When life is going well, it’s way easier to be healthy.

But when life is chaotic (COVID-19 anyone?) and toilet paper is rationed, we grab a handful of Doritos, turn on Netflix, and wash our woes down with a Coke.

And this isn’t good for our well-being, nor does it allow us to be strong in the face of stress.

We rely on the strength of our immune system to fight off infections. The problem is that our immune system is working overtime during extended periods of stress, like what we’re going through now, and is weakened to foreign invaders.

We need balance, moderation, and variety in our health at this time to be better equipped to battle. Thankfully, there are simple things that we can do to keep ourselves healthier during this quarantine period. They include drinking water, eating right, and moving our body. So, put down those chips and read on…

WHAT WE DRINK

Did you know that a 2% deficit in water affects our mental and physical well-being?

It’s true. We can live weeks without food, but no more than 10-days without water. Our body is 60% water, with our brains comprised of 76% water and our lungs at 90%. It is essential for our health. Many critical body processes cannot occur without water, like digestion, circulation, excretion, and the regulation of our moods.

Water is of the utmost importance when you’re trying to avoid getting sick or fighting an illness. Unfortunately, the average American only drinks 1.5 cups a day. This-is-not-good.

Daily water formula: body weight in pounds /2= ounces of water required

The formula to calculate the amount of water to drink each day is your body weight divided by two in ounces. For example, a 180-pound person needs 90 ounces of water.

Drink even more if you break a sweat. Don’t include pop (fine call it soda) or coffee into this water count.

Additional tips include:

* Pour yourself a jug of water in the AM and drink it throughout the day
* Ideally, consume water every 15-20 minutes
* Drink a glass of before eating each morning
* Drink water 30-minutes before every meal.

WHAT WE EAT

It’s normal for us to crave high-fat and high-sugar foods when under pressure. But when this happens, our diets become strained and this leads to a poor reaction to stress. Meaning we’re more likely to respond with irritability and anxiousness to challenges.

Now in college, it was kinda fun to gain 15 pounds as a freshman, but I imagine that it won’t be so fun to gain the Corona 15.

When under stress, our bodies use up our nutritional resources and we need additional vitamins and protein. In particular, more vitamin B and C and calcium are required. Remembering that vitamin C helps us battle stress and vitamin B helps you fight the effects of stress.

This all points to the fact that we need to eat more foods that are whole, this means more vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Eat foods that expire within days as compared to weeks or months. Throw away the processed junk, as you’ll just feel worse after eating it. Other tips include:

* Load up on your veggies first (after drinking that water) and you’ll have less room for the other bad food
* Don’t eat out of the bag like a horse at a trough. Pull out a portion and put in in a bowl/plate. If you want to go back for more, you’ll have to get up and scoop out more
* If you have a hard time getting enough vegetables in, make a smoothie and throw in some spinach and kale
* Create a hard stopping time for eating/snacking at night. For me, I don’t eat after 7 pm.

**Here are six foods to supercharge your immune system:**

Green Tea is particularly good for us because it has a powerful antioxidant called EGCG (epigallocatechin gallate), in addition to antioxidants called flavonoids, as well as other nutrients that improve brain function and lower risks of cancer.

Fruits like kiwis, lemons, oranges, papayas, and grapefruits have essential nutrients of vitamin C, which may be helpful for those under major stress (like every person in America right now).

Ginger contains an anti-inflammatory and antioxidant property called Gingerol that boosts your immune system, while also lower blood sugar and aiding in digestion.

Vegetables contain Vitamins A, E, and C (in addition to many others) and are responsible for boosting immunity. Spinach, red peppers, broccoli, and sweet potatoes are high in these vitamins. Keep in mind that it’s best to eat these in more of a natural state and not frie.

Turmeric is a potent anti-inflammatory spice that protects the heart due to its active compound of curcumin. You can either use this as a spice in your food or consider taking it as a capsule (along with black pepper as it helps with absorption). I’ve taken turmeric for my auto-immune disease for years now and it’s greatly helped my joint pain.

Nuts have the ability to strengthen the immune system with their healthy fats and nutrients. Sunflower seeds and almonds are two that stand out due to their higher amount of vitamin E. Grab a handful of nuts in place of those chips and rest happy.

HOW WE MOVE

Exercising creates a buffer between our fears and worries. It is a natural outlet for our bodies when under stress.

Exercise is both a physical and mental release as it relaxes tired and tense muscles. Also, our minds become calmer and clearer. Movements improve our ability to think, executive functions, and time management.

All of this shows that we need to move each day as a means of dealing with extra stress. Aim for 30 minutes of activity. This can include walking and stretching. But don’t discount a short 5-minute walk as it has benefits too.

For me, I shoot for three days of strength, two days of yoga/stretching, and some type of cardio each day (thankfully that puppy of mine keeps me moving with this).

Here’s a few free (woot woot) on-demand classes for you to get your sweat on:

* [YMCA](https://ymca360.org/)
* [Beachbody](https://www.beachbodyondemand.com/blog/beachbody-free-workouts)
* [CorePower Yoga](https://www.corepoweryogaondemand.com/keep-up-your-practice?utm_medium=Email&utm_source=ExactTarget&utm_campaign=20200315+LETTER+FROM+HP)
* [7 App](https://seven.app/)
* [Peloton App](https://www.onepeloton.com/app) (offers first 90-days free promo) Note that you don’t have to have a Peloton bike though as it includes yoga, meditation, stretching, and bodyweight classes.
* [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/) has every workout you can imagine. I had fun with this 30-minute yoga workout from [Alo Yoga](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4ViwsLKoSY) this weekend.

With enough water, movement, and the right foods, we will make it through this Coronavirus pandemic with our well-being intact.

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Amanda Chay founded [Wonderment](http://www.wondermentltd.com), a company offering a new approach for teaching stress reduction and mindfulness. She intimately knows the corporate world with 15+ years of experience running national sales teams and leading campaigns. Having recovered her own ill-health, Amanda is passionate about using this knowledge to guide towards self-growth