



# Healthier Living

CREATE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, NUTRITION, AND LIFE BALANCE



## get this STRAIGHT

**F**or many of us, slouching has become second nature. It is easy to let your body melt into what feels like a natural position, but how natural is it really? **Bad posture** can lead to more than just a sore back. Prolonged slouching wears away at your spine, causing back pain and making you prone to injury.

### To check your posture, try the wall test:

1. Stand with your head, shoulder blades, and buttocks touching the wall with your feet hip-width apart, and heels about 2 to 4 inches from the wall.
2. If you do not feel your shoulder blades against the wall, externally rotate your shoulders, open up your chest and squeeze shoulders together without lifting them up.
3. Make sure the back of your head is touching the wall and your chin is parallel to the floor.
4. Slide your hand behind the curve in your lower back, with your palm flat against the wall. If there's more than one hand-width of space, tighten your abdominal muscles to flatten the curve in your back. If there's less, arch your back so that your hand fits comfortably behind you.
5. Walk away from the wall while holding proper posture. Return to the wall to check whether you kept the correct posture.

### How do you maintain this posture throughout the day?

- Do yoga or a stretching and strengthening routine that targets your core, hip flexors, chest, and back.
- Check-in with yourself every hour and adjust your position.

**Seated:** make sure your feet are flat on the ground, and your ears are over your shoulders, shoulders over your hips.

**Standing:** pull in your stomach and put your weight on the balls of your feet. Ears over your shoulders, shoulders over your hip, hips over your knees, and knees over your ankles.

## QUICK CLICK

### soothing relaxation



[www.youtube.com/c/SoothingRelaxation](https://www.youtube.com/c/SoothingRelaxation)

Enjoy hours and hours of calming music for focus, meditation, or relaxation by visiting the Soothing Relaxation YouTube channel. Composer Peder B. Helland provides a variety of relaxing instrumental music for free and without advertising breaks. ♦



## FEATURED RECIPE

### KIMCHI FRIED RICE

#### INGREDIENTS

3 cups of cooked rice  
4 fried eggs  
1 Tbsp of cooking oil  
½ tsp garlic  
½ cup finely chopped onion  
¾ cup peeled and finely chopped carrots  
1¼ cup finely chopped kimchi, 12-oz. jar  
½ Tbsp sesame oil  
¼ cup kimchi juice, reserved from 12 oz. jar

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Sauté garlic, onion, and carrot in cooking oil for 2–3 minutes. Add rice, kimchi, sesame oil, and kimchi juice. Cook for 3–5 minutes, mixing well. Season with sea salt, to taste. Serve with fried egg.



**SWWC**  
LIVE WELL



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

# GOOD FOR YOUR GUT!

**Y**ou may have heard the term ‘**gut health**,’ but do you know why it is so important? The digestive system, or gut, influences many aspects of your health, from mood and behavior to appetite and weight. Many fermented vegetables and dairy products, like yogurt, kefir, kombucha, sauerkraut, and kimchi, promote the growth of beneficial gut bacteria, known as **probiotics**. Probiotics have been shown to lower blood pressure, fight GI disorders (irritable bowel, Crohn’s, and ulcerative colitis), reduce inflammation, lower bladder cancer risk, help manage diabetes, and support healthy body weight. If you are interested in increasing fermented foods in your diet, shop the refrigerated section at the grocery store and look for the words ‘naturally fermented’ on the label.

### Fermented foods with great health benefits

**Yogurt rich in probiotics.** eating yogurt with multiple strains of bacteria and yeast can help with digestion and keep all your numbers in line: blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol.

**Kimchi.** a spicy pickled cabbage with many health benefits from improving digestion, to strengthening the immune system, to reducing your risk for heart disease and stroke.

**Kombucha.** a fermented tea that is low in calories and sugar. Kombucha is a probiotic, but also is chock full of powerful antioxidants called **Polyphenols**, that decrease inflammation in the body. (Warning: kombucha does contain traces of alcohol due to the fermentation process)



### Forearm Stretch

Extend arm, palm facing up. With opposite hand, gently bend fingers down until stretch is felt. Hold for a count of 6 -10 with each arm. If you have carpal tunnel, use caution.

*Regular movement is fundamental to good health. Moving or changing postures every 30 minutes is recommended.*

### Challenge of the Month:



Try to introduce three gut-healthy foods into your diet such as kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, or yogurt within the next 30 days.

## MIND MATTERS

### the power of peace and QUIET

**T**hink about all the sounds you hear throughout your day from vehicles, airplanes, construction workers, TVs and devices, to people talking. **NOISE** is sound that you don't necessarily want to hear that is distracting and disruptive. Noise sends electrical signals to your brain and activates the body's stress response. Constant noise at work, home, and in your community can lead to elevated stress hormones, disrupt sleep, and can even increase blood pressure. **Finding peace and quiet is very important to your mental wellbeing.** A little quiet each day not only reduces stress but can improve cognition, especially memory and learning.



### Creating Peace and Quiet:

#### Find A Quiet Space

- Set fair expectations with housemates or coworkers. Let them know that you would like alone time to focus. Give them a reasonable time when they can approach you again.
- Utilize quiet spaces outside your home/office. Public libraries may have private meeting rooms you can reserve. Explore local parks to find less trafficked areas.

#### Quiet Distractions

- Silence your devices (phone, tablet, computer, watch) and place them out of eyesight.
- Use ear plugs or noise canceling headphones with calm music. Search for ambient, instrumental, or nature sound playlists. ♦