



# UNCOMMON HEALTH BODYWORK

## 10 Tips to Sleep, Eat, and Move Better

I've collected 10 ideas from research that can help you start to be uncommon – to be healthy and energetic. Be sure to work with your physician and/or healthcare provider before making any lifestyle changes. Try these tips to sleep, eat, and move better.

*Don't try to use all the tips at once* - Choose one or two and use them for a couple of weeks. After you are used to these new habits, then you can start to add more changes. If you try to make too many changes at once, you will likely end up giving up on all the changes and feeling frustrated.

Let's start with an important and often overlooked part of health – Sleep!



### Sleep

The most common advice on sleep is to ensure that you are getting enough sleep, so here are 3 different tips for sleep:

1. **Temperature** – According to studies, the room where you sleep should be between 60 - 66 degrees F. Having a cooler room helps the body to lower core body temperature, which is a sign for the body to sleep.

*Bonus Tip – if you are having trouble going to sleep take a warm bath. When exposed to warm temperatures, your body will direct more blood towards the*

*surface of your skin (that's why your skin gets a little reddish after a bath) – this reduces your core body temperature, which is a signal to your brain sleep.*

2. **Limit blue light** – watching TV, social media scrolling on phones or working on laptops exposes you to unnatural blue light after sunset. Studies suggest that blue light stimulates the body into thinking it's daytime and therefore time to be awake. Limiting exposure to blue light allows for the natural circadian rhythms to govern your sleep patterns. Cellphones and laptops can be configured to limit blue light after sunset. Another option is to wear specialized glasses that block blue light in the evenings (or throughout the day).



*Bonus Tip – install a low watt yellow or red lightbulb in your bedroom lamp for nighttime navigation – this will allow you to see without using blue light that interferes with melatonin production.*

3. **Morning sunlight exposure** – this might seem like an odd recommendation for sleep, but there's some research that backs this up (see references section). When you get morning sunlight exposure without sunglasses or filtering, your body creates serotonin, which later in the day is used to create melatonin (along with tryptophan – which is found in nuts, seeds, cheese, fish and most famously, turkey). Melatonin is made by the body, but you may have heard of it before as a sleep aid supplement. Exposure to morning sunlight and ensuring there is enough tryptophan in your diet may be able to *naturally* boost melatonin production – which may lead to better sleep!



## Move

As functional human beings, we are meant to move regularly, despite the way our modern lives have “evolved.” Movement can have many benefits including better soft tissue health, reducing “stiffness” or aches from being in one position for long periods,

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and improved circulation, posture, and breathing. Here are 3 tips to help you incorporate more movement into your daily life:



4. **Park farther away** - Park your car farther away when you drive to work, the store, the gym, etc. You know that you want to move more, so parking farther away will enforce that habit and give you an extra few minutes of walking before and after your car ride. As an added benefit, you have a few minutes to think and focus on work, so you can better start your day.
5. **Take walking "breaks" during the day** - sitting for prolonged periods of time can cause health issues. Studies show that sitting has several negative effects on health, despite regular exercise! To combat the effects of sitting, stand up and take a brief walk. If possible, take your conference calls or meetings while walking.
6. **Walk for 15 minutes after eating** - this tip is about moving, but it's also a way to minimize the afternoon slump after lunch. Walking for 15 minutes after eating helps to minimize the spike in blood insulin levels. Insulin is a hormone that your body releases to tell your body to absorb glucose into liver, fat, and skeletal muscle cells - which reduces your blood glucose level.



## Eat

Food is a way to fuel our body. "You are what you eat" is old advice, but that message is very important when you want to improve health. Thoughtful eating can be beneficial towards achieving better health and improved body composition. A major influence of your body composition is your diet - you might have heard, "*you can't out train a bad diet.*" Here are 3 tips to eat better that you can implement at your next meal:

7. **Eliminate added sugars** - Corn syrup and high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) are commonly used sweeteners in many foods. Eating excess fructose is believed to cause inflammation in the cells as they attempt to metabolize it. This causes the

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body to release cortisol, a stress hormone, to fight this inflammation. Cortisol causes the body to store more fat and this contributes to insulin sensitivity and even more fat storage.

8. **Focus on nutrient density** – if you want to get the most nutrients from your foods – make sure the foods that you’re eating have the most nutrients in them. Nutrient density allows you to get the most nutrients from smaller portions of food. Examples of nutrient dense foods include wild caught salmon, liver, sardines, blueberries, and egg yolks.
9. **Eliminate processed foods** – Eat real food with known ingredients instead of packaged and processed food. You should be able to recognize and pronounce all the ingredients in your food. Real food with minimal processing is higher in nutrients and contains fewer harmful ingredients. Shopping at farmers markets and home cooking are great ways to reduce processed foods in your diet. “Shop the perimeter” of your local grocery store – where the whole foods are – meats, fruits, vegetables, and seafood while avoiding the center of the store which usually has most of the processed foods.

## 10th tip - Grounding

Get outside and put your bare feet on the ground – no shoes, simply stand on the earth! If you live near the water or the beach - add some time in the water to enhance the experience (bonus points for salt water). This tip is about grounding, which is another term for coming into direct contact with the earth.

Grounding allows your body to absorb negative ions from the earth. Having extra negative ions helps your body in fighting free radicals – which are positively charged. Research has shown that grounding can have several positive effects on the body including reducing inflammation and prevention and treatment of chronic inflammatory and autoimmune diseases (see references for more details).

## References:

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