

How making small changes to your diet & exercise can have a positive impact on your Wellbeing

In elite sport often the difference between success and failure is what is called 'fine margins'. Sometimes this is a horse winning by a nose in a photo finish, or Oxford beating Cambridge in rowing by a centimetre. These fine margins can be linked back to how those athletes prepare for an event and the "one percent's" that they focus on away from their training to give them an edge. These fine margins and one percent's can be transferred to daily life for any of us, as ultimately they are nothing to do with being a sports person but instead, just doing things that benefit our lifestyle to get the best out of it. That could be sleeping better, feeling fresher in the morning, running longer or being more productive with your time, be it personal or professional.

Little Changes for a big impact to your life:

In this article we will explore a series of simple lifestyle changes or additions that many of us can adopt to lead a healthier lifestyle:

1. **Start your day with water** – whilst many of us will start with a coffee, energy drink or soft drink it is important to remember to hydrate. Mild dehydration can cause moodiness, fatigue, and problems concentrating so kick start your day with water.
2. **Stretching** – regular stretching can help to increase flexibility and motion, develop muscle strength, reduce pain and help prevent injury.
3. **Eat without distractions** - When we eat while driving, working or in front of the television our body never gets the clear signal that we're taking nutrients in. Part of mindful eating is eating without distractions and savouring the sense of your food.
4. **Walking** – allows us to be active and to take breaks from day to day life whilst also taking notice of what's around us and pausing from the day to day business of life.
5. **Spend time off technology** – spending too much time on social media and devices can impact both our physical and mental health. It can impact how much we exercise, how we feel about ourselves and ironically increase loneliness and social isolation. Be aware of how much time you spend on social media and take breaks when you need them.
6. **Alcohol** – A great tip for managing and monitoring your alcohol intake is to get a measurer rather than free pouring drinks. Or if you enjoy a beer, switch from pints to bottles.
7. **Stand up at work** – If you are sitting at a computer all day it's time to change that. Set a challenge to yourself to walk around the office or home or even just stand whilst working. Many studies suggest that people who spent more time standing or moving during the course of their week had lower levels of cholesterol and blood sugar.

8. **Buddy up for fitness** – working out with a friend can be great for boosting your motivation and also output.
9. **Connect with others** – regular engagement with others, be it a coffee with a friend (lockdown permitting), bumping into fellow dog walkers, or just a daily hello to your neighbours can help lower rates of anxiety and depression, build higher self-esteem, greater empathy, and more trusting and cooperative relationships.
10. **Make your own food** - This can help you save money, increase your awareness about good food, and give you an activity to do to take your mind off things.

Useful sources & more Information:

Some of the information sourced for this article was originally published on the links below. If you would like to access this and further information in more detail please follow the links below –

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/these-15-small-lifestyle-changes-will-improve-your-life-today.html>

<https://www.bustle.com/articles/163174-11-small-lifestyle-changes-that-can-make-a-big-difference-in-your-health-happiness>

We will explore some of these and discuss this topic in more detail during the **‘How making small changes to your diet & exercise can have a positive impact on your wellbeing’** webinar on **Wednesday 24th February 2021 at 12pm**. You can register to join the webinar at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7599414666266521103>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.

If you feel you may need some support, you can also contact Care first. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.