

# 10

## SECRETS OF HEALTHY PEOPLE

We bring you the small tweaks that make a big difference – straight from the pros. The best bit? They're easy to steal.

By **Amy Abrahams**

**C**racking the secrets to good health can feel more complicated than breaking into the Death Star, yet some people just seem to get it. So we asked the experts for the key things they do to stay at the top of their game. The result? Genius tips that don't cost a fortune, require a personal trainer or involve eating unpronounceable ingredients five times a day. Just straightforward advice that works.



# 1

### THEY KEEP MOVING

Newsflash: exercise is good for us. Wait, we knew that. But we forget that activity during the day also adds up: a Boston University study found ten-minute bursts have similar benefits to a regular workout. "A fit life is about more than sweating in the gym, and I say this as someone who runs fitness studios!" says Pip Black, co-founder of Frame ([moveyourframe.com](http://moveyourframe.com)).

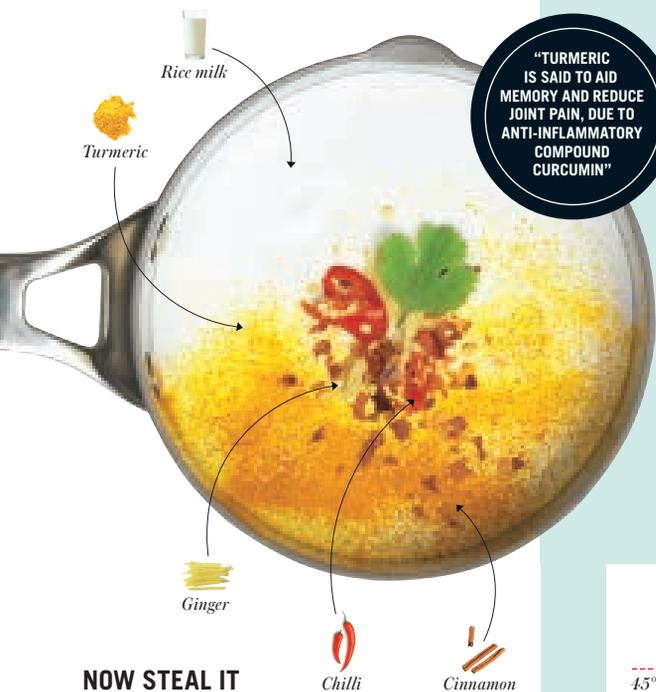
### NOW STEAL IT

Look for everyday moments that can be made more active: "If I have a meeting, I cycle there, and use a running buggy to take my son to nursery – it makes me feel good for the rest of the day," says Black. And when you're walking just to get from A to B, switch up your pace: a new study found that walking at varying speeds burns 20% more calories than keeping a steady pace. Easy! ▶

# 2

## THEY ADD SPICE

Your spice rack isn't just for flavouring culinary creations – it's packed full of body-boosting properties, too. And there's one super-spice leading the wellness way: turmeric. "I love adding turmeric to my rice milk in the morning," says nutritionist Madeleine Shaw.



### NOW STEAL IT

Madeleine Shaw's turmeric milk ingredients:  
 140ml rice milk  
 ¼ tsp turmeric  
 ½ tsp cinnamon  
 1 tsp fresh grated ginger  
 Pour the milk and spices into a small pot on a medium heat and warm for three minutes.

### SPICE IT UP FURTHER

Add chopped chillies to boost your metabolism, cumin for antibacterial and cholesterol-improving pow, and sprinkle on fenugreek to lower blood sugar levels.

# 3

## THEY SLEEP TECH-FREE



"Blue light from your mobile, TV and computer suppresses the production of melatonin (the sleep hormone), making it hard to drift off," says Dr Charlotte Kemp, a clinical scientist specialising in sleep. 95% of us browse the web, watch TV or text in bed, resulting in 'junk sleep' – shorter, poor quality sleep that leaves us #tired, #wired and at risk of obesity, heart disease and diabetes.

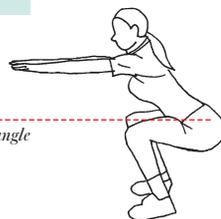
### NOW STEAL IT

"I keep the bedroom free of gadgets so I'm not tempted to keep checking for new emails or Facebook updates," says Dr Kemp. And if you're one of the 54% of women who say stress keeps them awake at night? "Keep a notebook and pen by your bed to write down your worries. This way you can switch off, knowing you'll deal with any issues in the morning."

# 4

## THEY SQUAT A LOT

While cardio has long worn the fitness crown for heart benefits, strength training, such as squatting and weights, is just as essential. "Strength and muscle mass are two top biomarkers [biological measures] of health," says Joslyn Thompson Rule, a Nike Master Trainer and online coach. Strength training has been found to counter diabetes and arthritis, help maintain muscle mass, and boost metabolic rate.



45° angle

### NOW STEAL IT

"To squat, stand with your feet a little wider than hip-width apart. Keeping even weight through your feet, squat down as if sitting on a chair, then stand back up, squeezing your bum tight at the top," says Thompson Rule. Rocking the squat already? Add squat jumps – these boost heart rate and stamina, challenge your coordination and provide serious calorie burn. ▶





"MEDITATION CAN PRESERVE BRAIN TISSUE, HELPING YOU STAY SHARPER FOR LONGER"

# 5

## THEY MEDITATE

10 minutes



From CEOs to celebrities such as Lena Dunham and Emma Watson, more and more people are turning to meditation. "It's the ultimate tool for wellbeing," says meditation practitioner Jody Shield. "You can do it any time – for free – and it can help to transform tired and low feelings."

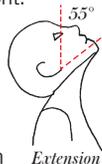
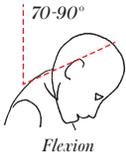
## NOW STEAL IT

"We're all busy – so ten minutes is enough," says Shield, who gave up a high-powered job in advertising to study meditation and retrain as an alternative therapist. "At lunchtime I shut my laptop, close my eyes, take deep breaths and imagine I'm looking directly at the space between my eyes (the third eye). It might feel weird at first, but it helps reset the brain to make you feel less stressed."

# 6

## THEY WATCH THEIR POSTURE

Thought "sit up straight" was something parents said to annoy you? Turns out poor posture can cause pain, headaches and even affect our moods, one US study found. "Posture is fundamental to health," says senior physiotherapist Janani Wijetunge. "I see so many people with chronic back pain, particularly office workers, and posture is a culprit."



## NOW STEAL IT

"We shouldn't spend more than 20-30 minutes in one position, so break up long stretches of sitting with exercises," says Wijetunge. "As well as standing up and walking around for a minute or two, try neck stretches, shoulder-blade pinches and trunk rotations. Do two to five reps of each, holding for 20 seconds."

# 7

## THEY CUT THEMSELVES SOME SLACK

Studies of more than 3,000 people found a link between self-compassion and four key areas of health: eating, exercise, stressing less and sleep. "It's all linked to emotional resilience," says Dr Catherine Green, a clinical psychologist at the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and themindworks practice. "It's about facing difficult feelings and accepting imperfections, rather than avoiding or attacking them."



## NOW STEAL IT

If you're feeling down or insecure, Dr Green suggests this technique: "Treat yourself the way you would a good friend, asking these questions: if they were suffering, what would you say? What would you encourage them to do? How would things be different if you started doing the same for yourself?" ►

# 8

## THEY MAKE SMART FOOD SWAPS



Coconut sugar



Banana



Date paste



Vanilla powder



Raw Cocoa



Cinnamon

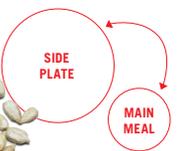
With a University of Texas study finding that a high-sugar diet could be driving breast cancer, it's time to cut down on the sweet stuff. How? Load up on healthier ingredients so you don't feel hard done by. "I have a sweet tooth, so I use dates and pecan nuts to prevent cravings," says Irene Arango, co-founder and chef of London raw food restaurant Nama.

### NOW STEAL IT

Arango suggests using date paste, vanilla powder, raw cacao, coconut sugar, cinnamon and bananas to sweeten coffee, smoothies and cakes. "And I stock up on energy bars with dates, almonds or protein powder, so I can still make healthy choices, even in a rush."

## PLATE SWAP

Sunflower seeds



Sundried tomatoes



Kale



Cucumber



"Another tip to boost your greens is to replace your main meal with a salad, such as kale, cucumber, sundried tomatoes and sunflower seeds, then have what would have been your main meal on a small plate, as a side. That way, you get more nutrients, but don't feel deprived," adds Arango.

# 9

## THEY TAKE VITAMIN B3



With over 50% of women suffering adult acne, a clear complexion is the Holy Grail of beauty. Skincare requires a holistic approach, but one vitamin could give a boost. "Vitamin B3 may control sebum production and reduce inflammation," says consultant dermatologist Dr Anjali Mahto, who suggests a supplement of 750mg.

### NOW STEAL IT

"Good skin is about healthy living," says Dr Mahto. "I cleanse, rinse with micellar water and use SPF, but I'll break out if I'm stressed or haven't slept, so I do yoga and meditate." The one product she swears by? "Retinoid cream at night. It helps remove pigmentation and fine lines and I don't think you'd find a female dermatologist who doesn't use one."

# 10

## THEY PRACTISE YOGA

Yoga has long been the healthista's go-to, as it keeps you lean and helps mental health, but a new study has found that just 12 minutes a day can also improve bone quality, lowering your risk of fractures and osteoporosis.



### NOW STEAL IT

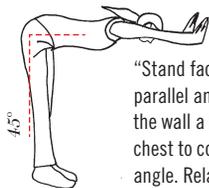
How to be a better yogi? "Stretch everywhere, on



12 minutes per day

anything (walls, tables), throughout the day. This is the one thing that keeps me flexible," says international yoga teacher Irene Pappas, known more commonly to her 500,000+ Instagram followers as @fitqueenirene.

### TRY THIS STRETCH



"Stand facing a wall about a leg length away, feet parallel and hip distance apart. Place your hands on the wall a bit below shoulder height and allow your chest to come through your arms, creating a right angle. Relax your neck; keep a strong foundation in the shoulders. You can bend your knees gently or keep them straight. Stay for ten-15 breaths and repeat whenever you need a moment to yourself." ©