



Healthy Habits Made Simple: Your Guide to Wellness

FROM DESERT SPINE AND SPORTS PHYSICIANS
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These easy-to-follow steps to nutrition, exercise, and sleep can help you feel your best, recover fast, and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Nutrition: Fuel Your Body

1. Calorie Needs

- Use an online calculator (e.g., NASM Calorie Calculator) to determine how many calories you need daily. If your goal is to lose weight, adjust your intake so you are in a “calorie deficit.”

2. Eat Healthy Foods

- Eat fewer processed foods and refined carbohydrates and more whole, single-ingredient foods and complex carbohydrates. Include plenty of fruits and vegetables.
 - Refined carbs: white bread, breakfast cereals, soda & sweet drinks, ultra-processed snacks, refined sugars
 - Complex carbs: whole grains, starchy vegetables, legumes, fruits
- **Tip:** When grocery shopping, think about sticking to the outer edges of the store!

3. Protein Goals

- Incorporate protein-rich foods into every meal and snack. This helps keep you satiated for longer. Aim for 0.7–1g of protein per pound of body weight daily.
- Some examples of high-protein foods:
 - Lean meats, poultry, and fish
 - Eggs
 - Greek yogurt
 - Cottage cheese
 - Nuts
 - Protein powder supplements

4. Stay Hydrated

- Drink at least half your body weight in ounces of water each day.

5. Limit Alcohol

- Drink less, or consider eliminating alcohol altogether—remember, there are no benefits to drinking any amount of alcohol.

6. Don't Restrict

- Restricting your favorite foods can lead to deprivation and bingeing. It's important to allow room for treats in moderation, as long as you prioritize a healthy diet. Be mindful.

Exercise: Move for Health

1. Cardio

- Aim for at least 150 minutes per week of cardiovascular activity.
- Zone 2 cardio should make up the majority of your activity.
 - Focus on maintaining 60-70% of your maximum heart rate.
 - Aim for moderate-intensity activities, such as brisk walking.
 - **Tip:** Walk 30 minutes, 5 times a week.
- Optional: Add 1 or 2 HIIT workouts per week (short bursts of high-intensity exercise).

2. Weight Training

- Do strength training 2–4 times a week:
 - **At the Gym:** Ask a trainer for help with machines or free weights if you're new to this type of equipment.
 - **At Home:** Use apps like *Peloton* for virtual guided workouts (\$12.99/month). They feature all types of skill levels, from beginner to advanced, and offer workouts from 5 to 60 minutes.

3. Bonus Ideas

- Add yoga once or twice a week for flexibility, strength, balance, and a mind-body connection.
- If you have chronic back pain, consider Pilates for core strengthening.
- Sit less and get your steps in. Aim for at least 7,500 or 10,000+ steps for even more benefits.
- Go outside for a walk and enjoy the benefits of being in nature.
- Aim for movement you enjoy. Choose something that feels fun and fits your lifestyle so it will be easier to incorporate into your routine!



Sleep: Rest to Recharge

1. Aim for 7-8+ Hours Nightly

- Consistent sleep improves recovery, energy, mood, and even weight management.

2. Create a Relaxing Bedtime Routine

- Avoid screens 1 hour before bed. Try reading, meditating, or listening to calming music instead.

3. Set a Consistent Sleep Schedule

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends.

4. Optimize Your Sleep Environment

- Keep your bedroom cool, quiet, and dark. Consider blackout curtains or a white noise machine if needed.

Your Wellness, Simplified

These habits are designed to make healthy living feel achievable. Start small and aim for consistency, not perfection. It's important to create healthy habits you can maintain long term. Don't forget to celebrate your progress! This will help you feel good about your accomplishments and motivate you to keep going. If you have questions or need additional guidance, reach out to Desert Spine and Sports Physicians. We're here to support you every step of the way.

NASM Calorie Calculator: www.nasm.org/resources/calorie-calculator

Zone 2 Cardio: www.mcpress.mayoclinic.org/nutrition-fitness/zone-2-cardio-what-is-it-and-why-is-it-trending-online

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