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A Special Supplement to the  
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INDEPENDENT**

# Fashion, Health & *Beauty*



# The risks of an overly sedentary lifestyle

Health experts call it “sitting disease.” It refers to when people spend more of their time behind a desk or steering wheel of a car or in front of a TV than they do engaging in physical activity. According to the American Heart Association, sedentary jobs have increased by 83 percent since 1950, and technology has reduced many people’s need to get up and move. Inactivity is taking a considerable toll on public health. A study from the University of

Cambridge equated inactivity with being obese. The Mayo Clinic advises that research has linked sedentary behavior to a host of health concerns, and found those who sat for more than eight hours a day with no physical activity had a risk of dying similar to the risks of fatality linked to obesity and smoking. Increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, abnormal cholesterol levels, and excess body fat all can be attributed to inactivity. Mental health can be adversely

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 Moving every 30 minutes is one way to reduce the harmful effects of a sedentary lifestyle.

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 affected by a sedentary lifestyle as well. Australian researchers surveyed more than 3,300 government employees and found men who sat for more than six hours a day at work were 90 percent more likely to feel moderate psychological distress, such as restlessness, nervousness or hopelessness, than those who sat for less than three hours a day. In addition, a sedentary lifestyle can significantly increase a person’s risk for various types of cancer. A German meta-analysis of 43 studies involving four million people indicated those who sit the most have higher propensities to develop colon cancer, endometrial cancer and lung cancer. Johns Hopkins Medical Center says research shows that high levels of

exercise at some point in the day can lessen some risk, but it’s not entirely effective if most of the rest of the day a person is inactive. Risk for cardiovascular disease increases significantly for people who spend 10 hours or more sitting each day. Various medical organizations recommend individuals get up and move at any opportunity to help reduce risks of inactivity. Erin Michos, M.D., M.H.S., associate director of preventive cardiology at the Ciccarone Center for the Prevention of Heart Disease, advises people who are very sedentary to aim for 4,000 steps per day. Such individuals can then build up to 10,000 steps daily. The Mayo Clinic recommends these strategies to reduce the amount of time you spend sitting.

- Stand while talking on the phone or watching television
- Invest in a standing desk
- Get up from sitting every 30 minutes
- Walk at lunch or during meetings

Sedentary lifestyles can affect health in many negative ways. But there are various ways to get up and go over the course of a typical day. – Metro Creative Graphics, Inc. (MCG)



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# How to eat to improve your energy levels

A little extra energy during the day could benefit just about anyone. Late morning mental fatigue and the post-lunch yawns may seem unavoidable, but there are plenty of ways to improve energy levels throughout the day. One such means to getting an extra hop in your step involves utilizing food.

The health care experts at Kaiser Permanente note that every part of the body, including the brain and heart, require energy to work. The body gets

that energy from food. According to the National Health Service, the publicly funded health care system of the United Kingdom, a healthy, balanced diet is the best way to maintain sufficient energy levels throughout the day. A dietary approach rooted in eating to energize can change the way people eat, potentially helping them avoid unhealthy foods that won't give them the boost they need.

The American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics echoes the sentiments of the NHS, noting that eating better is an effective way to improve energy levels. The AAND also recommends additional strategies for people looking to foods to provide an energy boost.

- **Eat every three to four hours.** The AAND notes that eating every three to four hours helps to fuel a healthy metabolism. This approach also can prevent the between-meal hunger pangs that compel many people to reach for whatever food is readily available, even if it's unhealthy. When eating every three to four hours, remember to prepare smaller portions than you would if you were eating three meals per day. The AAND points out

that feeling comfortably full but not stuffed is a good indicator that you've eaten enough.

- **Aim for balance.** A balanced plate should include foods from multiple food groups. The AAND notes that even a small amount of fat can find its way onto your plate, which should include a combination of whole grains, lean protein, fibre-rich fruits and vegetables, and fat-free or low-fat dairy. If that's too much for a single sitting, ensure these food groups are represented on your plate at some point during the day.

- **Avoid added sugars.** Added sugars can adversely affect energy levels. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that consuming too many added sugars, which are found in sugar-sweetened beverages like soda and iced tea and sweet snacks like candy, increases a person's risk for obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. The AAND notes that the energy provided by foods with added sugars is typically misleading, as it wears off quickly and ultimately leads to an energy crash. If you're looking to eat and drink for energy, then choose water or low-fat milk instead of coffee and soda and replace



sweet snacks with fruit.

- **Choose the right snacks.** The AAND recommends snacks have lean protein and fibre-rich carbohydrates. Low-fat Greek yogurt, apples, a handful of unsalted nuts, and carrots are some examples of healthy snacks that will provide an energy boost between meals.

How people eat can help them overcome fatigue or exacerbate existing energy issues. – (MCG)



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## Foods that promote healthy hair and skin

Millions of people across the globe deal with conditions that affect the skin and hair. Acne is a skin and hair ailment that, according to the American Academy of Dermatology, is the most common skin condition in the United States.

But what if the foods people eat could affect the health of their hair and skin?

There is evidence that they can. Foods that contain certain nutrients, phytochemicals and enzymes may help people develop healthier hair and skin.

• **Blueberries:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture gave blueberries its top ranking for antioxidant activity. The antioxidants in blueberries neutralize free radicals and protect people from premature aging, which can help the skin look younger and more vibrant.

• **Eggs:** Eggs are great sources of protein and biotin, which are two nutrients that may help promote hair growth. The health and wellness information site Healthline says biotin is essential for the production of a protein called keratin.

• **Fatty fish:** Fatty fish, such as salmon, are high in omega-3 fatty acids. Ciara Foy, a Toronto-based holistic nutritionist,

says about 3 percent of the hair shaft is made up of omega-3 fatty acids. They're also found in cell membranes and in the natural oils that keep the scalp and other areas of the skin hydrated.

• **Red bell peppers:** These peppers contain more vitamin C than oranges. According to dermatologist Dr. Julia Carroll with Compass Dermatology, vitamin C is an antioxidant precursor to collagen production, so consuming more vitamin C through foods can neutralize free radicals that could damage skin.

• **Spinach:** Trade lettuce for spinach, which is rich in calcium, iron, magnesium, omega-3 fatty acids, and much more. These nutrients can be the building blocks of healthy skin and hair.

• **Oysters:** Nutritionist and author Lisa Drayer says oysters are good sources of zinc, which aids in skin cell renewal and repair.

• **Coconut:** Coconut water is great for hydration and contains potassium, an electrolyte that moves nutrients into the cells. Coconut oil also can be used to boost hair health as a pre-wash conditioning treatment. – (MCG)



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# Healthy habits that can become part of your daily routine

A person's habits can have a strong impact on his or her overall health. Unhealthy habits like smoking and living a sedentary lifestyle can increase a person's risk for various conditions and diseases. On the flip side, healthy habits like eating a nutritious diet and getting enough sleep can bolster a person's immune system and reduce his or her risk for various ailments.

Some healthy habits, like daily exercise, can be time-consuming. Busy adults may not have time to exercise vigorously each day, though the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services urges men and women to find time for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. But not all healthy habits take up time. In fact, adults can incorporate various healthy practices into their daily routines without skipping a beat.

• **Take the stairs.** Taking the stairs instead of the elevator can have a profound effect on overall health. According to Duke University, climbing just two flights of stairs combined per day can contribute to six pounds of weight loss over the course of a single year. In addition, a study from the North American Menopause Society found that



stair climbing can help postmenopausal women reduce their risk for osteoporosis and help them lower their blood pressure.

• **Drink more water.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that water helps the body maintain a normal temperature, lubricates and cushions joints, protects the spinal cord and other sensitive tissues, and helps to rid the body of waste through urination, perspiration and bowel movements. Adults who are thirsty can choose water over soda or other sugary beverages. The



CDC notes that sugary beverages like soda and sports drinks contain calories but little nutritional value, making water a healthier way for individuals to quench their thirst.

• **Go for daily walks.** Walking benefits the body in myriad ways. For example, the Harvard School of Public Health notes that women who walk 30 minutes per day can reduce their risk of stroke by 20 percent and potentially by 40 percent if they walk briskly. In addition, researchers at the University of Virginia Health System found that men between the ages of 71 and 93 who walked more

than a quarter mile per day had half the incidence of dementia and Alzheimer's disease as men who walked less. A 15-minute walk around the neighborhood each morning coupled with a 15-minute walk after dinner can help adults dramatically improve their overall health.

• **Eat more greens.** Eating more greens is another healthy habit that doesn't require a major overhaul of an individual's lifestyle. The U.S. Department of Agriculture notes that dark green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, are rich in vitamins A, C, E, and K. The Mayo Clinic notes that vitamin E alone can help people maintain their vision and promote a healthy reproductive system while also improving the health of the blood, brain and skin. The USDA also notes that green vegetables contain very little carbohydrates, sodium and cholesterol. Adults won't have to reinvent the dietary wheel to incorporate more greens into their diets, and the results of doing so can have a significant, positive effect on their overall health.

The right habits can help people live healthier lives, and such habits need not require any major life changes. – (MCG)



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# Exercise-related injuries women should be aware of

Exercise is a vital component of a healthy lifestyle. Various studies have shown that people who find time to exercise regularly have a lower risk for diabetes and heart disease and also experience greater life satisfaction than people who do not exercise.

Though exercise should be a routine part of everyone's life, it's important that people who are physically active recognize the risk for injury that comes with such activity. Such recognition can encourage the kind of balance that can make active men and women less susceptible to injury. It's also important for active adults to recognize that they may be susceptible to certain types of injuries based on a host of factors, including gender.

According to the Geisinger Health System, a regional health care provider servicing parts of the United States, the differences in body composition and hormone levels between men and women can make women more susceptible to certain injuries than men. For example, Harvard Medical School notes that women have higher estrogen levels and less muscle and fat than men, and these factors and others can contribute to higher incidences of certain injuries among female athletes than male athletes. Though that's unfortunate, recognition of this gender gap has, according to Harvard Medical School, inspired some innovative efforts designed to prevent injuries in female athletes.

Female athletes and exercise enthusiasts can do their part by



recognizing which injuries they may be more susceptible to. Once that recognition has been made, women can speak with their physicians about what they might be able to do to reduce their injury risk.

- **Knee injuries:** Harvard Medical School notes that knee injuries are especially common among women who play soccer and basketball. Geisinger notes that tears of the anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, are more common for active women than active men because women have wider pelvises than men, which places increased strain on their ACLs. In addition, the muscles in women's hips are typically weaker than men's, which results in reduced leg control when jumping or landing. That can put extra strain on the ACL, increasing the likelihood that it will tear when turning quickly or accidentally falling. Certain muscle strengthening exercises can greatly reduce risk for ACL injuries, and active women are urged to discuss such exercises with their physicians.

- **Stress fractures:** Women who participate in high-impact sports and activities may be especially vulnerable to stress fractures. That's even more so for women suffering from what's known as the "female athlete triad," which the Harvard Medical School characterizes as a combination of inadequate calorie and nutrition intake, irregular menstrual periods and bone loss. Consuming a nutritious diet that includes adequate calcium and vitamin D can help reduce risk for stress fractures. Rest also reduces that risk, especially for female athletes who engage in high-impact sports.

- **Plantar fasciitis:** Sports fans are familiar with plantar fasciitis, an inflammation in the thick band of tissue that supports the arch on the bottom of the foot. Many a professional athlete has experienced plantar fasciitis, and women who in engage in certain physical activities may be susceptible to it. Geisinger notes that women are not necessarily more susceptible to plantar fasciitis than men, though they might be more likely to engage in the kinds of activities, such as ballet and aerobic dance, that increase their risk.

Physical activity is important for people of all ages and backgrounds. Women who are physically active and recognize their susceptibility to certain injuries can take steps to reduce their risk for such issues. – (MCG)

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## Fall and winter skincare tips

As summer transitions to fall, many changes take place. In addition to changing landscapes, men and women may need to adapt their health and wellness habits to ensure that they stay healthy and happy. Part of that daily regimen includes how to care for skin as the seasons change.

Just as skin requires certain protection from the sun and heat in the summer, skin has special needs in the fall and winter. Fall and winter are often characterized by cold, dry weather, which can make these times of year particularly challenging for people with dry or sensitive skin. These tips can help people maintain their skin's appearance and health.

- **Don't skip the sunscreen.** Sunscreen is not a summer-only requirement. UV rays can damage the skin any time of year, even if the rays are not as strong as during the summer. UV radiation accelerates and increases the risk of skin cancer. It also can lead to premature aging. Utilize a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher every day.
- **Invest in a humidifier.** Dry, cold temperatures can rob the skin of essential moisture, even indoors.

Dermatologists suggest using a humidifier at home to boost the amount of moisture in the air. This can make skin more comfortable and can have other health benefits as well.

- **Skip hot showers.** It can be tempting to sit under a hot stream of water to warm up. However, hot water dries out the skin by depleting its stores of natural oils, says Glacier Med Spa. Take warm showers instead and don't stay in for longer than 15 minutes.
  - **Limit exfoliation.** While exfoliation can remove dead skin, overdoing it can make already sensitive skin more raw. Increase the time between exfoliation treatments. Consult with a dermatologist for more advice about dealing with flaky skin.
  - **Don't forget your lips.** Using a thicker moisturizer on the body and face can help add and retain moisture. But pay attention to your lips and eyes as well. Something as simple as petroleum jelly on the lips can help prevent chapping. Invest in a quality eye cream to help the delicate skin around the eyes as well.
- Modifications must be made to skincare routines in anticipation of seasonal weather changes. - (MCG)



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# 5 ways to pamper yourself more often

The COVID-19 pandemic has left many people scrambling for ways to unwind without risking their health or the health of others. For more than a year, opportunities to let loose and have fun have been stymied by the cancellation of concerts, theatre shows, sporting events, family holidays, and so much more in the name of public safety. Individuals can look to coping strategies to find silver linings.

Pampering oneself can be a healthy and enjoyable endeavour to explore.

Pampering means different things to different people. Pampering involves indulging in self-care strategies to improve mental, physical and emotional health. Pampering can provide a respite from stress, enabling one to switch off his or her brain for a bit. Rest assured that pampering doesn't have to involve big expenses, and many pampering sessions can take place right at home. The following are five pampering ideas to explore.

## 1. Take a nap

Getting enough restful sleep is essential for your overall health. The Sleep Foundation says people who work

multiple jobs or for extended hours may not have enough time for sufficient sleep, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates one in three American adults do not get enough sleep. Getting seven or more hours of sleep per night is important, but you also can add to your sleep bank by taking short naps in the early afternoon. A nap can reduce stress and elevate the mood. Stick to a snooze of 30 minutes or less.

## 2. Indulge in a luxurious practical item

Instead of splurging on something that is whimsical or unnecessary, allocate some disposable dollars to something functional – but put a luxurious spin on it. Think of buying a set of silk bedsheets or indulge on a high-end cut of meat for a family dinner. You'll feel rewarded without feeling guilty that you were wasteful.

## 3. Schedule a salon service

Hair, nail or skin services enable you to get away from home for an hour or more and devote time all to yourself. Plus, you'll have the benefit of walking out of the salon looking like the best version of yourself.



## 4. Take a hot bath

People may be pressed for time when engaging in their daily beauty and grooming routines. A 10-minute shower before work might not provide the relaxation and sense of escape you need. Set aside a time in the evening to soak in the tub and let stress as well as aches and pains melt away in the water. Scent the water with essential oils for a relaxing aromatherapy session.

## 5. Find a simple pleasure

Display fresh flowers on the table, listen to some favourite music while cleaning the house or plan a homemade meal for yourself accompanied by a fine wine. Planning for a simple pleasure once or twice a week gives you something to look forward to.

Pampering comes in many shapes and forms and is an effective way to reduce stress. – (MCG)



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# Effective exercises for seniors

Losing interest in an exercise regimen is a situation many fitness enthusiasts have confronted at one point or another. Overcoming a stale workout routine can be simple for young athletes, whose bodies can typically handle a wide range of physical activities. That flexibility allows younger athletes the chance to pursue any number of physical activities when their existing fitness regimens grow stale. But what about seniors who have grown tired of their workouts?

Even seniors who have lived active lifestyles since they were youngsters are likely to encounter certain physical limitations associated with aging. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the likelihood of dealing with one or more physical limitations increases with age. CDC data indicates that 8 percent of adults between the ages of 50 and 59 have three or more physical limitations. That figure rises to 27 percent among adults age 80 and over.

Physical limitations may be a part of aging for many people, but such obstacles need not limit seniors looking to banish boredom from their workout routines. In fact, many seniors can

successfully engage in a variety of exercises that benefit their bodies and are unlikely to grow stale.

- **Water aerobics:** Sometimes referred to as “aqua aerobics,” water aerobics may involve jogging in the water, leg lifts, arm curls, and other activities that can safely be performed in a pool. The YMCA notes that water aerobics exercises are low impact, which can make them ideal for seniors with bone and joint issues like arthritis.

- **Resistance band workouts:** Resistance band workouts can be especially useful for seniors who spend a lot of time at home. Resistance bands are inexpensive and don't take up a lot of space, making them ideal for people who like to exercise at home but don't have much space. Resistance bands can be used to strengthen muscles in various parts of the body, including the legs, arms and back. Resistance bands can be pulled or pushed in any direction, which allows for more versatility in a workout than weight machines and dumbbells. That versatility allows seniors to spice up their workout regimens when things get a little stale.

- **Pilates:** Pilates is another low-impact exercise that can be ideal for seniors with



bone and joint issues. According to SilverSneakers, a community fitness program for seniors that promotes living through physical and social engagement, Pilates can help seniors build overall strength, stability and coordination. SilverSneakers even notes that seniors can experience improvements in strength and stability by committing to as little as 10 to 15 minutes of daily Pilates exercises.

- **Strength training:** Seniors on the lookout for something more challenging than a daily walk around the neighbourhood should not overlook the benefits of

strength training.

The CDC notes that seniors who participate in strength training can stimulate the growth of muscle and bone, thereby reducing their risk for osteoporosis and frailty. In fact, the CDC notes that people with health concerns like arthritis or heart disease often benefit the most from exercise regimens that include lifting weights a few times each week.

Physical limitations are a part of aging. But seniors need not let such limitations relegate them to repetitive, boring workouts. – (MCG)

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## Shake up a stale workout

Eating less and moving more are the hallmarks of many fitness regimens, especially those for people who want to lose weight. Maintaining a healthy weight can help reduce risk factors for many illnesses, making weight loss a worthy goal. While people have good intentions when designing their exercise regimens, over time, hitting the treadmill or doing a weight circuit can lose its appeal. When exercise routines become stale, people may be put off from doing something that is essential to their health. Routinely switching things up can keep workouts fresh and exciting.

### Try a trendy workout

Experiment with a new fitness trend to see if you like it. Start by talking with fitness centre or a personal trainer. Chances are they've already implemented novel workouts and they can walk you through some of the offerings. So whether it's barre classes that make you feel like a prima ballerina or renegade rowing to emulate a crew team, new exercises can help to banish boredom.

### Cut down on workout time

It's easy to lose interest in a lengthy workout. High-intensity workouts can

streamline exercise to 30 minutes or less and produce the same results as longer, less intense regimens. High intensity interval training, or HIIT, is a popular regimen that pairs bursts of maximum-output moves with short recoveries to streamline efforts.

### Bring a friend along

A buddy to exercise alongside can make a regimen fun even if you've done the same things over and over. Plus, a healthy dose of lighthearted competition may motivate you to keep going.

### Change small components

Apart from preventing boredom, changes to a routine also benefit your body. If exercise regimens are never altered, and you keep doing the same number of reps and sets, your body can adapt to these workouts and make it difficult to break plateaus. Lack of variation also may decrease focus, which can make it hard to achieve your fitness goals. A consultation with a personal trainer can help you adapt your routine or find an entirely new one.

Altering a workout regimen from time to time can help people overcome stale routines. – (MCG)

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