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ASK THE EXPERT

Your Questions Answered
by Health Professionals

How can I create new habits?

by Alicia Robbins, Health Coach

We are creatures of habit so why is it so hard to start a new habit? We make bold resolutions to start exercising or lose weight, without taking the steps needed to set ourselves up for success.

Look for patterns in your day and how you can use existing habits to create new, positive ones. This is called habit stacking. Preparing your morning coffee leads to a great opportunity to fill up your water bottle.

Start small, make it easy, do it every day and reward yourself!

CURRENT HABIT	>	STACK WITH
Getting Out of Bed	>	Stretch
Brush Teeth	>	Squat
Brewing Coffee	>	Get Water
TV Show	>	Stationary Bike
Lay Down in Bed	>	Deep Breathing



What are probiotics?

by Vanessa Mitchell, RDN

A simple way to define probiotics is that they are live microorganisms that benefit the health of the host (our bodies). And a simple way to define prebiotics is that they are the food that feed the good bacteria in our gut microbiome. We want to support the growth, activities and populations of the good bacteria in our bodies and one of the most important ways to do so is by what we choose to eat and drink, and choose to not eat and drink. Generally speaking, foods that are naturally fiber-rich are prebiotics. Think legumes, nuts, seeds, vegetables, fruits and intact whole grains. There are a few standout prebiotic foods, which include garlic, leeks, onion, asparagus, Jerusalem artichokes, chicory, less-ripe bananas, whole wheat, yams and sweet potatoes. One more reason to consume a diversified, plant-forward diet!

todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/120914p12.shtml

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Almost every gym offers a free session with a certified personal trainer

FITNESS

How to Get Started at the Gym

by Dani Jones, ACE Health Coach

Going to the gym can be an exciting new routine for some, and for others it can be a nerve-wracking idea. Worrying about knowing how to use the equipment, perform the exercises, and what to do can keep a lot of us from even getting started. There are plenty of ways to jump in, but here are some of the best ways to get started while keeping it simple.

1. Start with the “why”.

Having specific goals to work towards helps with what to do in the gym. Whether your motivation is losing weight or building on a specific skill, goals can help craft what kind of exercises to do while in the gym, improve self-confidence, and reduce confusion.

2. Add to the why by getting help.

Almost every gym offers a free session with a certified personal trainer to help with goal setting and what exercises and equipment to use. They can also be a great resource on how to use certain machines or other options when it comes to certain exercises.

3. Make a plan before going.

It's a great way to reduce confusion, streamline your time in the gym, and reduce self-consciousness. It doesn't matter if that plan is a 30-minute weight circuit or 10 minutes on a treadmill. Having an intention when at the gym helps with an efficient and simplified workout.

4. Add some fun.

This can help make the time move more quickly. Pick machines and exercises that are enjoyable to do, or listen to a fun playlist or podcast. If you like doing what you do when you go to the gym, you are more likely to keep going.



CHOCOLATE CHERRY CHIA PUDDING

Filled with probiotics, protein, Omega-3s and fiber!

1 cup mixed berry kefir
1 banana
½ cup frozen blackberries
½ cup frozen cherries
4 tbsp chia seeds
1 tbsp maple syrup
½ tsp vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS:

1. In blender - layer the kefir, banana, blackberries, cherries, maple syrup, and vanilla. Blend well.
2. Pour the purple blend into a Mason jar or bowl. Stir in the chia seeds well. Cover and set in the fridge for 4-6 hours.
3. Once the pudding has set, divide into two serving bowls. Layer with granola and fresh cherries. Drizzle the top with dark chocolate syrup.

Makes 1-2 servings

For more inspiration, please visit:
LifestyleKefir.com/recipes/

NUTRITION

Probiotics: Improving Your Gut Flora With Whole Foods

by Jessica Robertson MA, RD, CD

The complex community of microorganisms in your gut is called the gut flora, or gut microbiome. Your gut is a complex eco-system of 500-1,000 different bacterial species. Your gut flora perform many important health functions and are highly sensitive to your diet. Studies show that an unbalanced gut flora is linked to numerous diseases. Probiotics and prebiotic fibers can help correct this imbalance, ensuring that your gut is functioning well.

Maintaining a healthy gut is about more than taking a probiotic supplement. Your diet and exercise are just as important, as many lifestyle factors also affect your gut bacteria. Let's take a look at some whole food sources of healthy, friendly bacteria.

- **Yogurt:** look for a brand with live and active cultures
- **Kefir:** fermented milk drink; better source of probiotics than yogurt & lower in lactose so tolerated better for those who are dairy intolerant
- **Sauerkraut:** choose an unpasteurized option with live cultures; look in the refrigerated section in supermarkets
- **Tempeh, Miso, and Natto:** made from fermented soybeans
- **Kimchi:** spicy Korean side dish made from fermented cabbage

Adding a few servings of probiotic rich foods to your daily diet can be an easy way to give your gut microbiome a boost. To get started, try making a few simple swaps in the foods you eat, such as using kefir in your overnight oat recipe instead of milk; adding sauerkraut to salads; or using tempeh as a meatless main dish. Regardless of how you choose to get your daily dose of probiotic foods, the trick is to get creative and don't be afraid to experiment with new ingredients and flavors. Who knows, maybe one day you'll be making your own yogurt and fermented vegetables at home!





STRESS AND MINDFULNESS

Your Minimalism Checklist to Live a Simpler, Happier Life

by Tara Canada, ACSM Certified Exercise Physiologist, Intrinsic Coach®

Think about the joy and freedom of being on vacation. It's the perfect example of less is more — less stuff (just clothes and toiletries, right?), fewer commitments, not as much device time. It's minimalism — a more relaxed way of life — and it restores you. With less in your life, you can focus on what's most important to you. You have more time and energy for the things that count. Practicing minimalism improves stress, sleep and mood.

Ready to design a simpler, happier life?

Try some ideas from our minimalism checklist.

- Set aside time before bed to wash dishes, wipe off the kitchen counters and put away stray items.
- Declutter your desk, closet, drawer, table, car or room.
- Choose 10 items to donate.
- Borrow instead of buy.
- Mark something off your to-do list without doing it.
- Say no to something.
- Gift your loved ones with experiences instead of items.
- Place limits on screen time; for example, no device time after dinner.
- Turn off notifications.
- Put your cell phone away at times.
- Unsubscribe from e-mails.
- Sit down to eat.
- Do one thing at a time.
- Block out time on your calendar to spend however you wish



Snow Day

Featured Playlist

[spoti.fi/3gqtSH4](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3gqtSH4)

Spotify playlist by BGREGS INDY

Get information from your health coach through social media!

Click the links below:



Courtesy of [30-Day Minimalism Challenge - Modern Minimalism](#)