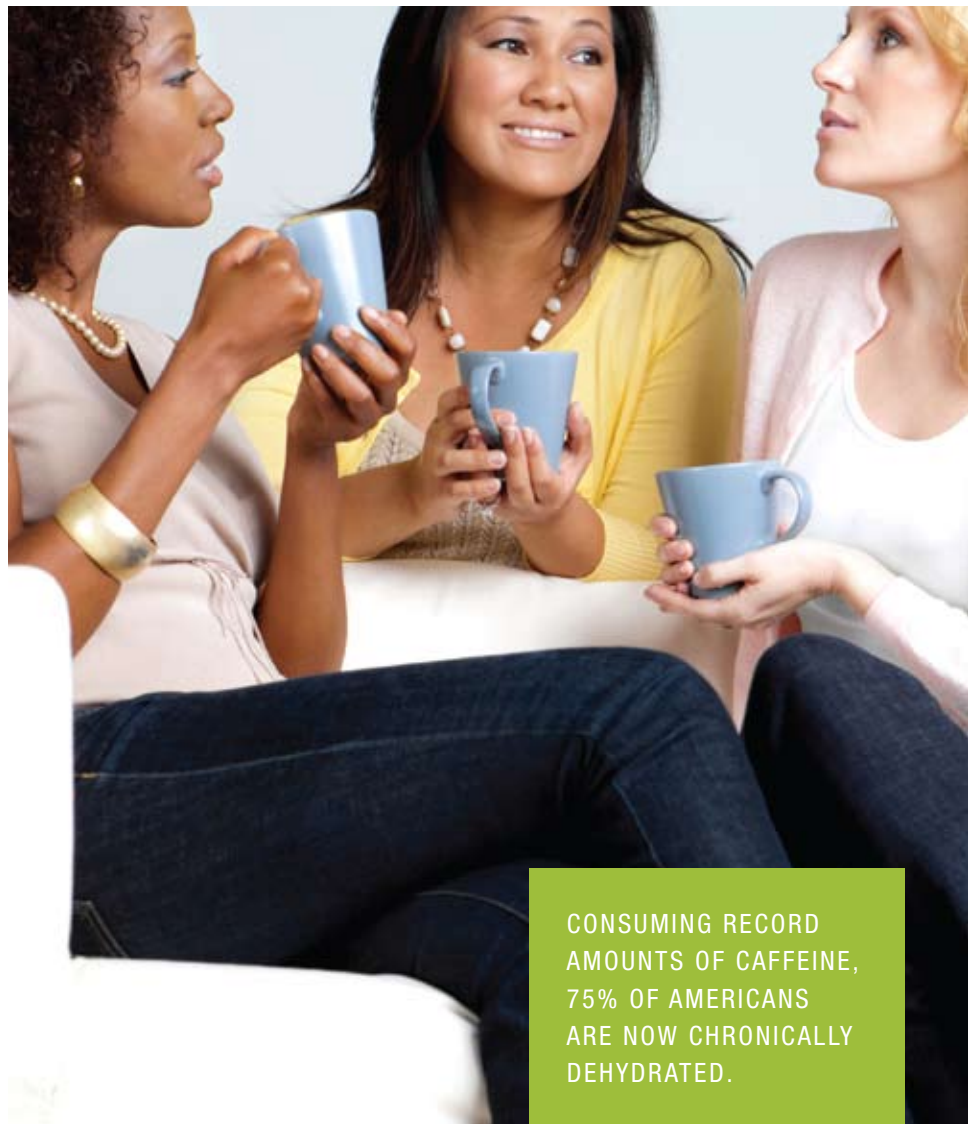
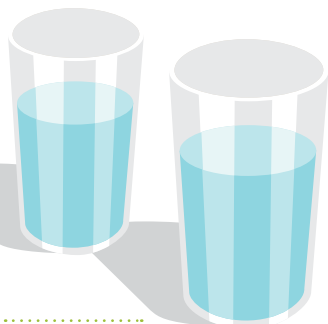
H2O - WEIGHT LOSS (AND OTHER BENEFITS)

Medical studies confirm that drinking water helps shed pounds. For example, it's been reported that people who drank two eight-ounce glasses of water before meals ate 75-90 calories less during the meal, and that those drinking water three times a day before meals (over three months) lost five pounds more than those who did not. Another study showed metabolic rates (the rate at which calories are burned) increased by 30 percent for both men and women who drank 17 ounces of water. Another study showed that water impacts mood, with dehydrated women exhibiting

headaches, loss of focus and fatigue. And water is proven to improve skin tone.

With the explosion of sugary sodas and coffee drinks, Americans are now drinking an average of 235 calories a day, far more than at any point in history. Swap out some of these beverages for water, our very healthiest beverage.

THIRSTY?
TRY SWAPPING
ONE CAFFEINE DRINK
A DAY WITH WATER.



CONSUMING RECORD AMOUNTS OF CAFFEINE, 75% OF AMERICANS ARE NOW CHRONICALLY DEHYDRATED.



Connect with
NATURE

Connect with NATURE

I will walk outside, breathe more deeply and enjoy the outdoors for a few minutes each day.

AMERICANS' "NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER"

American families increasingly live in an "indoor" world, glued to all their various screens (at work and at home), i.e., TVs, video games and the Internet, with the world's social networking addiction, etc. The upshot: People are spending far less time outside and in nature than at any point in history. One recent study reveals that outdoor activities have fallen by more than 20 percent per capita since the 1980s. And children, whose life used to be defined by outdoor play, are now keenly nature-deprived, spending an average of 45 hours a week with electronic media. One study finds that the number of children who spent time doing outside activities like walking or playing at the beach fell by 50 percent from

1997-2003 — while another survey shows that 70 percent of mothers reported playing outdoors every day when they were young, compared with only 31 percent of their children. The cost: The Institute of Medicine reports that childhood obesity has more than doubled for adolescents and more than tripled for children ages 6–11, over the past 30 years.

SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS - SURPRISING HEALTH BENEFITS

More than 100 research studies have indicated that outdoor recreation reduces stress, improves mood and leads to an overall increase in physical and psychological wellbeing. One report established that a view of nature, even through a window, speeds recovery from surgery, improves work performance and increases job satisfaction, while another found that 71 percent of people with mental health disorders decreased depression with a “green walk.” Additional studies showed



**FEELING BLUE?
RAISE YOUR SPIRITS
WITH A “GREEN WALK.”**

that going outside (or just being near plants) improved memory performance and attention span by 20 percent, and that getting out in nature does more than lift our mood — it can actually affect our priorities and alter what we think is important in life, making us less self-focused and more other- or community- focused.



**CHILDREN AND
TEENS BENEFIT FROM
NATURE MORE THAN
ANY OTHER GROUP.**

Children and teenagers benefit from nature experiences more than any group, especially with academic performance. One report revealed that students in outdoor science programs improved their science test scores by 27 percent, while improving conflict resolution skills and cooperation.



Make my
SLEEP
a priority

Make my SLEEP a priority

.....

I will build boundaries around my sleep by sticking to a set bedtime, and by not eating or working in bed.

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SLEEP DEPRIVATION NATION

Our 24/7 world, with the ever-longer work hours and constant “plugged in” overstimulation, means people are getting less sleep than ever: The average adult sleeps less than seven hours a night, while research shows at least seven-eight are needed. (In 1910, most people got nine hours of sleep a night.) Chronic sleep loss/disorders affect as many as 70 million Americans, and 30 million of us are now turning to prescription sleep aids. More than one-third of adults report daytime sleepiness so intense that it interferes with work, driving, etc., at least a few days each month.

ZZZS = GOOD HEALTH

The cost of not getting enough shut-eye isn't just eternal grouchiness and loss of productivity — study after study shows it increases the risk of serious chronic diseases and can shorten our lifespans. Data from three large epidemiological studies revealed that sleeping five hours or less per night increased mortality risk by roughly 15 percent. The medical research concurs that poor sleep is linked to: heart disease, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, increased inflammation, colds and even cancer, etc. And researchers are discovering how sleep is vital for learning and memory.

LACK OF SLEEP = WEIGHT GAIN

Numerous studies link too little sleep with weight gain and obesity. That's because while we sleep our bodies secrete hormones that help to control appetite, energy metabolism and glucose processing. For instance, lack of sleep leads to lower levels of leptin, a hormone that alerts the brain that it has enough food, and higher levels of ghrelin, which

stimulates appetite. So when tired, we may crave food even though we're not hungry. Hence, it's not surprising studies have shown that people who sleep less than six hours are much more likely to have a higher body mass index, while those that get eight hours have the lowest BMI.

A BIG CULPRIT - SLEEP HYGIENE

Many people with insomnia don't create environments and processes that aid in good, restful sleep. Experts agree you must establish a time of day when you sleep and wake and stick to it. Rooms should be dark, safe, relaxing and cool (many say 60 degrees is ideal). And you must "respect" your sleeping space, keeping work, electronics, TVs, cell phones, iPads — and strife/arguments — out of your bedroom. A new National Sleep Foundation poll found that 95 percent of us use some type of electronics, or stare at some type of screen, in the hour before bed at least a few nights a week, and all our fiddling with Facebook, Twitter and games in the last hour before bed is a new high-tech impairment to sleep.



Embrace
the power of
TOUCH

Embrace the power of TOUCH

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I will recharge myself and others through the simple act of giving or receiving a hug, foot rub or five-minute massage.

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Many medical experts agree that physical touch is a primal human need, and yet, in western (and especially, American) society, complex social rules often prevent us from the simple act of positive touch, and we've become a dangerously touch-deprived society. Some call it "skin hunger," and it affects everyone — with the elderly, the isolated and the ill being the most touch deprived.

MEDICAL EVIDENCE FOR TOUCH & MASSAGE

The medical evidence on the benefits of touch and massage is powerful and growing. Studies find that babies that receive massage develop faster, sleep better and experience less pain — with one study revealing that premature babies given

five one-minute massages a day gained 47 percent more weight than those that didn't. The 700-plus medical studies on massage reveal that it is a medically effective therapy for a range of conditions, including back pain, stress, anxiety and depression — and that it reduces stress hormones, improves immune function and even enhances alertness. So, positive touch and massage can do much more than make you “feel good.”



MASSAGES ARE PROVEN TO REDUCE STRESS, IMPROVE IMMUNE SYSTEM AND ENHANCE ALERTNESS.

KILLER STRESS

It is well publicized that stress is responsible for 75 percent of all doctor visits, and some of the new medical research around stress (and massage) is eye opening. For instance, a recent Cedars Sinai study found that just one 45-minute massage resulted in powerful biological changes, including a significant decrease in stress hormones, while boosting

STRESS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR 75% OF ALL DOCTOR VISITS

immunity. Consider the new research (much headed up by Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn, at UCSF) revealing that stress leads to shorter telomeres (those protective caps on the ends of chromosomes), and that shorter telomeres lead to higher risks for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers, depression, osteoarthritis, etc. — and that lifestyle changes, including a healthy diet, stress management and exercise, can reverse telomere shortening and potentially extend people's lives.



Give myself
the gift of
SILENCE

Give myself the gift of SILENCE

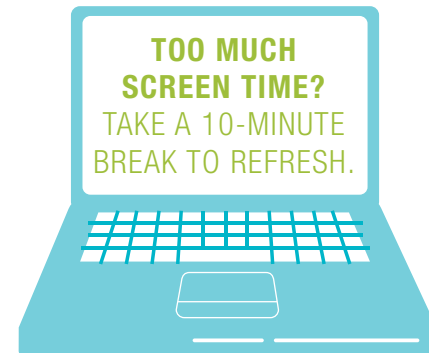
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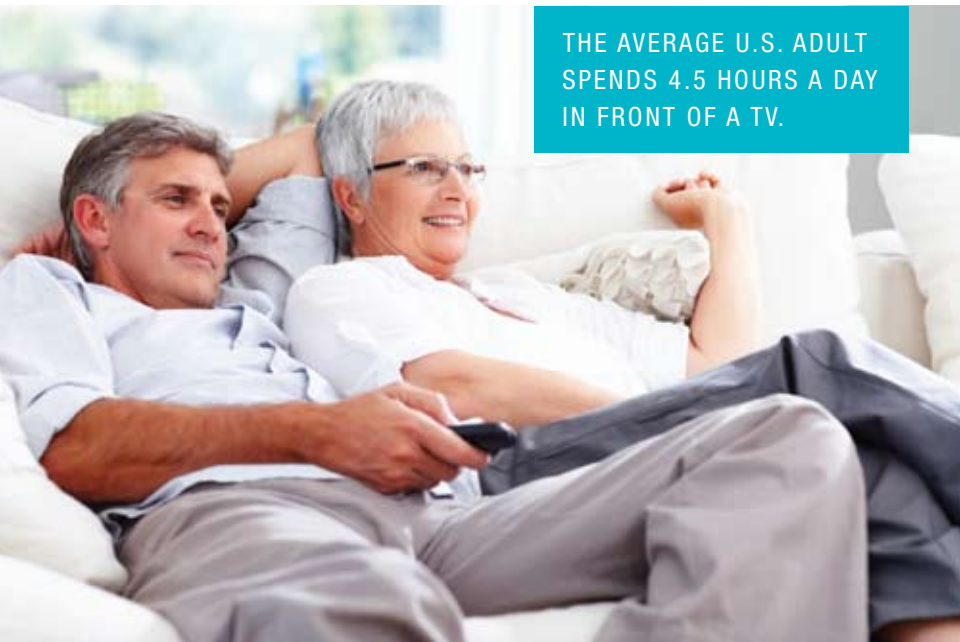
I will find 10 minutes a day away from screens of any type — phone, TV or computer and enjoy the quiet.

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UNPLUG

The sheer amount of time people now spend “plugged in,” consuming media, wired to all kinds of gadgets, bombarded with communications and digitally multitasking, is nothing short of staggering. The average time U.S. adults now spend with media (TV, video, the Internet, mobile, etc.) has now hit almost 700 minutes a day — that’s an unprecedented 11 hours-plus! (And more than 4.5 hours are spent glassy-eyed in front of a TV.) We all do it, all day: checking email, texting, web surfing — while listening to music or watching TV.





THE AVERAGE U.S. ADULT
SPENDS 4.5 HOURS A DAY
IN FRONT OF A TV.

THE COST OF OVERSTIMULATION

More scientists now believe that this endless time spent with the Internet, cell phones and TV is making us impatient, impulsive, forgetful, unfocused and even more narcissistic — that it is profoundly changing our brains and the very way we think and behave. For instance, scientists argue that all these “message spurts” play to a primitive impulse to respond to immediate opportunities and threats, which

excite us and produce a dopamine squirt — that can be addictive. When “unplugged,” people feel bored.

People like to think multitasking makes them productive, but the medical research shows it makes them have trouble focusing and stresses them out. For instance, one finding found that people interrupted by email reported significantly

“DOWNTIME IS TO THE BRAIN
WHAT SLEEP IS TO THE BODY.”

increased stress compared with those left to focus. More scientists like Michael Rich, MD, of Harvard Medical School are arguing that our brains desperately need downtime to allow the brain to process experiences and turn them into permanent long-term memories, which is essentially the act of learning. One study showed that major cross sections of the brain become surprisingly active during such downtime, which is why Dr. Rich argues that, “Downtime is to the brain what sleep is to the body.”



Take the
PLEDGE

Take the PLEDGE

We've given you some ideas, but now it's up to you to plan what's next. Make a note of the simple yet vital steps you'll take toward a happier and healthier life.

I PLEDGE TO:

How will you incorporate the 7 Healthy Habits into your life?

Change my **BREAKFAST**

(Ideas on pages 4-7)

Choose to **MOVE**

(Ideas on pages 8-11)

HYDRATE

(Ideas on pages 12-15)

I PLEDGE TO:

How will you incorporate the 7 Healthy Habits into your life?

Connect with **NATURE**
(ideas on pages 16-19)

Make my **SLEEP** a priority
(Ideas on pages 20-23)

Embrace the power of
TOUCH
(ideas on pages 24-27)

Give myself the gift of
SILENCE
(Ideas on pages 28-31)



For more information on Wellness Week[™] 2012 or the Pledge, visit:

www.WellnessWeek2012.com

www.WellnessWeek2012.com

