Keep moving any way, all day

The COVID-19 pandemic’s restrictions have limited much of our everyday physical movement, including simply walking to and from the car to work or another destination. It’s easy to get stuck sitting for prolonged periods, which poses health risks. The good news: simple, light physical activity can be beneficial too. While even a brief walk is ideal, try incorporating these movements into your day:

**Stand up and move your muscles!** Aim to interrupt seated time every 30 minutes. Consider setting up a “standing desk” by using a high table or stacking a pile of books while working or doing an activity like putting together a puzzle.

**Make pacing a habit!** Walk around while on the phone or during conference calls (without the video).

Do jumping jacks during TV commercials or midway through a series episode. Or try sit-ups, a yoga pose, or a few arm lifts using a set of small hand weights, or a filled water jug.

**Put more “oomph” into chores.** Take an extra big stretch while putting away dishes on top shelves. During vacuuming, do a few extra squats while scooping up the dustpan, and so on.

**Talk to your healthcare practitioner about ways to increase your physical activity if you have a health condition or are feeling ill.**

Prepare for flu season! Stay on top of your health NOW

Staying on top of your health becomes increasingly important as we approach flu season. Due to COVID-19, it will be even more important than usual this year! Flu season generally begins in October, so now is the perfect time to start taking steps to help you and your family stay as healthy as possible during this time. These tips can help:

**Get your flu shot.** According to the CDC, everyone age 6 months or older should have an annual flu shot. It’s especially important for people at higher risk including young children, pregnant women, people age 65 and older, those with weakened immune systems or chronic illness, and those who care for others who are at high risk.

**Enjoy fruits and vegetables high in immune-boosting vitamin C.** Drink orange juice in the morning, make a citrus-packed smoothie, or prepare Greek yogurt with strawberries.

**Stay hydrated.** Fluids can help your immune system mount a good defense, and water is your healthiest option. Low-sugar sports drinks are also beneficial since electrolytes help your body function at its best.

**Keep active and sleep well, too!** Avoid being sedentary, and aim for 7-9 hours of nightly sleep.

**Unplug.** Put down your devices, log out of social media and avoid the news for periods of time to lower stress and focus on what matters most—the health of you and your family!

**Keep following COVID-19 prevention guidelines.** Many of the measures to reduce your risk of COVID-19 may also help you reduce your risk of catching the flu!
Get better sleep

Feeling groggy, cranky or sleep-deprived? It’s common as the pandemic has disrupted our routines and reduced our exposure to natural light—throwing off our natural sleep/wake cycles. Furthermore, increased anxiety, worry, depression and stress-related fatigue also sabotage sleep. However, it’s more important than ever to get consistent quality sleep, helping to strengthen the immune system, heighten brain function, enhance mood and improve mental health. Try these tips:

**Stick to a strict sleep/wake schedule.** Include extra wind-down rituals each night like reading, gentle stretching or meditating. And don’t oversleep—sleeping more than the recommended 7-9 hours could make you feel irritable and unfocused throughout the day.

**Keep daytime schedules.** Even if you aren’t leaving the house, shower and get dressed, eat meals at the same time, and carve out time periods for work and exercise.

**Reserve your bed for sleep.** Don’t do your work, watch movies, scroll through news, etc., from your bed.

**Increase your daytime exposure to natural light.** This helps regulate your sleep/wake cycle. Go outside even on overcast days, and keep the blinds open indoors. Then, an hour before bedtime, shut off your devices—the blue light emitted can interfere with sleep. Consider using device settings or apps that filter blue light.

Other advice: Stay connected with others, limit naps; avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages late in the day, practice relaxation techniques, and restrict checking coronavirus-related news to pre-set times each day. Try to focus on positive stories and conversations.

Feeling overwhelmed? Talk to a licensed counselor or your healthcare practitioner for guidance.

Suicide Prevention Month

More than 41,000 suicides occur each year in the U.S., making it the 10th highest cause of death for all ages. Despite this alarming statistic, many myths about suicide persist and can interfere with someone getting the help they need. Read about these myths, get the facts, signs to watch for and how to help someone who may be exhibiting them.

Visit: [https://bit.ly/2Ea3C0z](https://bit.ly/2Ea3C0z) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)