



**LIFE AFTER 50**  
**12 DAILY STEPS TO AMAZING HEALTH**

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# From our toes to our head...

- Feet
- Knees
- Hips
- Back
- Shoulders
- Neck

- Skin
- Eyes
- Digestive System
- Balance
- Teeth
- The Mind

# Feet

- Our feet hold us up, obvious I know...but we never really pay attention to them unless they aren't feeling all that great. Then suddenly, they matter a lot. But it really wasn't sudden, they've always mattered and the better our foundation (our feet) the stronger our spine and happier our spine is, the better our balance is, our knees remain stable, and we can walk longer and stronger.
- Before you even get out of bed roll your ankles to the right and the left, point your toes forward and pull them towards yourself, and squish your toes together and then release them. Everyday. Every morning. This helps the muscles not only in your feet, but all along the leg, stretching and gently waking them up, ready to hold you up for the rest of the day. This is even more important if you have plantar fasciitis, since it helps to make the tendons and ligaments in our feet a little more pliable, and compliant.
- When you get out of bed roll back and forth on the soles of your feet, massaging the soles and giving them some special attention. If you have low arches, lifting the toes helps to build the arches. If you have very high arches, pressing into the toes helps to keep the arches flexible.
- Try to make sure when you stand that you press into all four corners of the feet, so that you are not leaning into one side or the other. Even when you walk, walk with awareness that you are pressing into the whole foot evenly.
- Walking barefoot on the morning dew is one of the best things you can do for your whole body. It helps to absorb negative ions from the earth and helps to expel the positive ions we collect in our bodies as free radicals. If you get a chance, and the weather is nice, give it a whirl.
- While you wait for the shower to warm up, go ahead and apply some healthy oil to your feet and massage it into the whole foot and between the toes. Mustard oil is especially good for the feet.

# Knees



## ➤ Exercise

- Squats, or whatever you call them, are amazing for the knees and need to be done- so do them everyday! If you need specifics on exercises, please refer to [www.yogawithmilan.com](http://www.yogawithmilan.com) for step by step instruction
- Lube up – they are a joint and joints need to stay lubed – so whether you like olive oil or sesame oil, or some other organic and non-petroleum based oil, use it to massage your knee joints every day ( do not use coconut oil except maybe in very hot weather or hot climate areas as it is considered cold and joints need warmth as they age)
- Walking is one of the best exercises for your whole body, just remember to step on the whole foot so that your knees remain aligned
- The one no-impact exercise I love is done lying on your back. Extend your feet to the ceiling, pushing into the heels, then lower the knees to the chest, then send them back to the ceiling. Repeat this as many times as you can until slight fatigue sets in, then do just one more 😊
- Massage the quads with your palms slightly after that!

# Hips

- Hips and Knees : If done properly aligned, those same squats will help both, so remember to keep your feet under your hips when doing the squats, and remember that hips are a joint as well, so don't forget to lube up (remember, no petroleum based oils, and lotion is mostly water, so not nearly as effective as oil)
- Hips and Back: Tight hips can be a reason for lower back issues, so properly stretching the hip joints and the psoas is essential to alleviating back aches. Open hips also help to keep the posture strong and open ( please refer to [www.yogawithmilan.com](http://www.yogawithmilan.com) for hip openers)
- One of my favorite hip openers entails squatting with your feet wide apart. Bend the knees and grab your ankles from behind, with your right hand grabbing the right ankle, and the left hand grabbing the left ankles. Go ahead and swing a little side to side, keeping your hands on your ankles. And yes, you may look funny, but it will keep things loose.
- If the above exercise is out of reach for you just now, grab the back of a chair with both hands, extend your left foot out and draw circles in the air with your toes. Repeat with your right foot. This is very gentle on the muscles, and it will even help a bit with balance! Win-win 😊

# Back

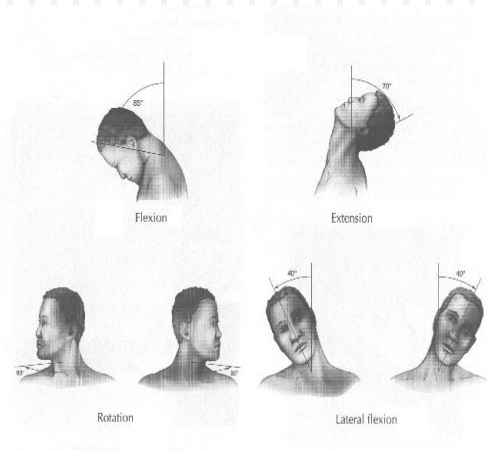
- This deserves its very own ebook and I'm sure there are plenty out there: this is the very minimum you need to take care of your back ( you are welcome to refer to [www.yogawithmilan.com](http://www.yogawithmilan.com) for more step by step instructions on back care)
- Spinal Health Components
  - Stretching – As a yoga teacher I have to recommend 'downdog' as the primary and best way to stretch the vertebrae and the space between them. If you are strong enough mentally and physically and have checked with your physician, then inversions are equally good, and of course, if you have ever taken a yoga class, you will realize that downdog is actually an inversion (feel free to refer to [www.yogawithmilan.com](http://www.yogawithmilan.com) for a how to)
  - Strengthening – I'm sure you have heard it many many times and it continues to be the gospel truth on back care and everything else care – strengthen your core. Plank and boat pose are wonderful ways to do this, and feel free to refer to [www.yogawithmilan.com](http://www.yogawithmilan.com) to see a step by step, or to see what you can do if you need variations because of physical disabilities.
  - Circulation in Spinal Cord – So our spinal cord doesn't get a whole heck of a lot of fresh blood going to it unless we cause it to happen such as with gentle twists, side bends, forward and backward bends (all gentle of course), and in general shaking things around. So throw in some very gentle spinal twists by maybe extending the arms and legs out and then swinging side to side softly and playfully. The circulation helps to keep things moving and keeps calcification of the spine at bay.
- Diet and Spinal Health – Diet is key in the health of the spine. Calcification of the spine is a horrible reality of aging and arthritis, so keeping the diet full of healthy vegetables and fruits, whole fat dairy (to keep things well lubricated) if you eat dairy, legumes, nuts and seeds, and pastured meats and eggs if you eat meat and eggs, along with plenty of greens and a healthy variety of whole grains are essential. About 80% of the diet should consist of healthy greens and vegetables. Fruits, when eaten, should not be combined with other foods, especially dairy or protein (I know that many morning smoothie recipes do exactly that, and in moderation it should be okay – please note that I say this from an ayurvedic point of view). You may want to refer to a dietitian or an ayurvedic specialist who can recommend a diet just for your body type if you want, or contact me if you have any questions on an ayurvedic approach to eating.
- I will offer that Yogaraj Guggulu is almost always an effective remedy to use along with proper exercise and diet. I always choose the Banyan Botanicals brand as they source the product from a sustainable grower ( I am not being paid for that recommendation. Guggul has been overharvested, and so buying from a reliable source is important). Massage can be an effective therapy as well, however, care should be taken that you do not apply excess pressure, as that can sometimes release toxins into the system that your body may not be prepared to handle.

# Shoulders

- **Start with keeping things moving:**
  - Shrug high and immediately drop the shoulders down – and then roll them to the front and back several times
  - Apply generous amounts of grease – olive oil, sesame oil, coconut oil if you live in a warm climate
  - Stretch your shoulders a little by holding a door jamb if you can reach high, or hold it to the side and begin to walk away (see the attached image)
  - Finally , to maintain strength, reach for the floor, and then extend one arm upwards, if you can with your gaze following it – alternate sides for about 20 repetitions
  - Anything you eat for spinal health will translate into shoulder health as well. If you have a specific ache or pain, Guggul can help, and so can eating MSM. A good quality MSM will provide sulfur to keep your body healthy, and help to synthesize the master antioxidant glutathione.



# Neck



- Movement is key to keeping the cervical spine and neck healthy and lubricated. As we age, we begin to lose moisture in the bones, skin, and muscles. Movement provides for healthy circulation and helps to keep moisture where you need it. A healthy diet is essential to make that happen, and gentle exercises which do not release cortisone into the system.
- Move your head side to side and down several times a day, even drawing circles with the head around the shoulders
- Interlace your fingers and place the palms on your forehead and press against your palms. Do the same thing by placing your palms against the back of the head
- Now extend one arm to the side and hold it until a bit of fatigue sets in and then do the same for the other arm – now progress with some of the shoulder release exercises above
- Sit upright and tall in a chair ( make sure you are not leaning against the back) Raise your arms shoulder height and create a right angle with the elbow with your arms open to the sides – pull the shoulder blades together and then bring the arms in a prayer position in front (keeping the arms at shoulder height), about 10 repetitions
- Make sure that here too, you apply that magic grease formula, massaging the whole circumference of the neck with a nice organic oil that you enjoy



# Skin



- The skin is the largest organ of elimination – keeping it healthy is extremely important
- Drink clean filtered water that has not been sitting in plastic – copper has been used for centuries as an antimicrobial vessel for water, and is generally considered safe. However, like everything, too much can be a bad thing, so please do your own research to decide if it will work for you. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antimicrobial\\_properties\\_of\\_copper](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antimicrobial_properties_of_copper))
- Dry brushing before your shower is highly recommended: with a dry natural bristle brush, or a silk or cotton glove, you will start to brush the body in a sweeping motion. Start with your feet and work your way up to your arms and then torso. Always brush towards the heart. That helps to stimulate circulation and keep lymph fluids moving towards the lymph glands. Make clockwise circles on the belly and buttocks. (Ladies, this is great for cellulite reduction )
- If you have time, before you step into the shower, this is a great time to use that oil I've been mentioning on your body. Simply retrace the motions you made for dry brushing.
- Take the coolest shower you can stand, or take a hot shower followed by a shot of cold shower. Try not to use soap, or just use it in intimate areas. The pH balance of the skin is adversely affected by soap.
- Eat lots of veggies! I cannot say enough about the diet. You are what you eat, and healthy fats and veggies are ideal. Complement your veggies with small portions of nuts, legumes, whole grains, and meat proteins if you eat meat. You do not need to eat meat for your health however, that is a personal choice. Even vegetables have plenty of protein – some of the planets strongest animals eat grass and leaves!

# Eyes



- Eat lots of veggies! (Of course I was going to start with that) and drink lots of clean filtered water that has not been sitting in plastic.
- Each morning squeeze your eyes shut tightly and open them wide. Maybe 10 repetitions. Roll them clockwise and counter clockwise, again, 10 repetitions. Then look up and down, and side to side 10 times each. Repeat the whole thing with eyes closed.
- Extend your forefinger out in front of you, straight ahead. Bring it in close slowly, to the tip of your nose. Do it 4-5 times, keeping your eyes on your finger the whole time. Now rub your hands together and place the palms on your eyes for a few moments.
- Before you begin the rest of your day, or maybe while you enjoy your morning drink, sit facing the sun and let the sunlight hit your eyelids. Enjoy this for 5-10 minutes, allowing the vitamin D to work it's magic.
- When you open your eyes, take your gaze as far as the horizon allows, and then quickly bring it to something close to you. Repeat 5-10 times.
- Use eyebright as an herbal eyewash to keep your eyes healthy. Please do your own research and check with your doctor to make sure this is okay for you.

# Digestive System

- Here we are at the crux of all disease and wellness attributes : if you are not absorbing nutrients from the food you eat, or not expelling waste from your system – nothing else will work efficiently!
- Eat your vegetables, which have fiber, vitamins, minerals, protein (yes, veggies have protein, and plenty of it)
- Also eat nuts and seeds in limited quantities (soaked and sprouted if possible). If we look at mother nature, she has provided plenty of seeds to us, which can be eaten freely. But nuts, she has given to us in limited quantities. Taking our clue from her, nuts should not be consumed in excessive quantities. Almonds, in particular, should be soaked and sprouted before consumption, as the phytic acid in them will actually deplete nutrients from your body.
- Beans and legumes (soaked and sprouted if possible, and grains that have not been exposed to genetic modifications, or chemical fertilizers and pesticides (also soaked and sprouted if possible). Fermented grains such as sourdough bread is ideal.
- If you eat eggs and dairy, make sure you eat full fat and from pastured animals. Animal products that come from CAFOs (confined animal feeding operations) have too many chemical applications, and the energy of that dairy or meat is extremely negative. The terror, stress and anguish an animal feels for all of its life affects the physical health of the animal. In other words, you ingest sick meat. Eat meat in limited quantities, because it is very difficult for your body to break down meat and absorb the nutrients. Also, try to eat meat in the daytime, as opposed to dinner time. It takes much longer for your stomach to break down meat than it does to break down vegetables. Dairy should not be consumed with other food either, especially fruit. It is best had on its own, or not at all.
- Eat fruits either 30 minutes before or after meals. They digest at a different rate than other foods because of the high sugar content, and combining them with other foods prevents the proper digestion of those foods.
- Always cook your food. Raw vegetables are too difficult for your body to break down and digest, cooking them releases the enzymes needed to digest and absorb the nutrients.
- Always drink warm water. Cold water and ice shock the system, and that water has to be brought to body temperature before it can hydrate you. Also, try not to drink water with your meals, but about 30 minutes before or after your meals. Drinking water with your meals dilutes your digestive enzymes and douses the metabolic fire which helps to keep things moving along.
- Try to eat only when you are hungry and finish your meals about 3 hours before your bedtime. Your body cannot digest food and shut down its systems ( which is what happens for sleep) at the same time 😊
- If you are having digestive issues, Triphala can be a great help. It is an adaptogen which can be eaten for any stomach related problems. It is very effective in feeding your gut flora and fauna with the nutrients they need to function well. 😊

# Balance

- Surprise! You may have already realized, balance, like everything, is use or lose. When you were a kid, it was fun to spin around in circles with your arms out...for no reason other than you could. The good news is that you can bring that playful part back. Spinning clockwise with your arms out, up to 21 times, actually prevents vertigo and other middle ear imbalances. If you cannot do 21, do 1. Then do 2 the next day, and slowly and comfortably build on it until you reach 21.
- This also helps prevent and correct motion sickness.
- If this seems too extreme, start with just standing on one foot at the sink while you brush your teeth. Alternate sides on a daily basis, and when you are comfortable, then channel that inner child and spin!
- Always do it in a safe place with plenty of room and no hard corners! 😊
- Lastly, if both of those seem extreme, simply rapidly for as many repetitions as you can, turn your head side to side. Never ever to the point of discomfort. Challenge yourself, but gently.

# Teeth



- By teeth, I mean mouth, gums, tongue and teeth. They are all part of one system, your digestive system.
- Every morning, try some oil pulling. By this I mean use that sesame oil or olive oil to swish around your mouth for about 15 minutes every morning. Then spit it out into trash, or a part of the garden you don't want anything ever to grow 😊 It sounds yucky, until you realize that it helps maintain and strengthen the enamel on your teeth. It helps gums maintain their strength as well. It prevents receding gums, and can even help with early stages of cavities. Brush your teeth and floss as normal.
- Always rinse your mouth after a meal. Brushing your teeth immediately afterwards is actually too abrasive for the enamel on your teeth. Rinsing your mouth removes the acids and allows your saliva to correct the pH inside your mouth.
- If you have extreme issues with your mouth, try using sea salt or Himalayan salt (not table salt) with some olive oil (or mustard oil if you can find it) to massage your gums. If it stings, use less salt and more oil until your gums are healthy enough to use more salt. Massage for about 5 minutes, and then spit out the residue. Rinse after about 15 minutes. You can repeat this several times a day.
- Try to use sucanat in place of table sugar, so that the minerals from the sugar cane are still in place. This reduces the impact of sugar on the mouth. And remember, sugar in general is a treat. If you must have something sweet, try dates. Or a small piece of dark chocolate. Then rinse your mouth 😊

# The Mind

- Don't forget that nothing at all works well or feels good if you don't have peace within yourself. And peace within yourself is a choice. You must cultivate it and nurture it. Through meditation and gratitude, you can achieve a state of mind which is steady in the face of chaos. It takes practice, and constant reminding that you are human, and that your human experience is a part of the package. Let go of judgment and expectation, and begin your meditation practice.
- Although the directions are extremely easy, sitting down with intention on a daily basis is how the process becomes habit. When it is habit, you will find you have increased your gray matter and increased your happiness!
- Before your meditation, go ahead and take a short walk, bike ride, swim or do some stretching. Simple exercises that cause circulation within the system.
- Step 1 – sit down and turn on a timer for 10 minutes
- Step 2 – close your eyes and focus on your breathing – the inhale and the exhale
- Step 3 – when you discover you are actually making your grocery list, going over the fight you had with your boss, etc. DO NOT JUDGE yourself
- Step 4 – thank the thoughts for introducing themselves, and go back to your breath
- Step 5 – continue the cycle until your timer goes off
- Repeat daily, and even increase the time spent if you can afford to (nothing wrong with repeating a mantra if you have one, or just visualizing the sun or moon...be creative and relax!)

# Conclusion

- You may find there is a lot of information, or not enough information. Either way, feel free to contact me and give me feedback or even ask me questions that you feel have not been answered.
- This is meant to be an easy overview, and not provide medical advice. Following these things on a daily basis, you may discover, make it so you can limit medical advice 😊
- The food, love and nurture we provide for our body can reduce stress levels and disease to a great extent. May you be well on your life's journey!

# Bonus: Supplements that may be helpful

- Triphala for metabolism and digestion
- Psyllium Husk for fiber and liquid balance
- Gotu Kola for memory and concentration
- Yogaraj Guggul for muscles, joints, nerves
- Ashwagandha for nervous system and anxiety
- Moringa for complete 'multivitamin'
- DMSO and MSM for pain management