



Dr Chatterjee's

4 PILLARS OF GOOD HEALTH

We live in a world of sensationalist media headlines. Trust me, you're not the only one that finds them confusing. One week, fat is bad, the next week fat is good. One "expert" says you only need 6 hours of sleep a night, another says you must get 9.

How do you navigate all of this conflicting information and decide what will help increase your energy, keep you healthy, and recover from illness?

Take control & simplify

I can help you. Making healthy choices doesn't have to be so confusing.

You can take control of your health by simplifying your approach. I want you to experience optimal health so you can feel great and be confident in the choices you make to take care of yourself and your family.

Achieving and maintaining health is not a passive activity. As the patient, you need to be involved. But, to be involved in managing your health, you need to understand where to focus your attention.

The keys to good health

After 14 years practising medicine, I believe a new approach to achieving and maintaining health is necessary. Rather than suppressing symptoms, I focus on finding the root cause of disease.

I believe that lifestyle and nutrition are the keys to good health. I want to help people like you take control of your health and simplify your approach to making healthy choices.

These are the four pillars of good health that I discuss in this ebook:

1. Eat well
2. Move well
3. Sleep well
4. Relax well

Making changes in these areas is simple, but not easy.

You may even think this short list is obvious. But, are you currently being intentional to take care of yourself in these areas? Do you spend most of your day sitting? Do you know how crucial it is to your health to make time to relax?

Knowledge is power

You can't control what other people eat around you, or what advertisements you see on the street, but you can change the environment in your home. You can change your own nutritional habits and lifestyle - if you know what changes will actually make a difference.

One of my core beliefs when it comes to health is that there are no specific rules that apply to all people, all the time.

Any advice needs to bear in mind each person's specific goals as well as their current health status. The details of how you implement these four pillars may look different than your neighbour, but focusing on improving these areas will benefit anyone.

EAT WELL



I don't believe there is one "perfect" diet for everyone. We are all different. Some people thrive on Vegan diets, some on Mediterranean diets, and others on a Paleo or hunter-gatherer diet.

However, there are some key principles that I think will benefit you no matter what your dietary inclination:

1. Food should be in its original, unprocessed whole food form as much as possible.
2. Liquid calories (e.g. juices and soft drinks) are a big source of health problems – try and stick to water, tea and coffee wherever possible and, maybe, the occasional glass of wine!
3. Do not be afraid of good quality, healthy fat. Make sure that your daily diet includes good amounts of foods such as avocados, olives, nuts, fatty fish (sardines, anchovies, wild salmon), eggs, and good quality meat (meat that actually still looks like meat!)
4. Try and eat at least five different coloured vegetables every day. The wider the range of colours, the more phytonutrients you will be getting. Phytonutrients are plant based compounds that benefit your health. Eat fruit as well if you wish, but make sure you are getting at least five portions of vegetables.
5. Choose low glycemic food as much as possible (i.e. food that does not significantly raise your blood sugar). This means foods that are low in sugar, flour and processed carbohydrates such as pasta. Remember, if you have diabetes or significant abdominal obesity your body cannot easily handle foods that are sometimes considered healthy, such as white rice or even whole grain flour.

MOVE WELL



Daily movement is critical to good health. You definitely don't need to sign up to an expensive gym to achieve this. Movement is best when incorporated into your daily routine. Try these tips:

1. Always take the stairs.
2. Try and get up and move at least once every 30 minutes. It may simply be a short walk to the office kitchen to put on the kettle. Maybe you just stand up and stretch at your desk. Do something that forces you to change your position regularly, throughout the day and it will benefit your body. It can be helpful to set an alarm on your phone to help with this.
3. Consider wearing a pedometer or using an app to track your steps. You should set a goal of 10,000 steps minimum, every single day – no excuses!
4. Focus on small amounts of movement regularly, rather than only an intense one-hour workout a few times per week. It's great if you're already in the habit of doing a gym workout, but remember this does not undo the negatives of sitting in a chair all day.
5. Good, quality movement can happen even when you only have a few minutes. Try doing some bodyweight squats, lunges and dips in the kitchen while your food is cooking. Keep your eye out for other opportunities when you are waiting for a few minutes and can get your body moving.

SLEEP WELL



Lack of sleep is a true modern epidemic. In the past, when the sun went down, we started to wind down and go to bed. These days we have artificial light that allows e-mails, TV, smartphones and social media to compete for our attention and time.

Different people require different amounts of sleep to optimise their health. However, a good tip is to aim for 7-8 hours of good quality sleep every night. You should wake up feeling refreshed.

My four big tips for this are:

1. Maintain regular sleep and wake times where possible, even on weekends.
2. Switch off ALL smartphones, computers and tablets at least 2 hours before bed. The only exception is if you're using a smartphone app to meditate. If you are going to watch television, make sure it is something relaxing.
3. Do not consume caffeine after noon. Many people can still feel the stimulatory effects of a caffeinated beverage they had in the morning while lying in bed at night. Everyone metabolises caffeine differently, but this rule of thumb can be beneficial to all.
4. Try and expose yourself to sunlight first thing in the morning. Even if it is overcast, natural light can help reinforce the body's natural sleep/wake cycle.

RELAX WELL



One area that often gets missed when people think about good health is the importance of relaxation and de-stressing.

Modern life is inherently stressful. Most of my patients are suffering from some form of chronic stress, which both causes and perpetuates many different health problems. You should:

1. Get outdoors as much as you can. Research has shown that time spent in a natural environment with fresh air out in the fresh air and a natural environment is associated with benefits to one's physical and mental wellbeing.
2. Intentionally schedule time for yourself every day. Whether that means sitting in a coffee shop, relaxing with a book, or taking a few minutes just to sit and stare out the window several times throughout the day. If you feel like your life is too busy to take these kinds of breaks, that's a definite sign that you need it!
3. Consider finding a relaxation activity you can regularly do such as yoga, deep breathing, or meditation. Plan to meet a friend at a class or use a phone app to help you. These activities can provide an antidote to the stresses of modern life. I find that this is one of the hardest things to persuade people to do as they feel they are not actually "doing" anything. I challenge you to try it for a few weeks and see how it makes you feel.

It's my hope that these suggestions help you feel empowered to improve your health and well-being through simple lifestyle changes. I plan to continue writing more on these subjects on my blog, and I'd like to hear what you're working on or struggling with so I can do my best to help.

It can often help to start making these types of changes with someone else. Consider asking a friend, neighbour, or work colleague if they want to start focusing on these four pillars as well. You can check in with each other to see how it's going and support each other as you make positive changes.

Do you know someone who would benefit from this simple, yet effective approach to a healthy life? [Share this free ebook](#) with them via email.

You can also [click here](#) to quickly share on Facebook.

Wishing you the best of health,

Dr. Chatterjee



P.S. [Connect with me on Twitter](#) and let me know what you're going to do this week to eat well, move well, sleep well and rest well!



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