



This health fix is right outside your door.

FREE WAYS TO CUT ALL YOUR HEALTH RISKS

Insurance premiums, co-pays, gym fees—it can be pricey to stay healthy. But these research-backed tricks don't cost a cent:

Step outside. Soaking up 15 minutes of sun (without sunscreen) two times a week can help your body produce sufficient levels of vitamin D, which has been linked to a lower risk of osteoporosis and breast cancer. The vitamin may also protect you from inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease, and other digestive illnesses, says Jun Sun, Ph.D., assistant

professor of medicine at the University of Rochester (NY) Medical Center. A recent study conducted by Sun and her colleagues suggests that vitamin D may help balance the naturally occurring bacteria in your digestive tract.

Switch your cereal. You know you're supposed to eat breakfast for a million different reasons, but here's one more: People prone to canker sores are more likely to have low levels of folate and B-12—two nutrients that fortified cereals such as Total Whole Grain and Kashi Heart to Heart

are full of—according to recent research from the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine in Farmington. So check nutrition labels before making your breakfast pick.

Steam your veggies. Not only does it simplify dinner prep, but steaming fresh cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli and cauliflower instead of boiling, frying, or eating them raw also boosts the amount of cancer-fighting glucosinolates they contain, an Italian study found.

Friend someone.

People with strong social networks live longer than those with less support, recent research from Brigham Young University in Provo, UT, determined. The positive health effects of friends are comparable to—believe it or not—quitting smoking, researchers say. Close family members and coworkers count toward this pal quotient too, so why not invite your favorite work buddies out for happy hour? Tell them it's doctor's orders! —GINA ROBERTS-GREY



How to treat a man-cold

It's flu season! Time to stock up on Kleenex, grab the cough drops, and revisit the health debate about whether men really are bigger babies than women when they're sick. "When my husband [Scott Phillips] is ill, he takes to the couch and pulls his hoodie over his head; suddenly he's all about sugary cereals and bad TV," Julie Bowen, who plays Claire on *Modern Family*, told REDBOOK. This regression isn't her imagination: A classic British study found that men were more likely to overrate cold symptoms than women. One way to help him feel better fast? Urge him to drink water. "You lose a lot of fluids from fever and blowing your nose," says Jim Sears, M.D., cohost of the talk show *The Doctors*. If severe symptoms last more than a few days, ask him to see an M.D. "Men avoid the doctor too much," Sears says. "But bad colds can turn into bronchitis or worse."



For more quick health tips, check out the new book by Sears and his cohosts: *The Doctors 5 Minute Health Fixes*.