



# **25 Tips To a Healthier Life**

**by Mitzi Dulan, RD, CSSD**



## Greetings!

I'm very excited that you have taken a step towards improving your health by reading my **25 Tips to a Healthier Life!** Thank you. When these 25 simple tips, tricks, and strategies are applied to *your* life – I know you will live better!

Yours in health and joy,

*Mitzi Dulan*

Mitzi Dulan, RD, CSSD

## **1. Take 100% responsibility for your life.**

Everything in your life is a result, whether directly or indirectly, of the choices you have made up to this point in your life. Stop complaining, blaming, and justifying! When you stop blaming your spouse, kids, parents, boss, co-workers, friends- it's amazing what happens! It is not someone else's fault that you choose to overeat or avoid exercising. By taking personal responsibility you will be able to reach new levels of success. Focus your energy on changing what you don't like and avoid the trap of complaining and blaming others for everything. I promise—this will transform your life!

## **2. Shop at the Farmers Market.**

Produce from the Farmers Market is some of the freshest produce you can buy. When produce is fresh, that means more nutrients with better taste and often better prices. Additionally, when you shop at the Farmers Market, you can feel good about yourself for helping out your local farmers and contributing to the sustainability movement. Visit [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org) to find one close to you.

## **3. Eat more plant foods than food from plants.**

Eating fresh, juicy fruits and vegetables will provide more nutrients and flavor than buying highly processed and packaged food products. Foods consumed should be in their most natural form- as close to how they grew in the garden or on the farm as possible. Eat at least one plant based meal each day. Maybe you try black bean soup or lentils and quinoa.

#### **4. You are your word.**

When you align your actions with your intentions, you are making a positive and powerful personal statement that will reward you many times over. Being vigilant about keeping your word means you'll take the time to weigh each obligation and intention before you commit to it. (This goes for your commitments to others as well as to yourself!) Avoid casually saying you will do something only to never follow-through or do it seven days later than you said you would. Bottom line: if you say you are going to do something- do it!

#### **5. Lift weights at least 3 times per week.**

Resistance training strengthens bone, burns fat, and keeps you moving. Increased muscle also helps maintain a high metabolism. Gaining strength and definition in your muscles doesn't hurt either! It's as easy as going to a local discount store and buying some inexpensive 8 and 10 pound weights.

#### **6. Avoid eating after dinner.**

Eating after dinner will just add unnecessary and unwanted calories to your daily total and can sabotage weight loss efforts. If you avoid eating at night you are more likely to be in a caloric deficit while sleeping so you can burn fat! Ask yourself, "do I want to burn fat or be digesting food while sleeping?" Combat evening eating by brushing your teeth or chewing mint-flavored gum after dinner to curb your urge to eat.

#### **7. Go to bed sooner.**

Your body burns calories while you sleep. Try to find a cut-off time for all your daily activities and get the extra rest you need by going to sleep

earlier. You're more likely to eat and snack on foods if you stay up late and have nothing to do. Sleep is also critical for good health. Getting a good night's rest will help you reduce stress, improve memory, lose weight, have a healthy heart and maintain a healthy immune system. Try to set a regular schedule and use soothing music, a fan, or eye mask to help you improve your sleep habits.

## **8. Read at least 10 pages a day.**

Is your brain malnourished? When is the last time you read a book? Reading provides you with mental nutrition. It is imperative part of your personal development to grow both personally and professionally. Reading will broaden your horizons and knowledge, and studies have shown that adults who read more also *earn* more. Not only earning potential but reading helps to keep your brain active. Take 10 minutes during your morning coffee, lunch break or before bed to delve into something that interests you.

However, I am recommending books that will teach, inspire, and educate so skip the romance novels and head for the non-fiction. Reading just 10 pages a day means you will read about 15 books a year! This is more than some people read in an entire lifetime. Some of my favorite authors are John Maxwell, Jack Canfield, Napoleon Hill and Eckhart Tolle.

## **9. Smile and laugh daily.**

Sometimes we get so caught up in the daily tasks that we forget to do smile and laugh. Try this: smile, now think of something negative. It's hard isn't it? These forms of self-expression not only relieve stress but can also help form bonds and strengthen relationships. It is also good for your soul and blood pressure. Bonus: smiling makes you look younger and more attractive. Love

life—and don't take it too seriously!

## **10. Be present for life and love.**

Don't allow yourself to be caught up in the memories of the past and the worries of tomorrow! Be fully immersed in what you are doing in the present. Make time to give your FULL attention to those around whether it is your spouse, kids, parents or friends. If you are constantly checking your phone they are noticing. Step away from your computer and cell phone. You'll be amazed at the amount of serendipity that comes your way!

## **11. Stop eating when satisfied.**

Have you ever eaten so much that feel stuffed or sick? Most likely. I want you to make sure you STOP eating when you feel SATISFIED. It takes some time from when you begin to eat to when your brain receives the signal that it's satisfied. Don't devour your meals; eat slowly so you won't overeat by the time your body gets the message that it's satisfied.

## **12. Eat a source of protein at every meal.**

A key to weight loss success is making sure you eat foods that will satisfy you and help maintain blood sugar levels. Not only will protein help decrease hunger but it is necessary for your immune system and for building and repairing muscle. Protein also provides less than half the calories per gram (4 per gram) as fat (9 per gram) does! It's that time that it takes to digest which gives you a feeling of fullness after meals. Aim to eat a source of protein at each meal like chicken, fish, or beans to feel pleasantly satiated.

### **13. Eat more fruits and veggies.**

The jury is in... eating fruits and vegetables are a must for good health! Fruits and vegetables can help prevent cancer, are great for your heart, eyes, and skin and can help you lose weight. Five servings a day is a good **minimum** to shoot for, but studies show that additional daily servings yield additional health benefits.

### **14. Don't smoke.**

Long gone are the days where smoking was perceived as an image booster. We have all wizened up to the propaganda and know how dangerous picking up a cigarette can be to our health. Take pride in living a smoke-free lifestyle to improve your health and add longevity. Don't miss precious moments with your grandchildren because of cigarettes.

### **15. Avoid the "energy suckers."**

Set yourself up for success by surrounding yourself with positive people. They will keep you optimistic and will encourage your dreams and goals, rather than get in the way. Being around negative people not only wastes your time, it also brings down your mood and outlook.

### **16. Don't drink your calories.**

Studies show that when we drink our calories, we do not compensate by eating less at our next meal. Actually chewing your food helps send signals to your brain that you are eating, and will soon be full. Additionally, most drinks tend to be high in sugar and calories but low in nutrients. Even fruit

juice can add up and doesn't provide all the benefits of whole fruit!

## **17. Eat foods you love.**

Eating healthy is important, but that doesn't mean you should deprive yourself of foods you love. Too *little* of a good thing can also be a bad thing! It's okay to indulge on your favorite foods now and then—always go easy on the serving sizes.

## **18. Listen to your body.**

Too often we ignore what our bodies are trying to tell us. We push ourselves too far at the gym or don't take enough time to properly stretch. Next time you're at the gym, spend 10 minutes before and after you exercise stretching out your muscles. The same goes for eating habits—we ignore the body's signal telling us when we are satisfied, and don't slow down to analyze whether we really want those last bites. It takes 20 minutes for your body to send the "satisfied cue" to the brain, so slow down, and take time to really enjoy your meal.

## **19. Make a list of all the qualities you love and admire about yourself and read it daily.**

Before you can start to love others you must learn to love yourself, but often we are our own worst critics. Change your mindset by focusing on the qualities that you're most proud of. Make a list, and any time you start feeling bad about yourself, pull it out as a reminder of how truly beautiful you shine on the inside and out. If you're having trouble coming up with attributes, ask your loved ones for ideas. You may discover new traits about yourself that others find endearing that you never even realized!

## **20. Exercise + socialize together with friends.**

Next time you want to spend time with friends, try trading in that beer and nachos for running shoes. Make walking dates with friends, organize a doubles tennis match, go bowling, or host an intense Wii Fit competition to get everyone's heart rates pumping. You'll have a newfound motivation to exercise and a broader range of activities for you and your friends to enjoy. You're guaranteed to get fit and have fun!

## **21. Spend more time outdoors.**

Scientists have coined the term "biophilia" to describe how our health and happiness correlates with the natural desire to connect with nature. With the surge in technology, however, people are spending an increasing amount of time indoors. Studies show that spending time outside can actually help lower rates of obesity and depression. Just 15 minutes in the sun helps our bodies to generate vital vitamin D to strengthen bones and may help prevent various cancers and other chronic illnesses. So go for a walk with your family/friends, go on a bike ride, or take a good book to the park.

## **22. Find a healthy balance between work and play.**

In a hectic world it's tough to balance work and down time, and this inevitably results in stretching ourselves too thin. A lack of balance could be putting your health and happiness in jeopardy. Whenever possible, leave your work at the office, turn off that blackberry, iPhone, or laptop, and devote your evenings to family, friends or me-time. Maximize your leisure time by combining activities. Spend quality time with your family by cooking meals together, go for a solo run with your iPod while listening to your favorite

songs, or join a book club to both socialize and engage in reading.

### **23. Schedule exercise into your daily planner or Smartphone.**

At the start of the week, add your workouts into your daily planner/Smartphone the same as you would a business meeting or girls' night out. By making a firm commitment to your exercise and health you'll be less likely to blow off the gym. Also, pack your gym clothes the night before and you will have one less reason to ditch your plan.

### **24. Make a list of things you want to do/see in your life.**

Having a list of goals, whether big or small, long or short term, serves as a daily reminder of what you want to experience and accomplish in your life. When brainstorming your list, keep it *specific*. For instance, instead of writing, "I want to travel, say "I want to visit Florence, Italy by the time I'm 45" or "I want to weight 130 pounds by May 1 next year". Clarity will make it easier to move in the direction of your goals. Succeeding at smaller, shorter term goals will give you the confidence to realize your bigger dreams.

### **25. Stop following fad diets.**

When it comes to weight loss, a "quick fix" just isn't going to cut it. While you may initially lose weight on a fad diet, these changes are only temporary and can't be sustained long-term. Instead of feeling starved and tired, anxious and deprived, concentrate on the foods that will keep you nourished, full, and glowing. Eat whole, unprocessed foods, watch your

portions, add exercise to your routine, eat enough to keep your metabolism revved up, and learn the healthy balance that works for you.



## About the Author

**Mitzi Dulan, RD, CSSD is a nationally recognized expert in nutrition, sports nutrition and weight loss.** A frequently requested speaker, she is a Registered Dietitian, Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics, and Certified Health Fitness Specialist through the American College of Sports Medicine. **Mitzi is the co-author of *The All-Pro Diet* (Rodale, 2009) with NFL future Hall-of-Famer Tony Gonzalez.** Mitzi's philosophy is simple: eating clean, real foods that are close to nature is the best way to fuel your body. Mitzi has been the team nutritionist for the Kansas City Chiefs Football Team and the Kansas City Royals Baseball Team for many years. Mitzi was also the University of California, San Francisco Sports Nutritionist and the Director of Nutrition Services for The San Francisco Bay Club. Mitzi's philosophy is simple: eating clean, real foods that are close to nature is the best way to fuel your body.

As America's Nutrition Expert<sup>®</sup>, Mitzi is a trusted source to the media and has conducted over two hundred television interviews. She has appeared on the Emmy Award-Winning television show "Starting Over" as the nutrition expert for the houseguests. She has also frequently been seen on the nationally syndicated "Dr. Dean Edell" segments and across the country and on CBS, NBC, ABC, and FOX affiliates in major media market cities. Mitzi has been seen on Discovery's Science Channel and quoted in the *The Wall Street Journal*, *Newsweek*, *Family Circle*, *Men's Fitness*, *Self*, *Shape*, *Oxygen*, *Life Experience*, *Maxim*, *Glamour*, *Fitness*, *Walking Magazine*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Jose Mercury*, *ESPN.com*, and *Glamour.com*.

Visit [www.nutritionexpert.com](http://www.nutritionexpert.com) to learn more about Mitzi.