

July/August 2020

The art of growing young[®]

Summer Skin

Feature Article



In this Issue...

A Camping Life
for Me

The Choice Is Yours

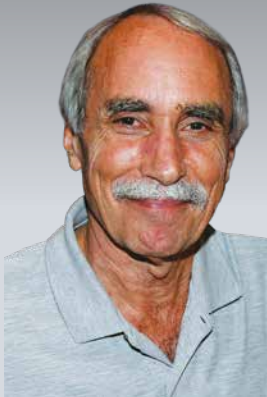
Working from Home



In this Issue...

Seeds of Happiness

02



Nutritional News

03



Tennis

04



A Camping Life for Me

08



02 Seeds of Happiness

03 Nutritional News

04 **Fitness**
Tennis

06 **Feature Article**
Summer Skin

08 **Lifestyle**
A Camping Life for Me

10 **Nutrition**
The Choice Is Yours

12 **Feature Article**
The Lone Nomad:
The benefits of traveling
alone

14 **Herbs and
Supplements**
Hay Fever

16 **Family Health**
Mindfulness for Kids

18 **Family Health**
Longevity Secrets
from Japan

20 **Family Health**
Working from Home

22 **Family Health**
Summer Hair

24 Ask the Expert

The Lone Nomad: The benefits of traveling alone

12



Working from Home

20



Seeds of Happiness

I was recently reading a study from the Princeton Environmental Institute that found having a home garden can enhance a person's emotional well-being. In the study, begun in 2017, researchers found home gardeners reported similar feelings of happiness as people who enjoy biking, walking and dining out. People who tended vegetable gardens reported even higher feelings of happiness than those who tended flower gardens.¹

The study didn't even look at community gardens, where social interactions occur. What a fantastic finding, especially in these times in which we are having fewer opportunities to engage in activities in public spaces. Unrelated to this study, but in a similar vein, when shelter-in-place orders began to be issued, seed catalogs and garden stores saw a significant increase in sales.

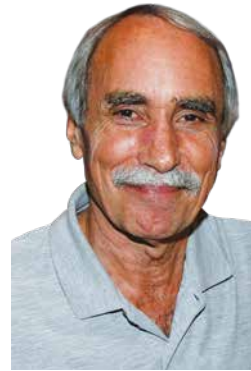
I don't know whether the surge in seed sales was due to people's unease over going to grocery stores, an innate desire to fortify their bodies with extra nutrition, or simply the realization by millions of people that they would finally have time to start and tend a vegetable garden. Regardless of the motives, the results are the same for all the new gardeners out there: delicious, homegrown food and a sense of happiness while growing it.

With those findings, it's no surprise that three years later, follow-ups showed that

70 percent of the study subjects were still enjoying actively gardening.

People are literally sowing their own seeds of happiness as they grow healthy foods. Even if all you have room for is a few herbs planted in your kitchen window, the satisfaction of growing your own food and the taste of freshly harvested fruits, vegetables or herbs can't be matched by the experience of purchasing and eating produce from the store.

Whether you have room for an entire backyard garden or just a single pot of basil near a window, planting your own seeds of happiness may be more important than ever.



Dwight L. McKee M.D.

Dwight L. McKee
Scientific Director

¹ Ambrose, Graham, et al. "Is Gardening Associated with Greater Happiness of Urban Residents? A Multi-Activity, Dynamic Assessment in the Twin-Cities Region, USA." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, vol. 198, 2020, p. 103776, doi:10.1016/j.landurbplan.2020.103776.

Nutritional News



New benefits of berries

The latest study on berries shows the flavonoid-rich foods are linked to lower Alzheimer's risk. Looking at the intake of berries, apples and tea of 2,800 people over the course of 20 years, researchers found those who consumed the fewest flavonoid-packed foods were two to four times more likely to experience symptoms of Alzheimer's.¹

Help protect your digestive tract with the sunshine vitamin

According to new research published in *Frontiers in Microbiology*, spending a little more time in the sun may help protect the health of your digestive system. Exposure to sunlight prompts the body to produce vitamin D, and that vitamin D influences some of the beneficial microbes in our digestive tracks. This may be especially helpful for those dealing with multiple sclerosis or inflammatory bowel disease, both of which are closely linked to an imbalance of gut bacteria.³



Exercise to beat depression

Just 35 minutes of physical activity a day may help protect against new episodes of depression, even in people who have been shown to have a genetic vulnerability. In a Harvard study of over 8,000 people, those who were more physically active were less likely to develop depression. All it takes is little more than a half hour per day to experience the protective benefits.²

Lifting weights helps your heart

Weightlifting is good for your heart, according to researchers, and it doesn't take much to experience the benefits. Engaging in resistance training for less than an hour a week may be all it takes to help significantly reduce the risk of developing heart attack or stroke. Spending more than an hour in the weight room did not yield any additional benefit, the researchers found.⁴

Olive oil, fruits and vegetables protect your heart

The latest research into the Mediterranean diet, long lauded for its health benefits, has once again found a new benefit of the diet rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains. Researchers found that a Mediterranean-style diet improved endothelial function in adults, which further suggests that the diet may help ward off cardiovascular disease.⁵



¹ Shishtar, Esra, et al. "Long-Term Dietary Flavonoid Intake and Risk of Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementias in the Framingham Offspring Cohort." *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 2020, doi:10.1093/ajcn/nqaa079.

² Wozniak, Tomasz. "35 Minutes of Exercise May Protect Those at Risk for Depression." *Harvard Gazette*, Nov. 14, 2019, news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/11/physical-activity-may-

protect-those-at-risk-for-depression/.

³ Bosman, Else S., et al. "Skin Exposure to Narrow Band Ultraviolet (UVB) Light Modulates the Human Intestinal Microbiome." *Frontiers in Microbiology*, vol. 10, 2019, doi:10.3389/fmicb.2019.02410.

⁴ Liu, Yanghui, et al. "Associations of Resistance Exercise with Cardiovascular Disease Morbidity and Mortality." *Medicine &*

Science in Sports & Exercise, vol. 51, no. 3, 2019, pp. 499-508, doi:10.1249/mss.0000000000001822.

⁵ Shannon, Oliver M., et al. "Mediterranean Diet Increases Endothelial Function in Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials." *The Journal of Nutrition*, vol. 150, no. 5, 2020, pp. 1151-1159, doi:10.1093/jn/nxaa002.

Tennis

Have you ever been in the midst of an exercise routine and checked the time only to realize you were not even halfway done? Or perhaps you have struggled with motivation to get on a piece of exercise equipment because once on, you feel stuck on it.

Boredom can be a significant deterrent when it comes to fitness. While some people like the almost trance-like monotony of certain exercise routines (swimmers, for example, often report being able to get into a meditative state with the repetition during the laps), a dynamic sport is more appealing for many.

Tennis provides a host of health benefits, including social and mental health. One of the best reasons to try tennis is that it is an all-in-one workout, meaning you exercise so many different areas of your body.



While sports like soccer or running focus more on the lower body, tennis works the body from head to toe.

Your legs are constantly in some sort of motion. Sometimes they are sprinting to get to the ball, and other times they are just bouncing in place in anticipation of the quick decision of where you'll run to next.

The legs have to jump, crouch down, stop suddenly, dash quickly—the variety strengthens and stretches so many different muscles in the legs rather than focusing on one major muscle group.

Your arms and torso are also moving with those ever-changing dynamics. As your body responds to the best way to hit the ball back, your torso must literally twist, turn and bend for your arms to be able to wield the racket. Your shoulders and upper back have to utilize the racket to hit the ball—force is needed, but also precision in calculating the angle.

Not only is tennis a full-body workout, but it also targets several different exercise areas, such as stretching, strengthening, aerobic and cardiovascular, coordination, balance, and flexibility.

Tennis is dynamic, with slower, more lulling moments of activity and then more fast-paced and quicker spurts.

When running, swimming or rowing, your body is doing the same repetitive succession of actions over and over again. In tennis, you need to move your body from one side of the court to the other, and forward and back. There is no specific rhythm or sequence of movement. You may have to reach suddenly, stretching out with your racket for the ball, or sometimes jump back to be able to just barely prevent the ball from hitting you. This makes your body (and mind!) more agile and responsive.



Tennis improves your cognitive capabilities. You have to make quick decisions and respond to plays instantaneously.

You have to calculate and respond to your opponent's moves, and you also have to consider things like the way the wind is affecting the movement of the ball. You have to decide where you want to hit the ball to, how hard, what angle to position your racket—the list of rapid decisions is long! Tennis forces your mind and body to work together in planning, strategy and coordination.



Tennis is a social sport. You have to have at least one other person. This is helpful in accountability (just like a walking group or a dance class!), but it also makes it more enjoyable. You get to spend time with another person, often without the need to talk much; instead, you can work on the game together.

Perhaps you have never picked up a tennis racket or you even feel intimidated by the idea of playing with an experienced player. The point is that you try a sport long enough to reach a level of basic ability.



Once you feel more comfortable in that given sport, then you will really know whether you like doing it.

You will only stick with a sport or fitness routine that you find fun and entertaining. So whether it is tennis, soccer, basketball or something else, sports are an important part of fitness, because if you're having fun, you'll be more likely to keep doing it.

Summer Skin

What causes skin conditions? Weather, pollution, gut health, foods, allergies? Or is it something else?

It's probably common to think of the colder months of winter as a time of year when our skin suffers. But summer has its own host of skin concerns including eczema, psoriasis and rashes.

A summer skincare routine will differ from your fall and winter routine because of the weather changes.

Factors such as allergies (different seasonal allergens are in the air), pollution, and changes in food and diet also contribute to different skincare needs during the warmer months.

Eczema, also called atopic dermatitis, is an allergic inflammation of the skin that causes moderate-to-extreme itchiness and a red rash. Eczema is thought to be the body's overactive immune response to irritants and allergens, and is more common with people who have a family history of it. People who suffer from it report it being incredibly uncomfortable.

Psoriasis is a chronic autoimmune condition that triggers the skin cells to turn over too quickly and leads to patches of itchy, flakey, thickened skin. For many people, summer is a time of reprieve from psoriasis since sunlight (and light therapy) is often a successful treatment for it. Additionally, many parts of the world are more humid during the summer months, which helps sufferers.

The key is to identify what exacerbates a flare-up and limit your exposure to it. If you have a flare-up in the summer, analyze what new creams, lotions or soaps (including laundry detergents or dishwashing soap) may be the culprit. Some people's eczema or psoriasis gets worse with temperature changes, such as the extreme heat during the summer. Avoid sweating too much, and be sure to rinse your skin thoroughly after exercising or sweating.

Keep the skin clean and dry yet well-moisturized. It is always best to use natural oils like coconut or olive oil. Try to avoid most of the commercial products that are loaded with synthetic chemicals, most of which can be irritating. Wear breathable clothing with natural fabrics. Use a humidifier if you live in a very dry climate. Invest in a high-quality air purifier in your home or office. Be sure to keep your home clean, and try to prevent dust and dander buildup.



Control your body's inflammation. Include in your diet foods that are anti-inflammatory, such as cherries, fatty fish, green tea and dark chocolate.

An essential step in healing inflammation is gut health. Research has suggested that psoriasis could truly be a bowel issue, and that certain flavonoids such as quercetin help prevent the absorption of toxins that can lead to psoriasis issues.¹ Quercetin is found in foods like leafy greens, onions, citrus, many berries, apples and honey. It is also available as a supplement, and is best absorbed when taken with the enzyme bromelain, found in pineapples.

¹ Ely, P. Haines. "Is Psoriasis a Bowel Disease? Successful Treatment with Bile Acids and Bioflavonoids Suggests It Is." *Clinics in Dermatology*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2018, pp. 376-389., doi:10.1016/j.cldermatol.2018.03.011.



Stress can overstimulate our immune systems and disrupt the hormonal balance in our body. This can cause an eczema flare-up. Take care of your mind and soul. Just as you would avoid physical irritants and allergens, prioritize and accommodate your lifestyle to promote well-being and positivity and avoid unneeded drama or anxiety. There are situations that are inevitable or unavoidable (difficult workplace dynamics, relationship struggles). It is important to have ways to care for yourself in order to cope with temporary stress-inducing periods of life. Yoga, meditation, regular vigorous exercise, healthy sleep and eating well are some essential components of self-care. Prioritizing healthy friendships and relationships is another way to counteract stressful or negative people or situations in your life.

Make it a yearly habit to meet with your dermatologist at the start of summer to do a review of moles, freckles and sunspots. This gives you both a chance to review the entire body (even intimate areas) to see if there are any moles or discolorations that need to be addressed.



Take a personal inventory of your skin (doing this every season with your spouse or partner is helpful) and make notes—compare those notes from year to year to check for changes. Making this a regular part of your healthcare routine can help you and your provider identify any skin concerns that require more attention, such as the need to biopsy a mole or to identify lesions that should be watched carefully over time.

Keep aloe plants in your home. Not only are they easy to care for and nice for year-round greenery in your décor, they are also incredible humectants to rub on your skin.

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. Water is essential. You should not only drink plenty of water daily, but also consume hydrating vegetables and fruits. After showering, lock in that moisture by applying a body lotion that contains natural oils or butters to your damp skin. Jojoba oil, shea butter, almond oil and squalene are all rich in nutrients the skin needs.

If you are by the sea, take a dip! Saltwater can help psoriasis. Alternatively, you can take an Epsom salt bath at home.

Vitamin D is one of the most important vitamins (it's actually a hormone!) for our immunity and mental health. Since the best vitamin D is produced when our skin absorbs direct sunlight (not through a window), it is a careful balance of getting enough sun exposure but not too much. Generally speaking, one should get 10 to 30 minutes of sun-skin exposure without sunscreen several times a week during late spring, summer and early fall, in temperate zones. People with fairer skin may find it a bit difficult to do that without getting burned. People with darker skin may need longer or more frequent exposure.

Those of us who live in northern latitudes have more difficulty producing enough vitamin D during the winter because of the low sun exposure, so supplements are often necessary.

Take advantage of the sunny fresh air during warm and sunny days by wearing shorts or a tank top during that 10-to-30-minute period. Wear a hat and sunglasses to protect your facial skin from damage and premature aging.

When you choose to apply a physical sunscreen (those that are known as mineral sunscreen—zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide), it blocks the damaging sun rays (shortwave ultraviolet) and does not contain toxic absorbable chemicals. Or if you are covering up with clothes, allow the psoriasis patches to be exposed for at least five minutes without sun protection. However, be sure to avoid sunburns, as that can exacerbate a flare-up. Always opt for physical—clothing or mineral—sunscreens, as they are better for coral reefs and other waterway ecological systems, and because nonmineral sunscreens can cause endocrine/hormonal disruption.

A Camping Life for Me

Most of us grew up in one of two kinds of families: families that camped or families that did not camp.

The families that camped probably went once or twice a year—they packed up their car with tents, sleeping bags, firewood and camp chairs.



They spoke of the smell of the forest, the cold splash of the lake and the taste of the roasted marshmallows.

The families that didn't camp shook their heads over why anyone would want to sleep on the ground, shoo mosquitos and miss a daily shower.

Which sort of family did you grow up in? When we have all the relative luxuries of life—shelter, running water, indoor bathroom facilities—what is the appeal of leaving for a more rustic experience?

Most of us living in a city or even a smaller town do not have the chance to truly connect with nature.

While spending time in the garden in your yard or walking around a neighborhood park is fantastic for daily nature exposure, an immersive camping trip can really help you reset and relax.

This exposure to nature is good for your health and important for our connection to the planet.

Camping helps us slow down. When we are in nature, we almost instinctually slow down. No phones ringing or dinging, beckoning us to answer messages immediately. No classes, meetings or obligations other than to cook, clean up a bit and just be.

The quiet of being out in nature is unmatched. The sound of birds chirping with their varied songs and the rustle of chipmunks in the bushes are each unique. Listen to the sound of the swaying trees in the breeze. If you are going to a campground, make sure you choose a place that doesn't allow radios or loud parties.



When you go camping, you might go on a daily hike in the woods.



Maybe you'll swim in a lake or the ocean. These are activities that get us moving. Even setting up a tent and building a campfire helps us move our bodies in ways we don't need to in our convenient, more urban lives.

But you don't have to completely rough it to go camping! Yes, you can go completely off the grid and hike miles into a nature preserve or government park to find greater solitude. But the reality is that many state and national parks have campsites with bathroom and shower facilities and comfortable camp setups.



Don't sleep on the rocks—get a packable, inflatable sleeping pad to put under your sleeping bag. No need to suffer through eating cold food out of a can. Plan meals that are actually fun to cook over a fire and delicious to eat. Bring a cedar plank and fire-roast some fresh fish or grill vegetables over the campfire. Bring a cast-iron skillet and make a campfire pie.

Camping doesn't have to be expensive. Of course, there is some basic equipment and gear you need, but you don't need to buy it, necessarily. See if another family would be willing to lend you their tent or some supplies.



Some recreational facilities or stores have rental services—so, no need to buy a bunch of gear you may not use frequently. Perhaps if you camp more regularly, you can find another family that may want to co-own some camping equipment, or maybe find friends or neighbors who want to do an annual campout together!

Camping is a time to connect. You can disconnect from everyday life and connect to those you care about. Families find the lack of everyday distractions a welcome change. Children can explore while adults talk and catch up. It gives us the chance to live life—albeit briefly—at a more sustainable pace.



The Choice Is Yours

These days, it can seem like everyone has a different dietary restriction. In the European Union, restaurants utilize extensive keys indicating what each menu item contains (such as nuts, dairy, eggs, meat). Even an average dinner party host will often ask friends and family coming for dinner if there are any foods they need to avoid.

Some food restrictions are necessary to prevent severe allergic reactions, while other foods may cause health issues such as headaches or gastrointestinal distress. For some people, food choices are based on ethics or religious beliefs. And many people make dietary choices based on trends or personal health goals. What is most important is that your body is getting the vitamins and minerals it needs, and that foods be whole, organically produced and processed as little as possible.



There are some universal guidelines for optimal nutrition, such as a diet based on a wide variety of fresh vegetables and fruits.

But because your body is unique, you may react to some foods positively and to other foods less well. The choice is yours on exactly which foods to choose for your individual needs and personal goals.

If your nutrition goal is to increase lean muscle, then you should also increase your protein intake and decrease your dietary fats. If your health concern is inflammation, decreasing carbohydrates and refined sugars would be important, and you might consider a low-lectin diet.

If your goal is to lose weight, a current popularly promoted dietary choice is intermittent fasting.

There are varying methods of fasting, but a popular intermittent fasting trend is the 16:8 rule. People who follow it will abstain from eating for 16 hours of a 24-hour period and then have a window of eight hours during which they eat. Some studies show that intermittent fasting can decrease caloric intake by about 25 percent. Other studies indicate that it is helpful in blood sugar control, decreasing inflammation in the body and improving hormone balance.

Gluten-free diets are used for a number of reasons. Some people have a medical condition called celiac disease. But many see that eating low or no gluten and other lectins helps with things like chronic headaches, mild gastrointestinal upset, chronic inflammation, weight gain or even blood sugar control.

Similarly, people who follow a dairy-free diet may have true lactose intolerance, or could be making a lifestyle choice based on how their bodies respond to dairy.

Vegetarians or vegans choose to not eat meat or to eliminate animal products entirely from their diet. Some people do this because of ethical concerns for animal welfare, and others do it as a way to protect the environment (a lot of natural resources go into producing animal products for dietary consumption). Others become vegetarian for health reasons. Some find that being a “flexitarian” is more suitable to their lifestyle—this means that perhaps they will eat a vegetarian diet at home, but when out at a restaurant or dining at someone else’s home, they don’t require meat or animal products to be absent from what they eat.

No two people have the exact same nutritional requirements. Even if you and another person have the same goal, you can’t just copy their exact nutritional plan. Certain health conditions affect your body’s nutritional needs. For example, somebody with cardiac disease should probably not follow a meat-heavy version of the paleo diet. Don’t blindly copy what other people are doing!

There are many factors that contribute to the differing nutritional needs of each person. Such factors may include genetics, age, culture, income, season, personal food preferences and mental focus needs.

The Lone Nomad: The benefits of traveling alone

Traveling is one of the most fulfilling ways to relax, learn and deepen our connection to the rest of the world. It's a time to disconnect from the ordinary and explore new lands, foods, people and customs. Traveling alone has additional perks. If you've never traveled alone but are curious what a solo adventure would be like, here are some reasons to try it at least once.

Know thyself.

Or perhaps better said, get to know thyself a little better. Community—family, friends, workplaces, marriage—are all social spaces where we can feel love, support and belonging. But sometimes it is hard to get some time alone to learn more about your inner space. Alone time can be very difficult to find (which is why people have so much trouble creating it for themselves in their everyday lives!), but it can be healthy for personal reflection and growth. Don't be afraid of your own company.

Distance makes the heart grow fonder. Or not.

Being on your own as you experience new and exciting things can be both lonely and invigorating. That loneliness or longing for the folks back home can help you appreciate them when you are back. You may miss connecting with your everyday relationships, which is healthy and normal. When you get back home, you'll have a new perspective about the people who matter most.

Additionally, having that space to be with just yourself and your own thoughts can help you identify less-healthy relationships or dynamics. It can give you time to breathe and think, process and evaluate.

Beyond the comfort zone.

Let's be honest—the idea of traveling alone can be pretty intimidating for a lot of us. But often self-growth and inner discovery are best accomplished through discomfort and growing pains. If you travel alone, be sure to include some unique adventures. Perhaps book a tour with another group to explore a rural village with a local guide. Maybe find a local market to explore and aim to try a completely unique food item. Or maybe sign up for a local cooking class.

If you're going to spend a few weeks in one region, a language class may be an enriching opportunity.

Another idea is to volunteer for local nonprofits or charity initiatives. All of these adventures help you learn more about the place that you are traveling in but also push you beyond your comfort zone. These activities can help you meet new people—both locals and fellow travelers.

Meet new people more easily.

When you travel with others, it is a lot easier to just stick to the people you know. Why talk to a stranger or strike up a conversation with a fellow traveler if you have your friend or spouse to communicate with while on vacation?

When you travel alone you can more easily engage with locals. In many parts of the world, traveling alone is a unique concept. In many cultures, people are so intertwined with their families and communities that the idea of solo vacationing may seem strange. This actually creates a great opportunity, as it opens you up for more moments of hospitality. Additionally, other solo travelers may also be more open to meeting you.

You choose the route.

In any traveling experience, there is give and take about what people want to do. One day someone may feel tired or even sick, but another day your companion may be more energized and curious to explore than you are. When you travel alone, you get to set the itinerary and the pace.

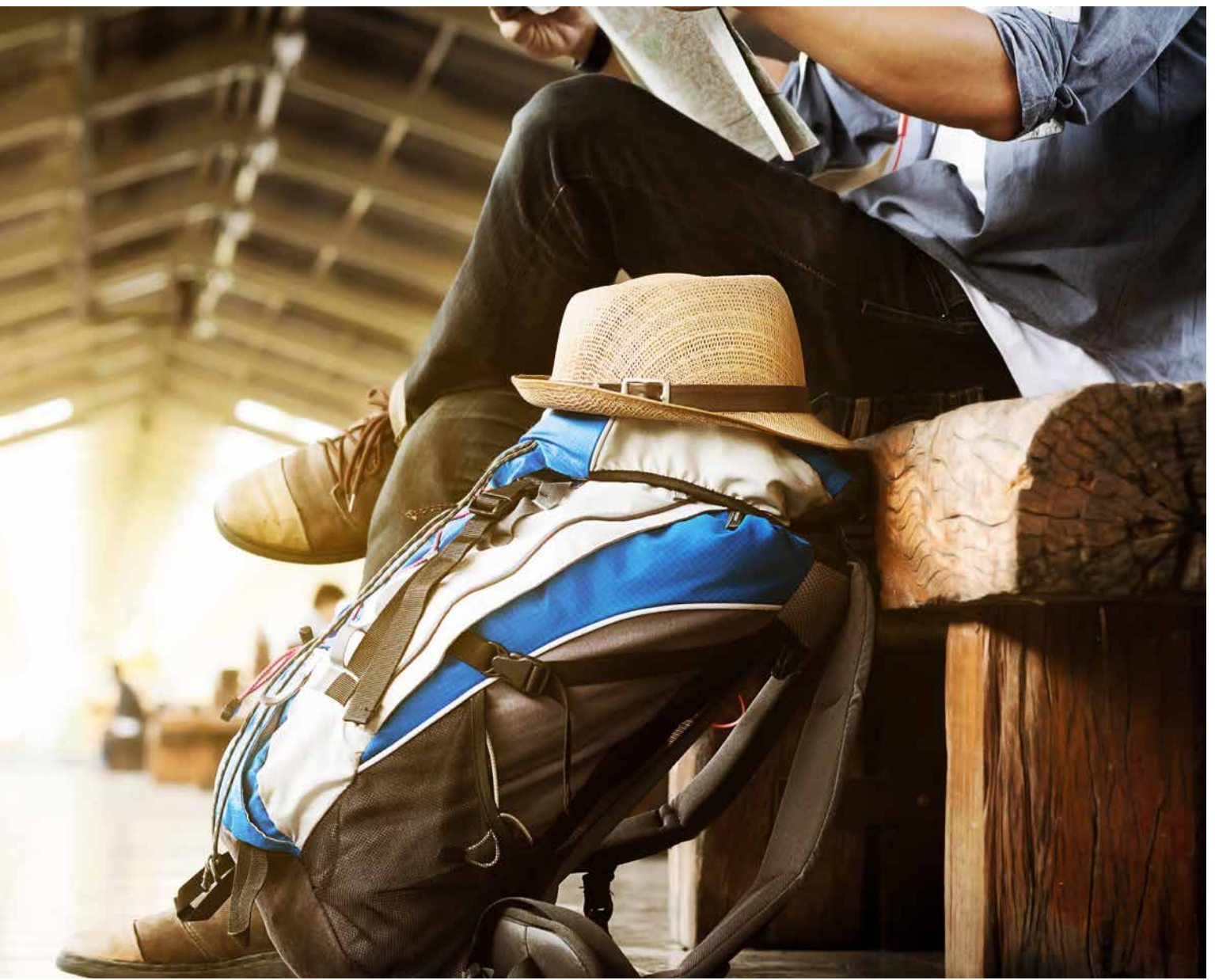


Self-sufficiency.

When you are alone, you have to rely on yourself. Sure, trying to read road signs in a foreign language or locate the restaurant you want to go to on a train map can be a great way to build teamwork and comradery with your travel mates. But when you are on your own, it is harder to take the backseat approach to travel. You have to make the decisions, and ultimately that means you have to do it yourself.

Try new accommodations.

There are specific accommodations that can help an independent traveler. While many young adults stick to hostels, some people may not be as keen given their reputation. Some hostels are geared to a more mature or quieter (read: not partying) crowd, with cleaner accommodations and many private rooms.



Other options are booking a private room in an apartment (try Airbnb) or exploring homestay options.

Other options are booking a private room in an apartment (try Airbnb) or exploring homestay options. If you are traveling to learn a new language, staying with a local family will force you to communicate beyond the classroom!

Boost confidence.

When you are able to reflect on the ways you dealt with more challenging travel moments, you can feel proud. It's easier to get over the intimidation or nervousness around traversing a foreign public transportation system when you have a companion with you.

But if you have to rely on yourself (and often the kindness of strangers), you will feel a sense pride.

A more immersive experience.

Traveling alone helps you to be more present to the situation. There is less conversation and communication with other people. It allows you the quiet space to sit and soak in the new places and faces.

Be safety minded.

While most places around the globe are relatively safe for solo travelers, be sure to do plenty of research to understand local customs. In some areas of the world, a woman traveling alone will appear highly unusual. Make sure you know how to ask for basic assistance in case an issue arises. Simple phrases such as "no, thank you" could help wave off any unwanted attention.

Additionally, knowing the customs around how to dress is particularly important. Be sure to keep embassy and consulate phone numbers at hand, and understand how to ask for medical treatment in case of a bad stomach bug or a sudden injury. You may want to notify your country's embassy about your travel plans, and at least leave a copy of your itinerary and passport at home with a trusted friend or family member.

Embrace the unknown.

By and large, traveling is safe. Prepare for the worst, but expect the best.

It will be an adventure you never forget and an experience that will be uniquely yours.



Hay Fever

Hay fever, or allergic rhinitis, is a seasonal allergy caused by an allergic response to pollen, dust mites or pet dander. Symptoms include a runny nose, red and itchy eyes, sneezing, coughing, and general fatigue. Despite the colloquial use of the word “fever” in its name, no fever is present and it is not associated with any virus.

Vitamin C is the ever-faithful antioxidant that helps our bodies ward off free radical attacks and helps keep our immune system working at its best. Consume plenty of fruits and vegetables with high levels of vitamin C during the seasonal allergy months.

Honey has known antihistamine properties. And the more local the better!

Ask around at farmers’ markets or check online about local beekeepers. If local isn’t an option, opt for manuka or buckwheat honeys. These honeys have some of the highest levels of antioxidants.

Decrease dairy consumption during hay fever season or when allergens are at high levels in the air. Dairy products can increase mucus production in your respiratory tract. Whole milk yogurt and kefir are brimming with beneficial probiotics, so you might limit your consumption to just these dairy products.



Spice up your meals! Capsaicin is an anti-inflammatory natural chemical found in chili peppers, horseradish, radishes and some mustards.

It’s what gives these foods that nose-running kick of heat and burn. If you are not a fan of spicy foods, just skip this, as there are other natural remedies that can help fight hay fever symptoms without the spice.



Less spicy but flavorful alternatives (or additions) include garlic and onions. Garlic and onions contain quercetin.

Quercetin is a flavonoid with anti-inflammatory and antihistamine properties. When flu and cold season hits, garlic soup is comforting and soothing. And during allergy season—even during the summer months—that warm bowl of garlic soup can help open up nasal passages and decrease swelling. Other options are French onion soup, grilled onions with a mustard vinaigrette on top as a dinner side dish, or roasted garlic to spread like butter over warm bread.

Be it allergies, viruses or other illnesses, a robust immune system is indispensable for staying healthy and fighting off ailments.

Focus on the following immunity-boosting actions:

Vitamin D is essential in immune function. Fresh air and sunlight are essential for optimal mental health but have also been shown to be immunity boosting. Indoor air can be surprisingly high in toxicants and irritants. Many people, especially those with darker skin living in climates with less sun, are deficient in vitamin D, unless they supplement with between 1,000 and 4,000 international units per day, taken with a meal with some fat in it, since vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin.

Reduce stress in order to better balance hormones and ensure the body is working on maintaining a healthy immune system and not responding to unneeded stressors. Spending time in nature helps keep us balanced. Mindfulness and meditation are essential practices that help us maintain a healthier mental state. Spending time with supportive (and fun!) people helps us find joy and relaxation.

One of the ways you can reduce stress is by being physically active with daily exercise. Exercise gets blood oxygenated and circulating, which also helps in cell renewal and body strengthening. If you exercise outside daily, it can help you accomplish all three of the aforementioned—making your vitamin D with help from the sun, reducing stress and keeping your body fit. Daily exercise also helps us sleep better at night.

Make quality sleep an uncompromising priority. When someone gets sick, hydration and rest are the age-old pieces of advice from grandmothers and healthcare professionals alike! Sleep is a time to regenerate our nervous system and repair our cells. Lack of sleep can cause a surge of stress hormones that further weakens our immune system.

Mindfulness for Kids

Telling young children not to run is like telling them not to breathe. They are fully in the present and fully in their bodies. Our job as parents, grandparents, teachers and caretakers is to teach them how to understand their feelings and tap into their emotions.

If we want to help our children truly lean into their higher selves, we must also teach them to engage their thoughts and emotions in healthy and kindhearted ways.

An important personal life skill is identifying and understanding our inner world. More self-actualized people are deeply aware of their thoughts and emotions, and know how to feel them without the thoughts and emotions controlling them. It sometimes seems like a lifelong journey—feeling our sentiments without letting them control us. Teaching mindfulness from an early age not only is important to help children be calmer and kinder, but also helps them develop into more humane and healthy adults.

But before you start teaching your children, you have to do your own work.

Model mindfulness. Just as with reading books, eating healthfully or practicing kindness to others, children learn from what they see us doing.

Try to establish your own mindfulness practice—however tiny a step it may be (start with five minutes once a day!).

Let go of expectations. That is a strong component of mindfulness. Try not to get stuck on the idea that your 10-year-old child will become this transcendental meditation guru.



Let go of the dream that your 4-year-old will be able to suddenly self-soothe when her sibling breaks her LEGO creation.

Don't force this on them. Introduce the idea as a fun new thing to try. Perhaps a class with other peers your child's age or a fun YouTube video would be a way to try it out. Don't link not meditating or practicing mindfulness with punishment or make it a consequence for poor behavior. Steer clear of saying things like "Do you need to go meditate to calm down?" Initially, this should be a practice independent from other behavior. Eventually, with practice, your children will be able to make that link on their own.

Keep the practice simple. Mindfulness may be too abstract a concept for school-age children. Use words and phrases like "noticing" and "being aware."



Tap into their senses. Children are very aware of the present moment (we could learn from them). Practice noticing and observing during fun daily moments. During dinner, have the family all slurp up the pasta and have everyone share what it tastes, smells and feels like. Be silly about it! If your kids say the pasta feels like a freight train while giggling to each other, embrace that!

Make bedtime a time to check in with one's body. Help your child do a nightly body scan. In the beginning, you could even incorporate a little stretching or massage. Explore apps of prerecorded body scans for kids that you could either play or get inspiration from.



Give your child a breathing buddy—a stuffed animal they can use to notice their breath.

This is especially good for children younger than 6 or 7 years. Your child will lie down on their back and hold their stuffed animal to their belly. With each breath, encourage your child to notice the rise and fall and the up and down of their stuffed animal.

Take a noticing walk. During this walk, talk about what all of your senses are experiencing. Take the same walk in different seasons and note the changes from one season to the next.

Practice gratitude. During meals, have each family member name something they are grateful for.

Attempt to have the gratitude moments focus not simply on material items, but also on people and events.

Let them know that you are grateful for them coming into your life.

Longevity Secrets from Japan

If you want to live a long and healthy life, looking to Japan for lessons on how seniors are living can be interesting. Japan has an aging population yet has one of the longest life expectancies in the world. The secrets to this longevity really begin in childhood and family life. Children born today are expected to live into their 80s and not have major medical conditions or complications until their early 70s.

What are the Japanese doing as a country and culture to promote healthy aging? Ultimately, it comes down to the way that Japanese people eat and move.

Instead of calorie-dense foods, they eat lower-calorie foods. A typical Japanese meal consists of a bowl of miso soup, a small bowl of rice, a portion of protein (such as fish, meat or tofu) and two vegetable side dishes.

The Japanese eat smaller portions in general, but especially of less healthy foods. Treats, desserts and junk food like pizza or potato chips aren't eaten on a daily basis; when people do indulge, it is in just a small amount.



Obviously, they consume a lot of white rice. White rice consumed with other healthy foods may not be as concerning for people who aren't diabetic.

For example, sushi has white rice coupled with fish, vegetables and seaweed. Because the rice is consumed with protein and vegetables, the glycemic effect is lessened.

Children are encouraged to taste and try a variety of foods. But that doesn't mean that Japanese parents need to do all the culinary encouraging. The Japanese school lunch program has been heralded internationally (similarly to France's lunch program) for being healthy. Schools prepare vegetable-abundant midday meals, often from fresh, seasonal and local sources. If a child doesn't like what is being served, there is no other option!

The Japanese walk a lot, from a very early age. Japanese children walk to school and are largely independent on public transportation.

There is less fear about society. Children as young as six years old are taught to take the trains independently. When a society is safe, children are freer to roam and play—which encourages movement from a very young age. That then translates into lifestyle building blocks for a more active adult life.

Instead of ignoring the aging population, Japan has actively worked to help older adults by doing big and little things to accommodate them. It isn't just helping seniors, but rather engaging them in everyday life by meeting them on their level.

Small but mighty gestures such as banks and stores providing reading glasses when completing transactions perhaps help seniors feel more normalized.

Train and bus schedules are available in larger print. At crosswalks, where there are buttons to stop car traffic and activate the pedestrian light, there is also a button to press if one needs more time to cross. Similarly, drivers who are 70 or older are strongly encouraged to sport a label on their front and back fenders to show they are an older driver. The prime minister even sends a special gift to people when they turn 100 years old.

Beyond the cultural or individual healthy decisions one can make to grow old in good health, there is something to say for your country modifying things to accommodate your needs. When people feel like they belong and are essential to society, perhaps they can live longer in good health due to a healthier spirit. We could all learn a few things from Japanese culture and society.



Working from Home

Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, with its required social distancing and stay-at-home mandates, remote work was increasing in popularity. Certain job sectors, such as start-ups and technology firms, allowed working from home and listed it as a perk. Some companies have entirely remote teams, with work-from-home intentionally built into their culture.

If working from home is new for you, you may find it challenging but quite rewarding. It's important to emphasize that whether you live alone or suddenly have your children home from school, there will be an adjustment period as you transition to working efficiently from home.

Create specific zones or spaces for work. If you do not have to worry about childcare or if your children are more independent, find a spot in your home that is separate from your living or sleeping space.

If you do have to participate in childcare (or do it all alone!), try to set up a workspace slightly removed from play or relaxation areas, such as a small desk in a corner of the dining room rather than the living room.

Have specific working hours and turn off notifications for work-related communication after those hours. During your work hours, work efficiently and intensely (no lurking on social media or news pages!). And respect your time off. Talk with your team about how you will prioritize work, but not overwork.

Without a commute, you are going to have a lot more time with your spouse, children or roommate (or yourself, if you live alone).

Embrace this time—it is a treasure! Without a commute in the morning, you can linger longer over breakfast.

Hopefully, you'll be able to use your lunch break to also detach from work and spend time with your loved ones. And not having a commute home in the afternoon means you can spend that time having dinner with your family and going on an evening walk. Take time for special things you wouldn't normally do, like eating lunch outside with your family.

Get dressed, brush your teeth, make your bed. The point is, get up and get ready in the morning to start your day. This helps you transition into a work mindset. It prepares your mind for a workday. It also helps you respect your off time—your nonworking time.

Take hourly breaks. Just like you should be doing at the office, stand up from your desk, walk around, stretch and disconnect from work for just a few moments. This provides a short mental break but also gets your blood flowing and your body better oxygenated.

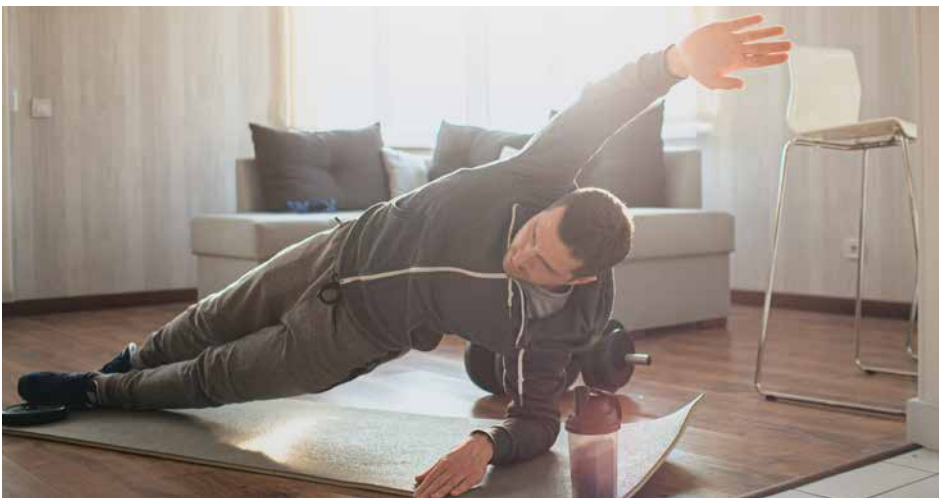
If you have children you have to take care of while working at home, experiment with a schedule that coincides with their learning or play time.

If you haven't already, now is the time to really encourage independent play in younger children.

If more intensive childcare is necessary, talk with your work team about flexible hours. Build a quiet time or nap into your children's days and really focus on work then.

Perhaps a few hours before your children are awake in the morning could be a time to do work that takes your full attention.





But remember that someone who normally works from home at a remote-friendly company most likely has childcare or school where their children will be.

Recognize that being thrust into remote work with little external support is not normal and can cause extra stress. If you are a manager, be sure to communicate this to your workers so they know that you know they are doing the best they can.



Remember, you are not working from home in the regular sense. You are at home during a global crisis, trying to work.



Summer Hair

Changing seasons mean there are different needs for our hair. Part of that is temperature and humidity, and another part is seasonal activities (think chlorinated pools, saltwater and more sun exposure).



Treat your hair well in the summer with some of these ideas. Protect your hair from UV rays. Wear a hat to protect your hair from damage from the sun.

Pull hair into a low bun so less of your hair's surface is exposed to the sun. Use extra conditioner if you're out in the sun a lot. There are also new hair products hitting the markets claiming UV protection for your hair, though beware of some ingredients—read labels carefully. The best protection is shade and a head covering.

If you're going to be swimming in a chlorinated pool or taking a dip in saltwater, slick a bit of moisturizing oil on your hair to seal the hair cuticle and decrease the absorption of water into the hair shaft. Another option is to wet your hair in the shower and then apply the oil on top of your damp hair. This way the hair shaft absorbs regular water and expands; then the oil seals in that water, helping to prevent the chlorine or saltwater from being absorbed into the hair shaft.

Choose a light yet nourishing oil such as jojoba or argan. Olive and coconut oil are great for do-it-yourself hair masks, but they may be a bit too heavy for this purpose.

However, if you have very delicate or dry hair, coconut or olive oil may be an appropriate option. Remember that you will have to wash your hair with shampoo when you're done to make sure all of the oil comes out.

When you are done swimming in a pool, rinse out that chlorine immediately! Find a shower to thoroughly rinse your hair (and skin, for that matter) even if you plan on sitting poolside for a while longer. The sooner you rinse, the better.

Treat your scalp. Often we focus on the drier outer hair where we see split ends. But hair health begins before we even see it emerge from our scalp. There is a debate in the hair care world over whether scalp massage promotes hair growth. But there is no debate about the need for a healthy scalp. During the summer, the key is to make sure you don't get a scalp sunburn. Again, wearing a hat and avoiding midday sun on that area of your body is the best solution. Some people will dab a mineral-based sunscreen (zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide) along their part line.

Unless you have a very oily scalp and hair, shampooing every day is probably unnecessary.



Depending on your hair type, you can try co-washing, rinsing or using a specific rinse agent (like apple cider vinegar or a purchased hair rinse).

Co-washing should be used by women with curly hair or very dry hair. Essentially, it means using a conditioner to “shampoo” your hair. You still scrub your scalp and work it through your hair, but instead of the cleansing (or irritating) surfactant-based shampoos, a light conditioner will do. If you find this leaves your hair a bit too greasy looking or feeling, try instead a specific co-washing product or a two-in-one shampoo and conditioner in lieu of the shampoo, and condition as normal.



On days you use a shampoo with some sort of surfactant (sudsing agent), be sure to condition well and maybe follow up with a leave-in conditioner.

If you have very straight or more oily hair, try using a rinse between washes. If you typically wash your hair daily, try the rinse every other day to replace the shampoo. Again, use your fingers to gently scrub your scalp and help break up and remove some impurities.



Try a protein-rich do-it-yourself hair mask. Whip up one to three eggs, depending on your hair's thickness and length, and coat it all over your hair and scalp.

If you have oily hair, use just egg whites. If the eggy smell isn't pleasing to you, you can add a couple drops of lavender oil or lemon juice. Put a shower cap on your hair and let it soak in for 20 to 30 minutes. When you're done, rinse it well with cold water—hot or warm water may cook the egg a bit, and you could get flakes of egg in your tresses! Follow with a gentle shampoo and conditioner.

Each person's hair is different—even people with the same hair qualities respond differently to different treatments and products. Experiment with what works for your hair without breaking the bank by trying travel- or trial-size products or exploring do-it-yourself natural beauty creations (such as the egg masks!).

Ask the Expert

What tea has the most nutritional value?

When it comes to tea and nutrition, the vast majority of tea will help protect your body from oxidative stress, due to its rich content of polyphenols. The reason is that the most popular teas—green, black and oolong—all come from the same plant.

The only difference is whether and how much they are fermented. Each of them starts with *Camellia sinensis*, a species of plant with thousands of cultivars.

They are mainly classified into green tea (unfermented), oolong tea (semi-fermented) and black tea (fully fermented), according to the degree of fermentation during their preparations, where the term “fermentation” refers to natural browning reactions induced by oxidative enzymes in the cells of tea leaves. As a result of these differences, green tea has the most catechins, and black



tea has the least, with oolong in between the two. The strain of tea and the elevation at which it's grown, as well as time and temperature of brewing, also affect polyphenol types and amounts in the final hot water extracts of the *Camellia sinensis* plant that we call tea. Despite these differences, all three major types of tea have relatively similar antioxidant effects, meaning the choice of which to drink belongs to your taste buds. Just be sure not to let your mug sit for too long, as all teas lose their potency with time. Fresh-brewed will have the strongest effects.

What is social nourishment?

Just as your body needs nourishment from a healthy diet in order to function optimally, your mind needs social nourishment. While nutrition for the body comes from food and drink, nutrition for the mind comes from spending time with friends and family, casual small talk with random strangers, heart-to-heart conversations with those we are closest to, and even periods of solitude.

The more ways in which we are able to connect socially, the better we tend to feel.⁴

Social nourishment is critical to complete well-being, but it can be hard to find right now as many people are isolating themselves. Fortunately, we live in a time when we can connect digitally when face-to-face interaction is not possible. There are many tools online to do this—and most smartphones and tablets can get us there.

Why is sleep so important?

There are many reasons getting enough sleep at night is important. From simply making you more alert to helping protect against serious health conditions, going to bed earlier is a good idea. Let's look at just a few reasons. There are lots of studies showing why sleep is critical for health. To begin with, less sleep often leads to higher anxiety.¹ Another study showed that losing just one night of sleep led to an increase in beta-amyloid, which is a protein in the brain long associated with impaired brain function and Alzheimer's disease.² Perhaps most importantly, a study of close to 500 people revealed that those of us who sleep for fewer than five hours a night have significantly shorter telomeres than people who get at least seven hours of sleep. This is a striking finding, because telomeres help determine how “old” a person is—biological age, rather than chronological age.³ This is a tiny sample of the many sleep studies that show how important it is to turn off the television and go to bed. Not only does adequate sleep help you regulate your mood and memory, it may also be an important factor in feeling and acting younger as you age.



¹ Simon, Eti Ben, et al. “Overanxious and Underslept.” *Nature Human Behaviour*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2019, pp. 100–110, doi:10.1038/s41562-019-0754-8.

² Staff. “Sleep Deprivation Increases Alzheimer's Protein.” National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, May 1, 2018, www.nih.gov/news-events/

nih-research-matters/sleep-deprivation-increases-alzheimers-protein.

³ Teo, Jing Xian, et al. “Digital Phenotyping by Consumer Wearables Identifies Sleep-Associated Markers of Cardiovascular Disease Risk and Biological Aging.” 2019, doi:10.1101/527077.

⁴ Hall, Jeffrey A., and Andy J. Merolla. “Connecting Everyday Talk and Time Alone to Global Well-Being.” *Human Communication Research*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2019, pp. 86–111, doi:10.1093/hcr/hqz014.