

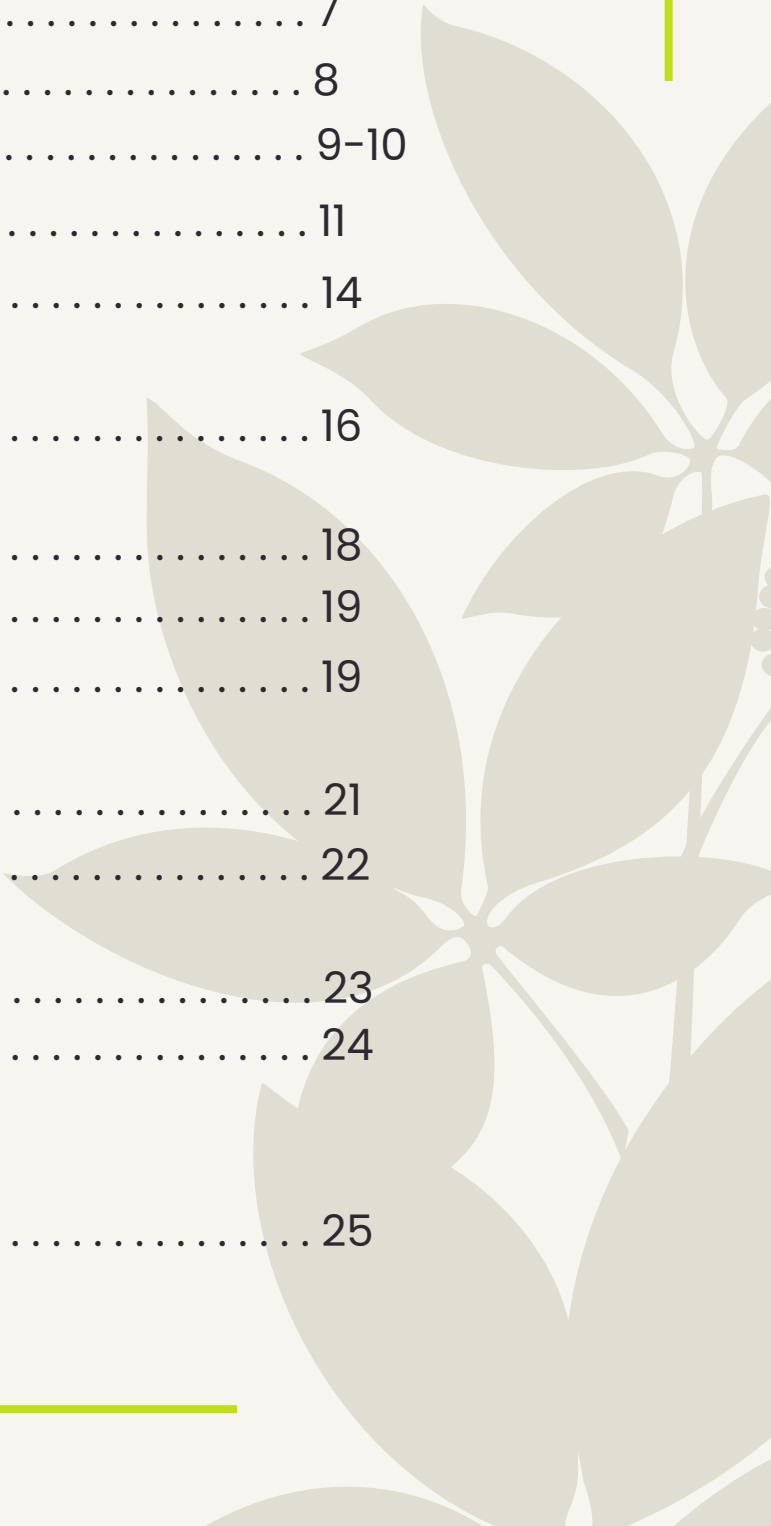


Lifestyle Guide



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solle (sohl)

noun, homonym for soul

1. the principle of life, thought, feeling and action
2. a person's complete being
3. the perfect integration of mind and body



A more complete vision of health

Our philosophy is that every aspect of our health is an interdependent part of our whole self and that every part of our whole self can affect our health. Mind and body **CANNOT** be separated. Abundant research shows that our thoughts, emotions and lifestyle significantly affect our health, even in ways that conventional medicine traditionally does not consider. For example, our brains and guts interchangeably affect each other in almost endless ways.

A holistic approach to health includes many opportunities for change. Creating improvement in several areas is more effective than simply focusing on one aspect of health. Build healthy habits into a healthy lifestyle and you will create lasting results!

In this guide, we will teach you about five main areas of your health, as well as provide examples of what healthy habits in each area can look like. The five aspects of health we will focus on are:

- Nutrition (includes the benefits of adaptogens)
- Hydration
- Movement
- Sleep
- Gratitude

As you read through each section of this guide, **only commit to changes that are realistic for you and where you're at currently**. Start small! There will be plenty of time to re-evaluate and adjust goals as needed down the road. After all, you're not starting a diet or beginning a 14-day workout challenge where the mentality is to just "power through." You're forming a *lifestyle* - so make sure it's one that fits you comfortably.

1. Nutrition



Nutrition is fundamental to health, no matter your lifestyle, size or age! You might convince yourself that, because you regularly exercise or maintain a healthy weight, nutrition doesn't apply to you as strongly. *We're sorry to tell you that is not true.* **There is no cheating nutrition!** In fact, many people appear to be "healthy" without being or feeling healthy. That's why we like to say that wellness begins within. This could not more directly apply than in the case of nutrition. You need energy for many things, and you don't want to waste body resources by having to spend more of them on managing poor nutrition or the effects of putting junk into your body. Nutrition is one of the most reliable and effective ways to begin addressing the root causes of many of the ailments we experience, both physical and mental.

"Those who think they have no time for healthy eating, will sooner or later have to find time for illness."

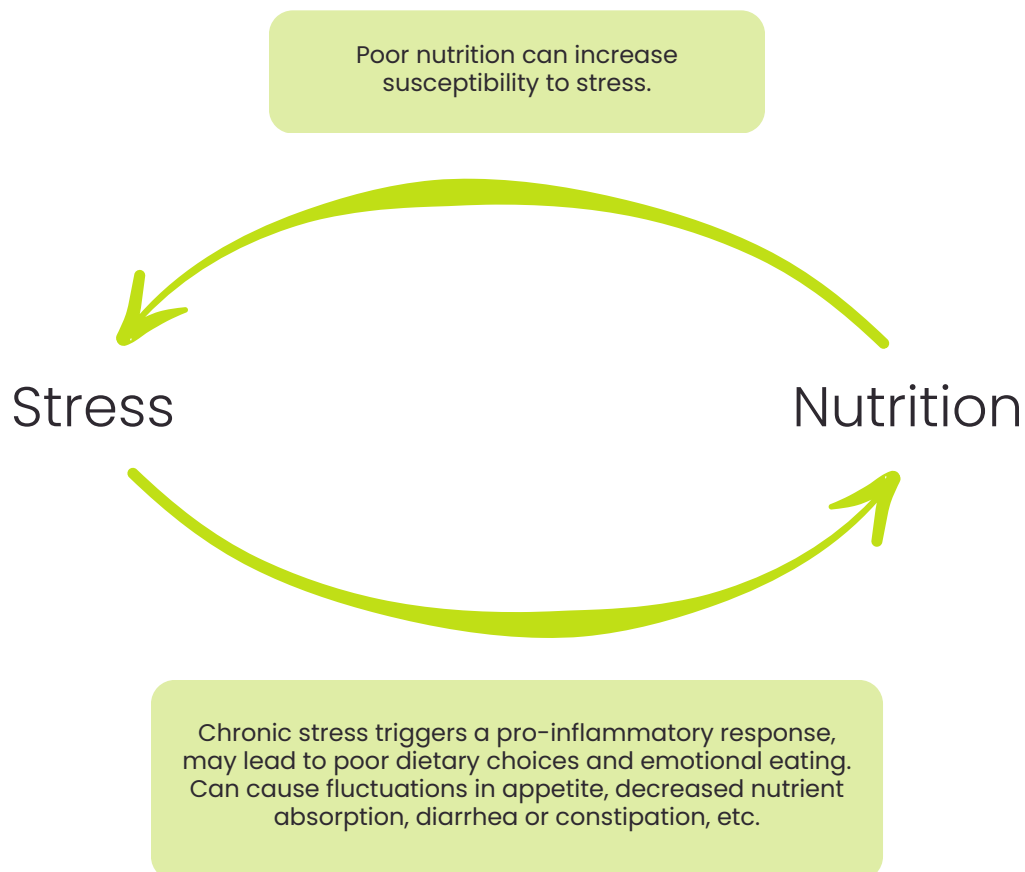
– Edward Stanley

Stress and nutrition

Chronic stress and nutrition share a complex relationship that can significantly impact your overall health and well-being. In addition to its pro-inflammatory impact on the body, **prolonged exposure to stress may lead to poor dietary choices**, such as consuming high-calorie, nutrient-poor foods or overeating as a coping mechanisms. Emotional eating can contribute to weight gain, nutritional deficiencies, and an increased risk of chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

When the stress response is activated, energy and resources are diverted throughout the body, preparing us manage the threat (think fight or flight response). For example, since digestion is less important than immediate survival, energy is diverted from that system so you are more prepared to escape threat. In an acute situation, this makes sense, and **your body is very good at managing short-term stress. However, chronic or long-term stress that disrupts digestion (and other body systems) is hard on the body.** You might experience fluctuations in appetite, decreased nutrient absorption, diarrhea or constipation, etc.

And it's not a one-way street: your stress response can be negatively affected by nutrition! **Inadequate nutrition can exacerbate the body's susceptibility to stress** by compromising the immune system, affecting hormonal balance and impairing cognitive function. Nutrients like vitamins B and C, magnesium, and omega-3 fatty acids play crucial roles in supporting the body's stress response and maintaining optimal mental health.



The Standard American Diet (SAD)

It's SAD for more reasons than one...

The Standard American Diet (SAD) is characterized by:



High consumption of processed foods



Refined grains



Added sugars



Over reliance on unhealthy fats + animal products



A general lack of nutrient-dense foods

Doesn't sound good, does it? This diet, which is prevalent in the United States and many Western countries, has become synonymous with poor nutrition and an increased risk of chronic diseases.

One of the primary reasons the Standard American Diet negatively impacts health is its heavy reliance on processed and ultra-processed foods. These foods often contain **high levels of added sugars, salt, unhealthy fats and chemical additives**, while being stripped of essential nutrients, fiber, and phytochemicals that support overall well-being.

Additionally, the SAD tends to be high in unhealthy fats, such as trans fats, and some saturated fats and seed oils, primarily found in fast foods, fried foods, and packaged/processed baked goods and snacks. These fats can raise LDL ("bad") cholesterol levels, increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke. Conversely, this diet is very low in healthy fats, such as omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for brain function, heart health and reducing inflammation.

The general lack of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the Standard American Diet further exacerbates its negative impact on health. Consuming adequate amounts of these nutrient dense foods provides essential vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber, which support immune function, promote digestive health, and help prevent chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease. **A diet low in plant-based foods is also lacking in dietary fiber**, which is crucial for maintaining healthy digestion, regulating blood sugar and lowering cholesterol levels.

However, while the Standard American Diet inevitably leads to many "sad" health outcomes, it does serve to show the power of nutrition when it comes to our health. **If we can harm our health through a poor diet, we can also protect and preserve it through a healthy one!** Research shows that adopting a balanced and varied diet, rich in whole foods, fruits, vegetables, lean proteins and healthy fats, does significantly improve overall health and reduces the risk of chronic diseases. Your efforts will pay off!

Developing a diet that suits you

Now, you are probably asking yourself at this point, **if the Standard American Diet leads to poor health outcomes, which diet should I follow?** As you're probably aware, there are MANY options available. In fact, so many that it is often overwhelming. If you're hoping we will provide you the secret to the one, extraordinary diet that is better than all the rest, we should probably warn you right now that that is not our intention.

As convenient as it would be for there to only be one correct answer, the truth is that any diet that includes plentiful amounts of fruits, vegetables, whole grains (including nuts and seeds), proteins and healthy fats will serve you well. **As unique individuals with unique needs to fit our unique lifestyles, the fact is that you will need to take the time to find what best suits you.** Some find they do best with a high-protein diet. Others prefer a vegetarian lifestyle. And many have come to love the well-balanced Mediterranean Diet.

What we will provide you with in the following sections are specific ideas of which food sources are healthy sources of the macronutrients you need, as well as a few tips for implementing healthy swaps, etc. But, before we do so, let's talk briefly about portions.



Knowing your portions

Just as important as what you eat, is how much of it you eat. Enjoying an ice cream cone with your child is a fun treat. Enjoying a whole pint of ice cream nightly while watching your favorite Netflix show is a recipe for mental and physical imbalance.

The following chart is designed to help you be aware of recommended portion sizes for various food groups and how similar portion sizes can differ greatly in their overall metabolic impact depending on what it is you are eating.

Hand Symbol	Equivalent	Foods	Calories
	Fist 1 Cup	Rice, pasta Fruit Veggies	200 75 40
	Palm 3 ounces	Meat Fish Poultry	160 160 160
	Handful 1 ounce	Nuts Raisins	170 85
	2 Handfuls 1 ounces	Chips Popcorn Pretzels	150 120 100
	Thumb 1 ounce	Peanut butter Hard cheese	170 100
	Thumb Tip 1 teaspoon	Cooking oil Mayonaise/butter Sugar	40 35 15

Foundations of a healthy diet

Stocking your house with nutritious foods prepares you for success. It is much easier to make a healthy decision beforehand by being conscious about the types of food you choose to keep in your home, than it is when you arrive home late, hungry and craving carbs!

Keep in mind that **the foods listed in each category are merely suggestions to help get you started.** This list is FAR from comprehensive!

PROTEINS

Chicken breast
Ground chicken
Hard boiled eggs
Eggs/egg whites
Solle**Complete**®
Turkey breast
Turkey bacon
Ground turkey

Cod
Salmon
Mahi Mahi
Shrimp
Tuna
Pork loin
Lentils/legumes
Beans

Cottage cheese
Unsweetened yogurt
Venison
Elk
Bison
Tofu
Grass-fed beef
Solle**Royal**™

HEALTHY FATS

Unsalted nuts
Avocado
Coconuts/coconut oil
Natural almond butter

Extra-virgin olive oil
Fatty fish
Pumpkin seeds
EnFatuate®

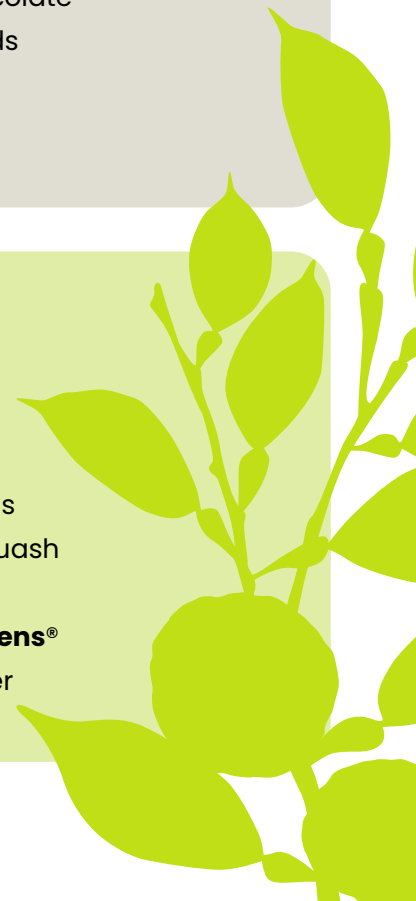
Dark chocolate
Chia seeds
Cheese
Hummus

VEGETABLES

Artichokes
Arugula
Bok choy
Broccoli
Broccolini
Brussel sprouts
Cabbage
Cauliflower

Celery
Collard greens
Peas
Eggplant
Green beans
Kale
Lettuce (dark is best)
Mushrooms

Onion
Spinach
Sprouts
Asparagus
Yellow squash
Zucchini
Avant**Greens**®
Cucumber



FRUITS

Blackberries
Strawberries
Blueberries
Raspberries

Tomatoes
Watermelon
Cantaloupe
Peaches

Grapefruit
Pomegranate
Apples
SolleRoyal™

GRAINS/STARCHES

Quinoa
Barley
Oatmeal
Sweet potatoes

Buckwheat
Popcorn (air-popped)
Pumpkin
Beets

Carrots
Bananas
Taro root
Brown rice

SNACK IDEAS

Veggies and hummus
Celery or apples with natural
nut butters
Greek yogurt with berries

Popcorn (air-popped)
Cottage cheese with berries
Dried unsweetened fruits

Veggie chips
Jerky

OTHER

Unsweetened nut milks
Apple cider vinegar
Ginger

Lemon juice
Lime juice
Balsamic vinegar

Cinnamon
Garlic

Try to base the majority of your diet around foods that come from the earth and have been processed as little as possible. We're aware that many of your favorite foods may not fit these qualifications. You're going to be okay! **Life is about moderation.** You can still enjoy these foods in small amounts or find ways to make them easier on your body.

Telling yourself "never again" can lead to unhealthy mindsets and behaviors. Also, be confident that **your taste buds and cravings are likely to change when healthy nutrition becomes a lifestyle.** One way to work through this transition kindly is to switch out some currently unhealthy foods for more healthful versions. You can view some healthy swaps on the next pages

Healthy swap ideas

Making healthy swaps is a great way to begin transitioning to a healthier diet. You don't need to change them all at once, but choose two to three things from this list that you could begin implementing now.

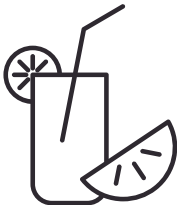
DRINKS

These should be one of the very first things you swap. If you're a drink person, they are an easy way to significantly decrease your caloric and sugar intake.



Coffee

Cinna**Mâte**® is a great coffee swap! Or, if you're not quite ready to give coffee up, try swapping your creamer/sugar for a packet of Cinna**Mâte**. This exchange will help you avoid sugar cravings later in the day, support healthy blood-sugar levels, and still add a sweeter taste to your coffee.



Juices and other sugary drinks

When you are looking for something to sip on, reach for a Solle**Vital**® or Solle**Excell**® instead of artificially flavored, sugary drinks. Or opt for freshly squeezed juice with no additives.



Milk

The typical cow's milk that you buy from the store has a sneaky amount of sugar in it. Try swapping it for a less processed dairy milk or an unsweetened nut milk. Almond milk has a subtle taste and can be a good place to start.



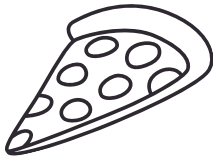
REFINED CARBS + UNHEALTHY FATS

Love carbs? Who doesn't? And that's okay! Carbohydrates are absolutely necessary for proper mental and physical function. However, not all carbs are created equal. Try to limit your refined or highly processed carbs (pastries, pasta, rice, generic white bread, etc.).



Pasta

If you're making pasta, try swapping half the noodles for zoodles (zucchini noodles). Homemade noodles and chickpea or lentil noodles are also better options.



Pizza

Branch out and try a cauliflower or broccoli crust. If you're looking for a higher protein option, you can try a shredded chicken crust!



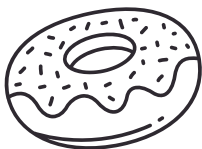
Potato chips

Dip veggies in hummus or cook homemade veggies chips. Kale chips are easy to make and can often fulfill that craving for something crisp and salty. Use a less refined salt that contains natural trace minerals! Himalayan or sea salt can be good options.



Breads

When eating sandwiches, burgers, etc. try limiting the amount of bread in the meal by having it open-faced (no top bun/bread) or lettuce wrapped. You can even use iceberg lettuce as taco shells! When you do opt for bread, stick to whole grains or a more gut-friendly sourdough.



Baked goods

Many problems are avoided by simply baking at home. Try using whole wheat, oat or almond flour instead of white, refined flour, or even mix some protein powder in! Swap vegetable and canola oil for avocado oil or another healthy fat-source.

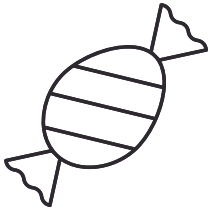
SUGAR

Sugar is one of the biggest cravings/addictions we have, and it's hard to avoid! Added sugars can be found in just about every processed food we consume - even spaghetti sauce and peanut butter. Start minimizing your intake by checking nutrition labels and cooking at home or using some of these swap ideas.



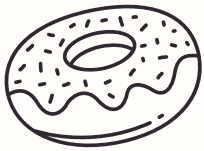
Ice cream

There are lots of yummy recipes for fruit-based ice cream alternatives. You can also dip fruit (berries work great) in yogurt or dark chocolate and freeze them as a yummy frozen treat.



Candy

When you have a sweet tooth, try going for a more natural sugar like dried fruit or homemade energy balls (both without added-sugars of course).



Baked goods

Try healthier options, like protein donuts, or swap out the refined sugar in recipes for more natural options, such as smashed banana, honey or stevia. Keep in mind that these are still sugars, so use them in moderation.



Leveraging the power of adaptogens

Adaptogens are a category of plants known for their safety and the many ways they improve health. Adaptogens have been used for centuries to **help people cope with the many ways stress affects the body** including its disruption of stress hormones (the HPA axis), stress's negative impact on all our organ systems, how it troubles our mental health, fatigue effects, immune effects and more. The wide range of medicinal actions in adaptogenic herbs **exerts a normalizing effect upon both mental and physical processes**. In addition to centuries of traditional use, adaptogens that have been studied scientifically have a significant and growing amount of research that supports their benefits.

There are certain qualities a plant must contain in order to be honored with the superior title of, "adaptogen." An adaptogen...

- is safe for daily use
- provides energy, but is not a stimulant
- strengthens and modulates the immune system
- has many active compounds, on both sides of balance
- has a beneficial effect on stress management and mood



At Solle, we are so passionate about the nutritional and modulating properties of these plants that **we include at least one adaptogen in each of our herbal drink and capsule formulas**. For more information about adaptogens, visit the "Our Philosophy" page on our website. You can also learn about the benefits of specific adaptogens via the "Our Ingredients" page.

SPOTTING AN ADAPTOGEN

What does an adaptogen look like? See for yourself! These natural substances take all different forms. Here are just a few examples.



Amla



American Ginseng



Jioagulan



Reishi

USING ADAPTOGENS

Stress plays a problematic role in every single life. It's part of reality for all of us and it can be hard on all of us. Adaptogens' unique anti-stress properties make them a no-brainer. Happily they can also be an effective and easy addition to your daily nutrition routine. Since many have a bitter taste or are plants that can be difficult to find in your area, supplements are the most economical and convenient way to add adaptogens into your daily diet. Not to mention, that quality supplements provide a higher concentration and variety of these plants than you would be able to consume otherwise.

With all supplements, it's important that you apply the correct mindset when using them. **Adaptogens are not a magic cure that will make up for all other poor health decisions.** In the words of Solle's Principal Scientific Advisor, Dr. Alison Caldwell-Andrews,



"attempting to improve your health by taking adaptogenic supplements without addressing your lifestyle is like trying to row a boat against the current."

Alternatively, when you combine various aspects of a healthy lifestyle and adaptogenic supplements, you begin rowing with the current. A healthy, holistic lifestyle allows you to harness the power of nature AND habits in order to **regain control of the direction of your health journey.**

Remember that our Solle Premium Quality Guarantee gives you confidence that when taking any Solle supplements you can consistently rely on their quality and potency. (See the 'Our Guarantee' page on our website for more information). This means that YOU get to determine the quality of your results. You are the captain of your boat, and as such, may choose whether to row with or against the current.

And keep in mind - the **best results are seen with a combination of consistent use and a complete health program** that includes lifestyle changes. For more information on which products will serve you best, you can always get help from your Solle mentor.



2. Hydration



Every single cell in our body requires water to function so making sure you're getting enough water is SO important. If you need a general guide for how much to drink each day, **try starting by drinking half your body weight, in ounces.** For example, if you weigh 160 lbs, start aiming to drink at least 80 oz of water a day. This number will vary based on your body and lifestyle, but this is a good starting point.

Stress and hydration

Proper hydration plays a vital role in helping our bodies and minds cope with stress more effectively. Adequate water intake ensures the optimal functioning of various physiological systems, including digestion, circulation and temperature regulation. When the body is well-hydrated, it can efficiently transport essential nutrients and oxygen to cells, remove waste products and support overall metabolic processes. These functions are crucial for maintaining energy levels, cognitive performance and emotional stability, which are often compromised during periods of stress. Furthermore, dehydration can exacerbate stress by causing headaches, fatigue, irritability and difficulty concentrating.

Hydration also plays a role in the production of stress hormones, such as cortisol, and neurotransmitters like serotonin, which regulate mood and anxiety levels. By staying properly hydrated, individuals can enhance their body's resilience to stress, promote mental clarity, and support overall emotional well-being.

Hydration – it's about more than just water

Hydration is a crucial factor in maintaining overall health and bodily functions, but it's essential to understand that proper hydration is about more than just consuming water. While water is the primary component that helps regulate body temperature, transport nutrients, and eliminate waste, it's not the only element involved in maintaining optimal hydration levels. **Electrolytes and trace minerals** also play a vital role in achieving optimum hydration.

Electrolytes are minerals, such as sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium, that carry an electric charge and are key to regulating fluid balance, muscle contractions and nerve signaling within the body. **When we sweat or lose fluids through other means, we also lose electrolytes**, which can lead to an imbalance that causes muscle cramps, fatigue, irregular heartbeat and cognitive impairment. You've probably experienced some of these symptoms before, perhaps after a few hours in the garden or a run.

That's because proper hydration requires us to replenish both fluids AND electrolytes. We also need trace minerals.

Trace minerals are micronutrients, like zinc, copper, manganese and selenium, that are required by the body in small amounts (hence their name) to support multiple functions. **Trace minerals work in conjunction with electrolytes to maintain optimal hydration** and contribute to fluid balance regulation, muscle function and nerve signaling.

How can you ensure adequate intake of electrolytes and trace minerals? Start by eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds. If you need additional support, adding a pinch of a less-processed salt to your water, or taking a clean supplement can help. Solle**Vital**[®], for example, contains a blend of high-mineral-content herbs to help you meet your body's trace mineral needs.



3. Movement

Exercise and purposeful movement is not just for gym rats, marathon runners or bodybuilders. It is defined as any movement that causes your muscles work, consequently burning calories. ANYONE can do this.

Another common misconception about exercise is that its only purpose is aesthetic. This could not be further from the truth. **Regular exercise releases specific hormones and endorphins in the brain that improve mental health and mood, provide clearer thinking and better memory, and decrease stress** and feelings of anxiety/depression. It also helps you maintain strong bones and joints, enjoy better sleep, increase energy and lower the risk of chronic disease.

Unfortunately, our modern modes of transportation, office jobs, and general way of life have caused a reduction in our daily movement. As a result, it is more important now than ever that we be purposeful and conscious in our efforts to exercise and strengthen our bodies.

Of course, this will look different for all of us depending on our experience and comfort levels, but **the important thing is that we make time to do something!**



Stress and exercise

Exercise is a powerful tool for managing stress, as it **offers both immediate and long-term benefits for our physical and mental well-being.** Engaging in regular physical activity can help alleviate stress by stimulating the production of endorphins, which are natural mood elevators and pain-relievers. These brain chemicals not only improve mood but also promote a sense of relaxation and well-being, helping to counteract the negative effects of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline.

In addition to its mood-enhancing effects, exercise can also improve our ability to cope with stress by increasing overall resilience. Regular physical activity strengthens the cardiovascular system, enhances immune function and improves sleep quality, all of which contribute to a more robust stress response and better overall health. Exercise can also serve as **a healthy coping mechanism and a productive outlet for releasing pent-up tension and frustration**. By focusing on the physical movements and sensations during exercise, individuals can shift their attention away from stressors and achieve a state of mindfulness, which has been shown to **improve emotional regulation and reduce anxiety**.

Moreover, engaging in regular exercise **can boost self-confidence and self-esteem** by promoting a sense of accomplishment and mastery over one's body. This increased sense of self-efficacy can translate to other areas of life, making it easier to handle challenges and stressful situations with greater confidence and composure.

BENEFITS OF REGULAR EXERCISE



Releases mood-elevating endorphins



More robust stress response



Strengthens the cardiovascular system



Promotes a healthy weight



Enhances immune function



Improves sleep quality



Helps counteract negative effects of stress



Can boost self-esteem

Forming a healthy mindset

Before you start planning out your new exercise routine, let's make sure we're clear about our mindset. Exercise is NOT a punishment for what you ate or what you do or do not look like physically.

Exercise IS a time for investing in yourself, both mentally and physically.

If you are intimidated by the word "exercise," or struggle with motivation, a goal buddy will be particularly helpful to you in this area of your lifestyle. Social health is an important aspect of your well-being as well, and finding a workout buddy is a great way to combine the two!

Remember that working out at least **3-4 times a week for 30-60 minutes** is recommended in order to experience the positive effects of exercise. Of course, anything is better than nothing.



4. Sleep



Sleep is essential for your mental and physical health, and just a little sleep here and there won't cut it. Getting enough quality sleep (usually 7-9 hours) allows our bodies to restore energy, regulate hormones and strengthen the immune system, just to name a few of the crucial functions sleep affects. In short, **consistent, restful sleep, and enough of it, is necessary for optimal functioning both mentally and physically.**

You may feel that, "you're doing just fine" with less than this. Over time, our bodies can adapt to poor sleep patterns and develop a certain level of resilience to the negative effects of sleep deprivation. This acclimation **may give the illusion that we are functioning normally despite the lack of adequate rest.** However, it's crucial to understand that this perceived adaptation does not equate to optimal functioning. In reality, chronic sleep deprivation can lead to impaired cognitive performance, weakened immune system, increased risk of chronic diseases and reduced emotional well-being. **While our bodies may temporarily adjust to cope with sleep deficits, the long-term consequences can significantly impact overall health and quality of life.** Prioritizing good sleep hygiene and establishing consistent sleep routines is essential for maintaining peak physical and mental performance and ensuring long-term well-being.

Stress and sleep

The connection between sleep and stress is bidirectional, meaning that they significantly influence and impact one another. When you experience stress, your body releases stress hormones like cortisol, which can disrupt the natural sleep-wake cycle and make it difficult to fall asleep or maintain restful sleep throughout the night. This disruption in sleep patterns can lead to sleep deprivation, which in turn exacerbates feelings of stress, creating a vicious cycle that can negatively affect overall well-being.

Lack of quality sleep can have several detrimental effects on the body's ability to manage stress. **Sleep deprivation impairs cognitive function, including memory, decision-making and problem-solving skills, making it more challenging to cope with daily stressors effectively.** Furthermore, insufficient sleep weakens the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to illness and prolonging the recovery process, which can add additional stress to an already taxed system. **Emotionally, sleep deprivation can lead to increased irritability, mood swings, and heightened anxiety levels,** further exacerbating stress and potentially straining relationships with others.

Conversely, **prioritizing good sleep hygiene and ensuring adequate rest can help alleviate stress and improve overall mental health.** Quality sleep allows the body to repair and rejuvenate itself, restoring energy levels and promoting optimal functioning of various physiological systems. During sleep, the brain processes and consolidates information, helping to regulate emotions and enhance problem-solving abilities, which can improve an individual's capacity to handle stressors more effectively. Moreover, getting sufficient sleep supports the immune system, reduces inflammation and helps balance hormone levels, all of which contribute to **better stress management and overall health.**

TIPS FOR NATURALLY IMPROVING SLEEP



Practice relaxation techniques before bed



Regular exercise



Avoid heavy meals before bed



Sleep in a dark, quiet, cool room



Reduce blue light exposure before bed



Diffuse essential oils



Use a natural sleep aid



No caffeine/alcohol close to bedtime



5. Gratitude

In today's fast-paced world, stress has become an unavoidable part of our daily lives. While we may not be able to eliminate stress entirely, one powerful tool that can help us navigate stress more effectively is the practice of gratitude. **Cultivating gratitude is a skill that has been linked to numerous mental and physical health benefits**, including increased happiness, improved sleep and a stronger immune system. Let's explore how gratitude affects our well-being, its role in dealing with everyday stressors, and tips for incorporating gratitude into your daily routine.

Gratitude is the act of recognizing and appreciating the positive aspects of our lives, whether it be the people, experiences, or even the seemingly mundane things that bring us joy and comfort. Research has shown that individuals who regularly practice gratitude, for example, by keeping a gratitude journal, experience a range of benefits, such as:

- Increased happiness and overall life satisfaction
- Improved mental health, including reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Enhanced social connections and relationships
- Better physical health, including lower blood pressure and a stronger immune system
- Improved sleep quality and duration

These benefits demonstrate the power of gratitude in fostering a sense of well-being and resilience, making it an essential component of a healthy lifestyle.



Gratitude and stress management

Gratitude can play a significant role in helping us deal with everyday stressors by shifting our focus from what's lacking or causing distress to what's going well in our lives. This shift in perspective can help reduce feelings of overwhelm and negativity, promoting a more balanced and optimistic outlook. Moreover, **gratitude can help us cultivate a greater sense of control and self-efficacy**, empowering us to better cope with challenges and adapt to change.

By acknowledging the positive aspects of our lives, we can also foster a sense of connection and support, which are crucial for managing stress. Gratitude can help strengthen our relationships, as expressing appreciation and recognizing the kindness of others can enhance feelings of connection and trust. This social support is invaluable when it comes to navigating stressful situations and maintaining overall mental health.

Tips for practicing gratitude

Incorporating gratitude into your daily routine doesn't have to be complicated or time-consuming. It's something anyone can do, anywhere. Here are a few simple tips to help you enhance your gratitude skills:



Keep a gratitude journal

Each day, take a few minutes to write down three things you're grateful for. They can be as simple as a warm cup of CinnaMate® or a beautiful sky. This practice helps train your brain to focus on the positive aspects of your life.



Express appreciation

Make a conscious effort to thank the people in your life for their kindness, support and love. This not only strengthens your relationships but also reinforces your own feelings of gratitude.



Create gratitude reminders

Place visual cues around your home or workspace that remind you to pause and reflect on what you're grateful for. These could be quotes, photographs, or even small objects that hold sentimental value.



Practice mindfulness

Being present and fully engaged in the moment can help you appreciate the beauty and joy found in everyday experiences. Try incorporating 5-10 minutes of mindfulness exercises, like deep breathing or meditation, into your daily routine to encourage gratitude.



Volunteer, give back, turn outward

Is it natural to want to turn inward by isolating ourselves and fixating on our own problems when we feel bad. Make a conscious effort to turn outward instead. Helping others and witnessing the impact of your actions fosters a sense of gratitude for the opportunities and resources you do have.

You don't need to implement all of these suggestions to begin reaping the benefits of gratitude. To start, choose one and begin there! **By making gratitude a consistent part of your daily lifestyle, you can boost your well-being, improve your ability to manage stress, and enhance your overall quality of life** - not to mention the positive effect you can have on others!

Turning new habits into a new lifestyle



Transforming new habits into a sustainable lifestyle involves consistency, commitment and patience. It won't happen overnight, but **the key is to integrate your new habits seamlessly into your daily routine so that they become second nature**, ultimately leading to lasting change. The next section provides various strategies to help you turn these new healthy habits into a healthy lifestyle.

Recommended strategies

Start small and build gradually: When adopting new habits, it's essential to start with small, manageable steps instead of attempting drastic changes all at once. By setting realistic and achievable goals, you'll be more likely to maintain motivation and avoid becoming overwhelmed. As you become comfortable with one habit, gradually incorporate additional habits or increase the intensity of existing ones.

Create a routine: Incorporating new habits into a daily routine greatly reduces the amount of stress surrounding your new goal, as well as the required energy to achieve it, which helps ensure long-term success. Determine the best time of day for each habit and establish a regular schedule that works for your lifestyle. As you repeat the routine, the new habits will eventually become ingrained and feel like a natural part of your day, not an additional stressor.

Find your 'why': Understanding the underlying reasons behind your desire to adopt new habits can provide powerful motivation to persevere even when challenges arise. Connect your habits to specific personal values or long-term goals, such as improving health, reducing stress or enhancing relationships. As you implement the new habit into your daily life, frame your thinking to follow the empowering pattern of "I chose this" instead of "I have to do this."

Be patient and embrace setbacks: Changing habits and creating a new lifestyle takes time, effort and persistence. It's essential to be patient with yourself and recognize that setbacks are a natural part of the process. When faced with obstacles, use them as opportunities to learn, adjust your approach and refine your strategies for success.

Set up a system of accountability: Building a system of accountability for yourself, whether that's by using a daily goal tracker, sharing your goals with a friend and asking them to follow up with you, or posting about your new habits and goals on social media, knowing that there is record of your progress will help you stay motivated and provide social support throughout your journey.

Celebrate progress and reward yourself: Acknowledging and celebrating your progress, no matter how small, can serve as a source of motivation and reinforcement. Rewarding yourself for reaching milestones or maintaining consistency can help strengthen your commitment to the new habits and encourage long-term adherence. Take a moment to consider what motivates you and what some of these rewards might be.

Getting started

Enough talking! Let's get to doing. Take a moment to grab out a notebook and pen, pull up a new Word doc, or open the Notes app on your phone. Once you're ready, reflect on each of the following questions and write down your thoughts and plans.

1. What is your 'why'? What will you gain from making these lifestyle changes?
2. This guide focuses on five main areas of well-being: nutrition, hydration, movement, sleep and gratitude. Which areas do you struggle with the most? In which areas are you already doing well?
3. How do you plan to hold yourself accountable?

Recommended daily goals

Setting goals can be overwhelming. In order to help you get started on your health journey as soon as possible, we've provided the following six daily goals. These six goals cover the basics of each area of health we discussed and serve as good general guidelines.

- ✓ Take adaptogens
- ✓ Follow your nutrition plan (whatever this may be)
- ✓ Drink half your body weight in ounces of water
- ✓ Engage in purposeful movement for 20+ minutes
- ✓ Get 7+ hours of sleep
- ✓ List or say three things from today that you are grateful for



Troubleshooting

Why have a troubleshooting section? Because as you have probably experienced, our intentions and goals don't typically become habits on our first try. If you find yourself in this situation, don't despair. This is NOT failure. It is simply time to reevaluate and troubleshoot.

REINFORCEMENT

One of the most common causes of collapse is inadequate frequency and/or scale of reinforcing rewards. The need for reinforcement of a desired action is particularly poignant during the beginning stage of habit forming. Define a small action you will be allowed to take or treat you will receive (even if this is a singular chocolate chip) upon having completed the desired action. Be creative! Remember that this period of heavy reinforcement is just that - a period. Once the habit is formed and has become an everyday part of your lifestyle, you will no longer need such frequent rewards for your progress.

MINDSET

Be kind to yourself. Nobody is motivated by a pessimistic, over-exacting boss, so don't be that for yourself. Avoid "should-shaming" yourself in your self-talk. This can sound like, "I just don't know why I can't stick to drinking 100 ounces of water everyday. This *should* be so easy." This pattern of thinking is neither helpful nor motivating, and the reality is that habits take work to form!

Focus on fostering a positive mindset that allows you to be a cheerleader for yourself, in place of an unsympathetic boss. Ask friends and family for help if need!



ready, set... begin!

