

A Starters Guide to Health and Wellness

The below topics address the lifestyle fundamentals of human health and performance. These aspects of our lives are directly related to most modern-day diseases, metabolic disorders, and general ailments. Additional steps and measures may be required, but these four critical aspects of life are essential for any level of treatment. It is a fact that a poor diet, insufficient sleep, a lack of physical movement, and stress ARE the root causes of most modern-day diseases and illness.

To start, pick one topic that you feel needs the most attention. If I might suggest, start with your sleep. Otherwise, address each topic one at a time and slowly move to the next issue. The key is to do the best you can. Perfection is not necessary, so please do not try. Each area influences the other. Keep at it, and over time you will begin to experience the significant effects!

Nutrition: You Are What You Eat!

Enjoy – Nutrient dense real foods. The foundation should be plenty of vegetables and plants (fresh or frozen, organic whenever possible)

Lean Protein: beef, lamb, pork, poultry and eggs, fish & seafood

Fats: olive oil, coconut oil, avocados, pastured butter (Kerry Gold) Ghee, seeds & nuts

Carbohydrates: Starchy roots & tubers, properly prepared legumes (dried beans & lentils soaked for 24 hours, NOT canned) fruits (berries are best, fresh or frozen, organic whenever possible)

Beverages: Water, seltzer, teas (herbal, green, white & black) black coffee in moderation.

NOTE: Although healthy, most fruits and nuts should be consumed in moderation. Too much can lead to weight gain and other possible issues.

Avoid – Processed, packaged and boxed products, sugar, refined grains, vegetable oils, artificial ingredients (colors, flavors & preservatives) most convenience/fast foods. Avoid drinking your calories (soda, juice, sweetened teas, etc). Alcohol in moderation

Movement: For a Healthy Body & Mind

Please check with your doctor before starting any physical activity for the first time. If you can only do one thing, walking is the place to start. For the other activities, start slow and build as you progress. Do what you can. Something is better than nothing!

Daily – Walk for 30 minutes. Outdoors is ideal, a treadmill or elliptical is acceptable, but avoid going too hard. This is to establish a solid movement foundation. It is amazing what walking every day can do for your body and mind.

2-3 x per week - Resistant or weighted exercises. Free weights, body weight exercises, resistance bands and machines are all helpful. Doing this will help develop and maintain strength, muscle mass, mobility and a healthy nervous system.

1 x per week – Raise your heart rate. Some sort of play is best, like soccer or basketball. Go for a run or some other type of vigorous exercise. You don't need much. Short bursts, recover and repeat. Look up Tabata or HIIT training as an example, but any type of movement that gets your heart rate up will work.

Sleep: Restore and Refresh

Before Bed – “Unplug” ~1 hour before bed. Light from electronic screens disrupt your circadian rhythm and disrupt sleep. Herbal bedtime tea, a hot shower and reading before bed are proven to help. The key is consistency. Unwind and relax your body and mind in order to perform at your best the next day.

Your Room - Make your room as dark as possible, eliminating any sources of light. No TV or lit alarm clocks. Use your cell phone as an alarm clock and use blackout curtains to help keep it dark.

During Sleep – Avoid turning on any lights and avoid checking the time. If you do, it's a sure way to stimulate your brain and keep you from falling back to sleep.

NOTE: If you have trouble falling asleep, it's quite probably do to stress. If you fall asleep fine, and then wake in the middle of the night, it's possibly either low blood sugar or a circadian imbalance due to light exposure. These are the most common causes.

Mindset: Unleash Your full Potential

Your state of mind is key to all of the other elements. Meditation is a very powerful means of establishing a calm and balanced mind and body. There are several methods and practices out there. The key is to find something that works for you and to do it each morning if possible. Taking time out of each day, just for you, is so important for your health. Too much time spent watching TV, on electronics or social media can rob you of your vitality. Diaphragm breathing exercises, meditation, yoga, reading spiritual and mentally uplifting material can help you develop a better sense of wellbeing and happiness.

Check out the apps **HeadSpace**, **Calm**, **Oak** or **Insight Timer** for motivation and tracking.

Suggested books are **The Power of Now** by Eckhart Tolle, **Wherever You Go, There You Are** by Jon Kabat-Zinn and **Awareness** by Anthony De Mellow.

For more information or to schedule a free consult, visit mattkansy.com