



15 Ways to Empower Your Health

#1 Surround yourself with the right people.

Having a community that uplifts and encourages you is one of the most powerful indicators of health. This was one of the most consistent findings in the Blue Zone research which studies communities with high numbers of 100+-year-old residents.

#2 Choose what you eat wisely.

Try to consume whole, clean, real food. Foods should look as close as possible to the way it looks when it is grown. Try to avoid processed foods or foods with long lists of chemical ingredients.

#3 Show gratitude.

Research shows that our brains are not capable of simultaneous gratitude and anger. Try to stay more focused on counting your blessings.

#4 Create boundaries with negative inputs.

News broadcasts, negative coworkers, friends or family and excess time on social media are a drain on your energy. Try to limit your time watching or reading the news to less than one hour per day.

#5 Move your body.

The goal is to become more active. Intend to move your body for 30 or more minutes daily. It is usually best to include some cardio/walking, strength and balance exercises weekly.

#6 Be mindful in this moment. Avoid fussing over what has been and what might be. Take some time to appreciate what IS. Most of what we worry about never comes to be true.

#7 Get good sleep

For adults 7-9 hours of sleep each night is optimal. Children may need more. Restful, quality sleep has been proven to improve your immune function, hormonal function and reduce the risk of mental illness as well as cardiovascular diseases.

#8 Limit exposure to Toxins

We are surrounded by a world that is bathed in chemicals. Some are man-made and some are naturally occurring. Design the space around you to minimize your exposure to harmful substances. Consider what you breathe, what you drink, what you eat and what you put on your skin.

#9 Laugh, dance and sing.

All are proven to lower cortisol (your stress hormone) and raise dopamine (your reward neurotransmitter). In addition, they all stimulate your vagus nerve via movement of your diaphragm and thus move you toward the side of your nervous system that is responsible for resting, relaxing and digesting (the parasympathetic nervous system) as compared to the fight, flight or freeze side of your nervous system (the sympathetic nervous system).

#10 Connect with your spiritual beliefs.

Taking time to pray or practicing a regular routine of time for worship or devotion is essential for long-term health.

#11 Let go of stress.

Try to avoid carrying around the same list of worries day after day. Use prayer, journaling or a deep, therapeutic conversation to let it go.

#12 Take time to care for yourself.

Don't ignore the needs of your own care. If you want to be fully present to care for others, you must first care for yourself.

#13 Pay attention to your body.

If new symptoms develop or if prior symptoms end, keep asking yourself "What is my body trying to tell me?" You may learn what is triggering your symptoms and what may be needed to make the symptoms stop.

#14 Work toward maintaining a healthy weight.

It is not necessary to achieve perfection, but keep trying to make choices that lead you on a path of improved health.

#15 Stay Hydrated.

Drink clean, filtered water and avoid sweetened beverages. A good, general rule of thumb is to divide your body weight (measured in pounds) by 2. This is how many ounces of water you should drink per day.

At Root Function Wellness we help patients become empowered to nurture their own path of wellness. We develop individualized treatment plans that address the entire body as one system with a goal of optimizing your total function. If you are ready to move toward feeling vibrantly healthy, call 605-753-0920 to request a Free 15 Minute Phone Consult with Dr. Amy Wagoner or contact us by email at <mailto:info@rootfunctionwellness.com>.