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# Healthroads® Newsletter

## Welcome to Healthroads!

In this monthly newsletter, you'll find a collection of articles on popular health and wellness topics. If you'd like additional guidance and support in your quest to lose weight, improve nutrition, develop an exercise plan, reduce stress, or quit smoking and haven't discovered our Weight Management, Tobacco Cessation, and Wellness programs, we encourage you to call us today. **Some or all of these programs may have been purchased for you by your employer.** To take advantage of all that Healthroads has to offer, call us toll-free at **877.330.2746** or visit us online at [www.healthroads.com](http://www.healthroads.com).

## Wellness and Healthy Living

### Banish Bug Bites

Summertime is outdoor time. It's the perfect season for camping under the stars or enjoying a backyard barbecue. But spending more time outside also increases your chances of being bitten or stung by insects. Luckily, you can take steps to help avoid bites and stings—and to take the bite and sting out of any you get.

Start with these tips:

- \* Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, and socks if you plan to be off-trail.
- \* Choose light-colored clothes (not bright, floral, or patterned clothing).
- \* Skip perfumes, scented lotions, and strong-smelling hair products.
- \* Treat your pets with flea and tick prevention products.

Applying insect repellent is another option if you will be outside for long periods or in places where mosquitoes or ticks thrive. Products that have the chemical DEET are most common. Or you can try a natural repellent.

Natural repellent products are made with essential oils like thyme, clove, lemon eucalyptus, or neem. You may need to try several to find one that works well for you. No matter which product you choose, carefully follow the directions. Both chemical and natural products can have side-effects if not applied correctly.

If you do get bitten or stung, don't fret. Most bites and stings cause only minor pain or itching. You can treat these symptoms on your own:

- \* **For bee stings:** Remove the stinger by gently scraping it with a credit card. Wash with soap

and water. Apply a baking soda paste (3 tsp. baking soda + 1 tsp. water) or apply ice for 10 minutes until the pain lessens.

- \* **For mosquito bites:** Wash the bite with soap and water. Apply an anti-itch cream. You could also blend oatmeal in a blender until fine and add it to warm bath water. Then soak to soothe the itch of multiple bites.
- \* **For ticks:** Use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Gently tug on the tick until its jaws release. Then pull it straight out and wash the bite with soap and water. Apply ice to reduce pain and swelling.

Be aware that any bite or sting can cause an allergic reaction. Get emergency help right away if you have swollen lips or throat, can't breathe easily, or feel faint or dizzy. Use common sense, practice prevention, and get outside and enjoy.

# Imagine...

Your own customized, 7-day exercise program created by a certified personal trainer or a registered dietitian analyzing your diet to build you a healthy eating plan meal-by-meal. Healthyroads offers these great services and much, much more!

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**www.healthyroads.com**  
to enroll today.



## Diet and Exercise

### Turn Back Time With Age-Busting “Superfoods”

Aging is a curious process. One minute you can't wait to be old enough to drive. The next minute, you're surprised to find your first grey hair. You can't stop the clock, but you do have some control over how well your body ages.

Eating right plays a big role in aging well. Of course, eating healthy foods helps you manage your weight and look great on the outside—no matter your age. But certain superfoods may also help your body age well on the inside. These foods help fight the two major players in aging: inflammation and cell damage.

Inflammation is marked by symptoms like pain, redness, heat, and swelling. It's caused by wear, injury, or disease and can happen in any of your body's tissues. Cell damage is caused in large part by being exposed to free radicals. And you can't escape them. They're produced when your body does tasks as basic as digest food or use oxygen. To help fight inflammation and free radical damage, add superfoods like these to your meals:

- \* **Fish:** The omega 3 fatty acids in cold-water fish may help reduce inflammation. Wild salmon is a good option.
- \* **Apples:** Apples contain quercetin. It helps protect cells throughout your body. You'll get benefits from any color apple, but be sure to eat the skin.

- \* **Berries:** Blueberries, strawberries, raspberries—most any berry will do. They're all high in antioxidants, the free radical fighters.
- \* **Bell peppers:** Green, red, and yellow peppers all contain vitamins A and C—both great age-fighters.
- \* **Nuts:** Nuts are famous for their heart-healthy oils. But varieties like walnuts, pecans, and almonds contain age-fighting antioxidants, too.

Need some ideas to get started on superfoods? Try these:

- \* Slice apples and dip them in almond butter.
- \* Make a sandwich or salad with canned, wild salmon.
- \* Add sliced bell peppers to salads, wraps, and pizzas.
- \* Mix a handful of nuts and dried cranberries for a snack.

Superfoods are a great addition to your diet. But don't forget to eat a variety of healthy foods from all of the food groups each day. When it comes to good nutrition, there's no magic bullet. A balanced, healthy diet really is your best bet for aging well.

## Coach Tip:

Walk outside on your work breaks. The burst of activity and sunlight can help tame office tension and boost your mood.





## Fight Nicotine Cravings One Bite at a Time

Without question, quitting smoking can be tough. Usually, there's more to it than just kicking the nicotine addiction. Smoking may be a daily habit for you—as normal and comfortable as your morning shower. It may be a social activity. Or it may be one of the ways you deal with stress.

To quit smoking for good, you may need an arsenal of tools to help you. You can hang out where smoking isn't allowed. You can try a new activity to release pent-up energy and deal with stress. You can even turn to your eating habits for help.

Try these ideas to help get your eating habits working for you:

- \* **Eat more small meals:** Eat 4–6 small meals a day. This keeps your energy from dipping and your blood sugar steady. Both can help reduce nicotine and junk food cravings.
- \* **Avoid trigger foods:** Stay away from spicy and sweet foods, or other personal food triggers. These may bring on nicotine cravings.

- \* **Change food and drink patterns:** Think about foods or drinks that you have paired with smoking in the past. For example, did you take a morning break with a cup of coffee and a smoke? Did you light up with a glass of wine or beer in the evening? If so, change it up. Drink juice on your break. Try a non-alcoholic spritzer in the evening.

- \* **Fight cravings with crunch:** Crunchy snacks help satisfy the munchies. Carrots, pickles, celery, and apples are good low-calorie options.

- \* **Chew sugar-free gum:** OK, so gum's not really a food. But studies show that chewing gum can be very helpful in keeping withdrawal symptoms and cravings under control.

Practice the eating habits above and you'll be one step closer to quitting for good. Plan to eat a balanced diet each day, too. It's common for people who quit smoking to crave foods that have lots of calories. If you stick to a balanced diet and healthy snacks, it will help you avoid weight gain.

Focus on these foods:

- \* Fruits and vegetables
- \* Whole grains (oatmeal, whole wheat bread, quinoa, brown rice)
- \* Beans and legumes
- \* Lean meats (chicken, turkey, fish)

Finally, don't give up if you give in to a nicotine craving. Think about what triggered your need to smoke. Share your experience with your doctor. He or she may suggest nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) as one more tool to help you fight your cravings.

NRT products come in patches, lozenges, gum, and nasal sprays. They help with cravings because they contain nicotine. They have helped many people successfully quit tobacco. Along with good eating habits, these products help you feel satisfied so that you can quit once and for all.



## Serious About Quitting?

We at Healthyroads understand the challenges of quitting smoking. That's why we offer a comprehensive Tobacco Cessation program that provides you with the best techniques to help you quit—once and for all. From our phone-based coaching program and educational materials to our online resources and discounted nicotine replacement therapy products, we give you every chance to succeed. For anyone considering quitting smoking, take the first step and contact us today at **877.330.2746** or visit [www.healthyroads.com](http://www.healthyroads.com).

## Beef Up Your Blood With Iron

Iron is no slacker. This mineral carries oxygen through your blood to every cell in your body. It helps your body use energy. And it helps your immune system work well. Getting enough iron in your diet is crucial.

Your body stores about 90 percent of the iron it needs and reuses it each day. The other 10 percent of iron must come from the foods you eat. But if you don't eat enough of the right foods, you may start to notice symptoms like these:

- \* Feeling very tired, weak, dizzy, or lightheaded
- \* Cold hands and feet

- \* Pale skin, brittle nails, sore tongue
- \* Restless legs

Not having enough iron in your blood is called anemia. Both men and women can get anemia. But pregnancy, dieting, and heavy periods put women at more risk.

Eating foods rich in iron helps keep your iron stores stocked. Your body absorbs iron from these foods the best: beef, poultry, liver, and seafood. Iron is also found in cooked greens like chard and collard greens, beans, nuts, seeds, and fortified breads and cereals. However, it's harder for your

body to absorb this iron. You can help boost iron absorption by pairing iron-rich foods with foods that have vitamin C, like orange juice.

If you think your iron level might be low, ask your doctor to test it. Your doctor may advise you to take an iron supplement. It's very important to be tested before taking iron on your own. Too much iron can cause heart and liver damage.

If your iron stores get low, it does take time to build them back up. But when your energy returns, you'll be glad you made the effort to beef up your blood.



## Mind-Body Techniques Learn to Unwind From Your Daily Grind

Feeling uptight or anxious? It may be your job. As much as 40 percent of workers feel their jobs are very or extremely stressful. Lots of working conditions can cause job stress. Coworkers can cause stress, and change in the workplace can too. Here are some other common causes:

- \* Feeling like you don't have enough support or can't meet job demands
- \* Feeling like you don't have control over your work
- \* Not having enough balance between work and home life
- \* Feeling worried about the economy and job security

Some people say that stress is just "part of the job." But too much stress can affect your health. It's harder for your body to repair itself or fight illness when you are stressed. Over time, stress can contribute to serious health issues like heart attacks, back problems, and depression.

It's not possible to avoid all job stress. But tips like these can help you manage it:

- \* **Track your stress:** Write down what causes you stress for a week. Rate your stressors on a scale of 1–5 (low–high). Find ways to address your stress.
- \* **Give yourself a pat on the back:** Take time to recognize all you do, especially when you are feeling overburdened.
- \* **Let go:** Make peace with the things you cannot control.
- \* **Take time for you:** Working around the clock is a sure path to burnout. Reserve regular time for family, hobbies, exercise, and relaxation. Leave work at work.

Get help if you feel your stress is out of control. Managers and human resource staff are good places to start. Also talk to family and friends for relief and visit your doctor if you are concerned about your health.

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- \* Award-winning materials
- \* Password-protected website for tracking your progress
- \* Customized meal and exercise plans

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