



# A Healthy You

Travel | Sleep | Exercise | Skin care | Healthy aging

**Independence**   
Age Fearless



# Welcome to *A Healthy You!*

The choices you make every day play an important role in your health and well-being — and an *A Healthy You* guide from Independence Blue Cross (IBX) can help make those decisions easier.

Want to learn more? Visit [ibx.com/good-living/age-fearless](https://ibx.com/good-living/age-fearless).

If you or a loved one is a Medicare beneficiary, visit [ibx.com/medicare](https://ibx.com/medicare).

---

## What's inside

Travel .....	3
Sleep .....	5
Exercise.....	9
Skin care.....	13
Healthy aging.....	15
Recipes.....	19

---



## 8 simple steps for a safer trip

### Protect yourself from illness and injury so you can focus on fun

Whether you're driving to another state for a long weekend or planning an international vacation, staying healthy while you travel is key for a pleasant trip. Follow these steps to avoid illness and injury while you're away.

#### 1. Know before you go

Check out what's happening at your destination. Have there been disease outbreaks? Will you be traveling during a time of bad weather like hurricane season? Are there any safety concerns for the area? Before going abroad, view the latest alerts at [cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel).

#### 2. See your doctor if needed

If you have recently had surgery or have a health condition like diabetes, ask your doctor if travel is safe for you. If you're going to another country, get a pretravel health check four to six weeks before your trip. Your doctor will make sure you are up to date on routine vaccinations like MMR and get any recommended vaccinations for yellow fever, typhoid, or other diseases.

#### 3. Stock up on medications

Whether you'll be gone a couple of days or a month, pack an extra week's worth of prescription medications, says Jennifer Hamilton, MD, PhD, an assistant professor at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. Take all prescription medications in their original bottles. You may also want to bring over-the-counter drugs for allergies, pain, or motion sickness, if they're not restricted. Store any medications and health documents in your carry-on luggage for easy access.

#### 4. Wash your hands often

Travel usually means crowded areas and plenty of germs. To minimize the risk of illness, maximize your hygiene efforts. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often, especially before eating and after using the restroom. For extra protection, double up by washing your hands and then using hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

**Bonus:** If you have alcohol-based wipes, take a swipe at seatback trays and armrests before using them.

#### 5. Stay hydrated

"Dehydration wears away at your immunity and makes it easier to get infections," Dr. Hamilton says. "It can also cause headaches." Keep in mind that both caffeine and alcohol dehydrate you. Drink water regularly while you travel to prevent dehydration. Bring or buy a bottle of water and keep it handy.

#### 6. Move your body

Long periods of sitting can cause tight muscles and stiff joints. For people who smoke or have heart disease, it can also lead to something more serious. "If you're not moving every hour or two, you could be setting yourself up for blood clots in your legs," Dr. Hamilton says. Try this to keep your blood flowing: In a seated position, tighten and relax your leg muscles. If you're in a car, walk around at rest stops. If you're on a plane, stand up to stretch when you can. When you arrive at your destination, do some gentle stretches.

#### 7. Tweak healthy habits

Don't let the vacation mindset lead to vacation pounds, Dr. Hamilton says. Aim for balance. Indulge your taste buds but stick to healthy portions. Pack sneakers and explore the city on foot.

#### 8. Make time for rest

You'll have more fun if you're not exhausted the whole time. Do your best not to skimp on sleep. If you're on a longer trip, plan a night you'll go to bed early or a morning you'll sleep in.

Source: [getgoodliving.com/article/healthy-living/8-simple-steps-safer-trip](https://www.getgoodliving.com/article/healthy-living/8-simple-steps-safer-trip)



## Prepare yourself for sleep tonight

### Simple strategies that can help you get the rest you need

If you can't remember the last time you got a good night's sleep, you're in good company. Nearly 70 million Americans say they have sleep problems. Fortunately, making a few adjustments to your daily routine can help. Here are seven things you can try. They've worked for other people who couldn't doze off.

### Eat this salad for dinner

Toss spinach or lettuce with asparagus, broccoli, zucchini, walnuts, mushrooms, and sesame seeds. Top with low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese. These foods are all high in tryptophan. That's an amino acid that researchers think causes sleepiness by raising the body's levels of serotonin, a chemical that induces relaxation.

### Have fruit before bed

Eating a big dinner or a big snack before bed will keep you awake but snacking on a small bit of fruit can have the opposite effect. Eating some pineapple, tart cherries, or a banana will increase your levels of the hormone melatonin, which can help you fall asleep faster. Bananas also contain magnesium and potassium, which relax your muscles.

### Change your sheets often

Three out of four people say they get a better night's sleep on sheets with a fresh scent, according to a recent poll by the National Sleep Foundation. Wash sheets in hot water once a week and blankets regularly to help reduce dust mites, especially if you have asthma or allergy symptoms.

### Sleep like a bat

Experts say the ideal bedroom temperature for sleeping is between 60° F and 72° F. A slightly cool room contributes to good sleep because it mimics the body's internal nighttime temperature drop. Think cool and dark. That's how bats like it, and they sleep about 16 hours a day. What's most important, though, is finding a temperature that's comfortable for you.

### Wear socks

When your feet and hands are warmer than the air in your bedroom, you're more likely to doze off. Researchers in Switzerland found that warmth increases blood flow to feet and hands, and that in turn brings on sleepiness. Poor blood flow is suspected to be a major cause of sleeplessness in older adults.

### Let go of your worries

As the day's problems come barreling into your bed at night, do you find yourself too worked up to doze off? A few hours before bedtime, make a list of what's worrying you. Stephanie Silberman, PhD, author of *The Insomnia Workbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Getting the Sleep You Need*, suggests asking yourself, "What are the things that come to mind when I'm lying in bed at night?" Jot them down along with possible solutions. Then, if a worrying thought pops into your head on the pillow, you can tell yourself you've dealt with that issue. Silberman says that should create a sense of relief and help you relax.

### Get up

If you're still wide awake after 20 minutes in bed, get out of bed. Do something quiet and relaxing, like reading or taking a warm, not hot, bath. If this goes on night after night, try learning a few simple yoga poses or meditating. Talk to your doctor if you think lack of sleep is hurting your health.

Source: [getgoodliving.com/article/health/prepare-yourself-sleep-tonight](https://www.getgoodliving.com/article/health/prepare-yourself-sleep-tonight)



## Is it healthy to take a nap?

If you get a healthy amount of sleep (seven to eight hours for the average adult) during the night but start to fade during the day, a nap might be for you. “The body has peaks and valleys of energy during the day, and often when people would reach for a cup of coffee, that would be a time during the day when a nap would be more productive,” says Janet K. Kennedy, PhD, clinical psychologist and founder of NYC Sleep Doctor. Think of naps as a caffeine-free way to energize and refocus.

### Who shouldn't be napping

Unfortunately, naps can't compensate for a full, healthy night of sleep. “The most important sleep you get is the consolidated sleep at night, and if you are having difficulties and are overcome with fatigue during the day, carrying that fatigue [into bedtime] will help more than a nap,” she says. If you suffer from insomnia and restless nights, napping could in fact drive you further into the tiresome valley of sleep deprivation by tricking your body into thinking it doesn't need a full night of rest.

### How to be a good napper

Follow Kennedy's napping rules for the most effective break:

- **Keep it short.** 20 – 30 minutes is ideal for a power nap.
- **Keep it early.** Don't try napping too close to your normal bedtime. Finish all naps before 2:30 p.m.
- **Keep it relaxing.** There's nothing worse than settling down for a nap, only to toss and turn. Set an alarm so that you won't be worried about whether you'll wake up.

Most important, however, no nap should be a forced nap. “Some people are good nappers, and some people are bad nappers,” Kennedy says. If you find yourself unable to feel awake or feel groggy after a nap than you did before, a midday snooze may not be the thing for you.

## Eat for energy

The following sample menu is designed to give you steady energy all day and promote sound sleep at night.

- **Breakfast:** Omelet with 1 egg yolk, 4 egg whites, and whatever vegetables you have with 1 slice of whole-grain toast OR peanut butter on whole-wheat toast with a glass of low-fat milk.
- **Morning snack:** 6 ounces Greek yogurt, any kind of fruit, 2 tablespoons of nuts OR 1 slice cheese and 3 whole-grain crackers.
- **Lunch:** Large salad with grilled chicken breast, avocado, garbanzo beans, tomato, pepper, onion, 2 teaspoons of olive oil plus vinegar OR tuna on a whole-wheat English muffin with fruit.
- **Afternoon snack:** 1/4 cup almonds and 1 piece of fruit OR 1 cup veggies dipped in 3 tablespoons hummus or black bean dip.
- **Dinner:** Grilled salmon with vegetables and a baked sweet potato OR a big salad with avocado, chicken or turkey breast, and a whole-grain roll.
- **Afternoon or evening snack:** 1 graham cracker and a glass of fat-free milk OR 18 pretzels OR 3 cups of popcorn.

Source: [getgoodliving.com/article/healthy-living/your-secret-all-day-energy](https://getgoodliving.com/article/healthy-living/your-secret-all-day-energy)



## Getting fit and connecting through community

**Learn how your fitness benefit through One Pass can help you improve your physical, social, and mental fitness.**

At IBX, we are committed to helping our members achieve their health and wellness goals. And your One Pass fitness benefit can help with that! When discussing what it means to be “fit,” it’s easy to focus only on exercising and fostering healthy eating habits. What most people don’t know is that improving your social and mental fitness is just as important as your physical journey.

We saw this firsthand at a recent event IBX hosted with One Pass at the Haverford Area YMCA. The event highlighted the importance of all three aspects of fitness: Staying physically fit, fostering social connections, and exercising your brain. Members had the opportunity to see how they can use their One Pass benefit to create a fitness experience that’s all their own — one that meets their individual goals and connects them to others in their communities. Members have access to all local YMCAs and many other local gyms through the One Pass fitness network.

Let’s take a closer look at the event to see how it promoted creating a comprehensive fitness journey to members in attendance — and how you can do the same.

### Physical fitness

Improving and maintaining your physical fitness is central to good health. Members at the event could participate in senior-focused group exercise classes: A tai chi session, a chair yoga routine, and a live pickleball demonstration and activity session where members could try the sport.

There are so many ways to achieve physical fitness. Whether you enjoy a solo workout at the gym, online or in-person exercise classes, or a walk through the park, you can get stronger and healthier each day.

### Social fitness

Members at the event worked on their social fitness without even knowing it. They engaged with each other and created a shared experience. This type of fitness focuses on making changes to your social habits, like how and when you interact with others. Pushing yourself to explore new ways of staying connected can help you combat feelings of stress and loneliness. Plus, it can help you feel better overall.

Now that in-person events have returned, fostering your social fitness is becoming easier. And after the last few years where many felt socially distant and isolated, it’s more important than ever to reach out. Stephanie Alloway, director of group exercise and wellness at the Haverford Area YMCA, said, “Socialization is just as important as the exercise. It makes you feel you belong and gives you access to a community of great people.”

### Mental fitness

Members explored different aspects of mental fitness during the One Pass event. They learned about and practiced mindfulness during tai chi and chair yoga sessions. These sessions also helped them reduce feelings of stress.

They also had the opportunity to learn about BrainHQ. This online brain-training program, which is another benefit available through One Pass, helps strengthen cognitive function, including brain speed, attention span, and memory.

The wonderful thing about creating a fitness journey is that it’s unique to you. Something that may work for others may not be a good fit for you — and that’s all right! Your One Pass fitness benefit gives you the flexibility to fully explore fitness, including the physical, social, and mental aspects. And if you’re enjoying your journey, that’s a win.

### Finding your fit

Here are some of the benefits that come with your no-cost One Pass membership, including at-home options:

- Access to a national fitness network, including all local YMCAs, boutique studios, yoga, Pilates, spinning studios, and more
- A home fitness kit with tools like weights — ideal if you prefer to work out at home
- Virtual or in-person community fitness activities
- Access to a complete online brain workout, including an initial cognitive test and a brain training program
- Thousands of on-demand and livestreaming digital fitness classes

To get started, visit [youronepass.com](https://youronepass.com) or call One Pass at **1-877-504-6830** (TTY/TDD: 711).

One Pass is a voluntary program offered by an independent company. The One Pass program varies by plan/area. Information provided is not medical advice. Consult a health care professional before beginning any exercise program. Source: [getgoodliving.com/good-living/article/lifestyle/getting-fit-connecting-through-community](https://getgoodliving.com/good-living/article/lifestyle/getting-fit-connecting-through-community)



## 6 reasons to go to the gym today

### No excuses! Let these reasons motivate you to get moving.

1. Regular exercise can help you manage your weight and prevent weight gain.
2. Being active can help lower your risks of conditions like high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, and certain types of cancer.
3. Physical activity helps to keep the brain engaged and reduces the risk of Alzheimer's disease and memory loss.
4. Exercise helps carry oxygen and nutrients to your tissues, which can make you feel more energetic.
5. You're likely to sleep better after being active during the day.
6. Your body in motion releases "feel-good" chemicals that help to boost your mood and reduce anxiety.

Source: [good-living/article/fitness/6-reasons-go-gym-today](https://www.good-living.com/article/fitness/6-reasons-go-gym-today)





## Lay it on thick... with sunscreen

A shot glass.

We can all picture what this looks like, right? One of the little glasses bartenders use to measure alcohol.

A shot glass is the same as one ounce — and according to the experts at the American Academy of Dermatology, one ounce is the correct amount of sunscreen we need to use to protect ourselves from the damaging effects of the sun.

If the one-ounce thing was as much of a surprise to you as it was to me, here's a little cheat sheet of a few other things you might not know about when and how to apply sunscreen.

### 5 ways to apply sunscreen more effectively

- **Think ahead.** The UV filters in sunscreen need 20 – 30 minutes to soak into your skin and form a protective barrier. If you're exposed to the sun sooner than that, it's like you aren't wearing sunscreen at all. If you're going to the pool or beach, apply sunscreen before you leave the house. You can even do it in the buff, which eliminates the hassle with suit straps, etc.
- **Don't skimp.** Keep in mind that your sunscreen's SPF makes no difference to the amount you should be using for adequate coverage.

- **Remember the easy-to-miss places:**

- Ears
- Lips
- Around the eyes (easy to forget if you're wearing sunglasses)
- Tops of the feet
- Behind the knees
- In and around the armpits
- Under swimsuit straps
- Exposed parts of your scalp, like where you part your hair

- **Reapply periodically.** Unfortunately, it's not a one-and-done situation. Been swimming or splashing around? Reapply. Been sweating? Reapply. Been out for more than a couple of hours? You know the drill. Do it regardless of the SPF you're using.

- **Get help.** Enlist a friend to help you cover those hard-to-reach places. Like where your muscles get tight across the shoulder girdle.

### Brush up on your summer skin-care smarts

Wearing sunscreen is just the start of a healthy skin-care routine. Consider these tips to help protect your skin all summer long.



**Moisturize.** Aging skin can be prone to dryness. Use a mild soap, shower less often, and moisturize every day to help preserve your skin's moisture. Also, consider using a humidifier to add moisture to the air.



**Drink water.** In warm weather, you may lose more water than you realize. Sip water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Water-rich foods, like fruits and vegetables, can also help you stay hydrated.



**Wear hats.** Hats are an excellent way to protect your face and scalp — especially if you have light-colored hair or only distant memories of a full head of hair.



**Use bug spray.** If you spend a lot of time outdoors (especially at night), use insect repellent to help reduce the risk of getting mosquito bites.



## Secrets to healthy aging

### These three habits can help you stay healthier later in life

As we grow older, our habits and routines become ever more important to our overall health. Some of the things we did in our younger days may no longer sit well with our bodies, so it's important to tune in to your physical being and adjust your routines accordingly. Here are three key ways to ease into your golden years with stamina and strength so you can continue to live well.



### 1. Eat well to sleep well

Catching enough z's is harder in our later years—but letting your body cycle through deep rest cycles is key to your overall health. "Hormonal changes can wreak havoc on sleep for both men and women as we age," says Beth Misner, certified sports nutritionist and co-author of *Healing Begins in the Kitchen*. That's why Misner says it's key to avoid foods with added hormones and to eat a natural, balanced diet of organic fruits and vegetables (to avoid pesticides), as well as local organic meats (to avoid products from industrially farmed animals). In addition to keeping an eye on hormone disruptors, regulating melatonin production is another vital aspect of getting healthy sleep. "As the sun goes down, switching to yellow and orange color bandwidth lighting and using blue-light filters on computers and mobile devices can help preserve healthy melatonin levels," says Misner. "That leads to better sleep and aids with longevity."



### 2. Exercise (you knew that was on the list)

There's no magic youth pill — yet. But nothing comes closer to stopping the aging process than regular high levels of exercise. New research from Brigham Young University (BYU) indicates that getting to the gym may slow the aging process that's happening inside your cells. "We all know people that seem younger than their actual age," says exercise science professor Larry Tucker, who worked on the study. "The more physically active we are, the less biological aging takes place in our bodies."



### 3. Adopt a Pet

Having a pet in your later years doesn't just keep loneliness at bay, it also helps you stay healthy. "The connection shared between pets and the elderly lowers stress and keeps people more active and alert," says Misner. "Research has shown that even petting a dog can lower blood pressure and heart rates." If you cannot care for a pet, you can still benefit from the positive impact an animal can have. Most shelters welcome volunteers to walk dogs, and some even have hours when you can come and pet the cats who love to sit in people's laps. Purrfect!

Source: [getgoodliving.com/article/healthy-living/secrets-healthy-aging](https://getgoodliving.com/article/healthy-living/secrets-healthy-aging)

## Stay connected

Taking part in social activities is good for your mental and physical well-being, but it's not always easy to do. Think about what makes it difficult for you to stay social or make new connections. There may be a simple solution.

If you	Try this
<p><b>Don't know where to begin</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for activities that match your interests, like lectures, cooking classes, game nights, or sports leagues.</li> </ul> <p>The following websites are a great place to start:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Find your town's center online at <a href="http://aging.pa.gov">aging.pa.gov</a></li> <li>– Search for upcoming events in Philadelphia at <a href="http://uwishunu.com">uwishunu.com</a></li> <li>– Browse Independence LIVE's health and wellness classes at <a href="http://events.ibx.com/events">events.ibx.com/events</a></li> <li>– Check out Philadelphia Parks &amp; Recreation programs for older adults at <a href="http://phila.gov/the-latest">phila.gov/the-latest</a></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider online dating — It has proven successful for many older adults. There are several websites designed just for "mature singles." You can read self-descriptions of others in your age range, then send a message to spark up a conversation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feel best in a group</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check the bulletin board at your library, senior center, or grocery store for notices about group trips. You're likely to find outings to ball games, museums, outlet stores, concerts, and local gems you may not have visited in a while, like Longwood Gardens or The Franklin Institute.</li> <li>At free sites like <a href="http://meetup.com">meetup.com</a>, you can browse through activity groups in your area that match your interests — from Phillies fans to lovers of mystery fiction.</li> </ul>

## The key to healthy connections: Go at your own pace

Taking part in activities should be fun, not stressful. It's OK to ease into socializing.

If you	Try this
<p><b>Want a situation that doesn't feel forced</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer at a museum, hospital, animal shelter, or homeless center.</li> <li>Sign up for a class at a local college. You'll focus on learning but be surrounded by people with similar interests.</li> <li>Travel. Look for trips designed for solo travelers who are like-minded. Classic rock cruise, anyone?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feel shy and awkward</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take small steps. Try going out alone, even if for just a little while.</li> <li>Go to a movie or a free lecture. This gets you out of the house. You never know: Someone sitting near you may break the ice.</li> <li>Consider joining a group that takes trips to galleries, sports events, historic locations, or the theater where the focus is more on the place or event.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Have limited mobility</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If your mobility is limited, pick up the phone. Call a friend or relative you haven't spoken to in a while. Have a computer or a smartphone? With services such as Skype and FaceTime, you can make video calls like the Jetsons.</li> </ul>

Source: [getgoodliving.com/article/stay-connected](http://getgoodliving.com/article/stay-connected)



## Carrot cake muffins

Servings: 16

### Ingredients

- 1 1/3 cups whole grain flour
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp fine-grain sea salt
- 1 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 2/3 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/3 cup coconut sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/2 Tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 cups carrots, peeled and shredded

### Directions

1. Start with room-temperature ingredients. Preheat oven to 350F (you can soak eggs in room-temp water for 10 minutes if you forgot to take them out).
2. Insert liners into muffin tin.
3. In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and cloves. TIP: When measuring flour, use a spoon to scoop flour and pour into a measuring device, then level off to ensure you don't use too much flour.
4. In a separate large mixing bowl, use hand mixers to beat together sugars and eggs until combined.
5. Mix in applesauce and vanilla extract. With mixer running on low speed, slowly pour in vegetable oil and mix until combined.
5. Mix in applesauce and vanilla extract. With mixer running on low speed, slowly pour in vegetable oil and mix until combined.
6. Mix in applesauce and vanilla extract. With mixer running on low speed, slowly pour in vegetable oil and mix until combined.
6. Finely shred the carrots (on the small side of your grater) and measure to ensure you have 1 and 1/2 cups.
7. Add the dry ingredients right on top of the wet ingredients, and the shredded carrots right on top of that. Stir until JUST combined, being careful to not over-mix.
8. Pour mixture into muffin cups so they're 3/4 full, bake 18 – 22 minutes, or until toothpick comes up clean.
9. Place on wire rack until completely cool.
10. If desired, make cream cheese icing.

Source: <https://getgoodliving.com/good-living/recipe/snack/carrot-cake-muffins>



## Green-berry smoothie

Servings: 1

### Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 1 cup frozen strawberries
- 1 tsp mint, chopped
- 1/2 tsp zested ginger
- Pinch of salt
- Stalks of celery
- 1/4 cup peeled cucumber, chopped

### Directions

- 1.** Pre-cut and make ready-to-go bags for easy making! Freeze fruit and no ice is needed!
- 2.** Add greens, fruit, herbs, spices and powders first, then add liquid.
- 3.** Blend until smooth and enjoy!  
Freeze or refrigerate extra for later!

Source: <https://getgoodliving.com/good-living/recipe/drinks/green-berry-smoothie>



Content provided by Linkwell Health.

Information here is provided for informational purposes and is not meant to substitute for the advice provided by your own physician or other medical professional. You should not use the information for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease or prescribing any medication. If you have, or suspect that you have, a medical problem, promptly contact your health care provider.

Independence Blue Cross offers products through its subsidiaries Independence Assurance Company, Independence Hospital Indemnity Plan, Keystone Health Plan East and QCC Insurance Company — independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Independence Blue Cross complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-275-2583 (TTY/TDD: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-800-275-2583 (TTY/TDD: 711)。

