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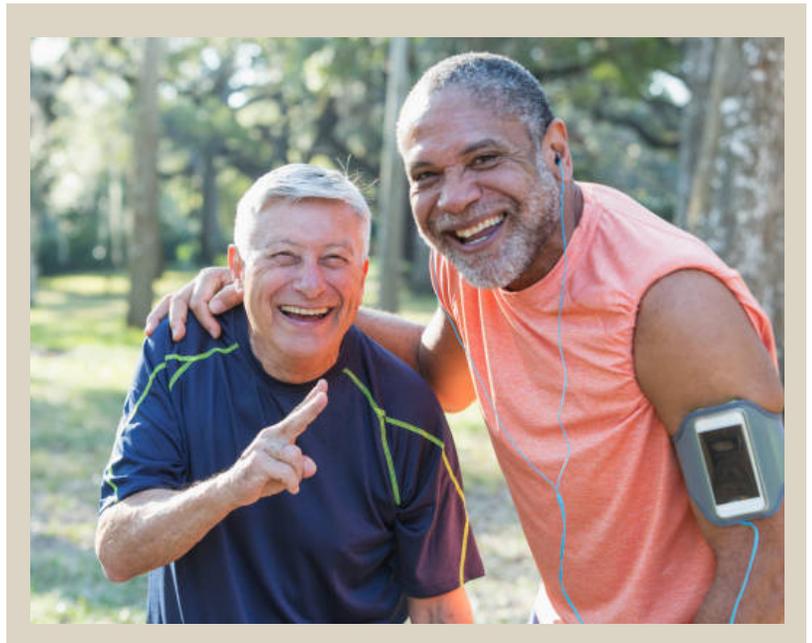
November 6, 2019

# Wellness Wednesday

## How To Support A Loved One Who's Trying To Be Healthier

You want the people you love — be it your partner, your friends or your family — to live long, healthy and fulfilling lives. When a person you care about tells you they're ready to make some positive health-related changes, you may be so eager to help that you bombard them with your well-intentioned advice: Eat this, read that, start this new workout routine ASAP.

Telling them what they "should" do isn't the most effective route. However, you can be a loving and encouraging force as they navigate these changes for themselves. And don't underestimate the importance of your support in helping them achieve their wellness goals. In fact, research has shown that people with strong support systems are often more successful at sticking to their healthy habits.



Below, we asked a few experts to share their do's and don'ts for supporting a loved one's commitment to a healthier, happier way of living.

### What You Can Do To Help

Just as there's no single path to "getting healthy," there's no one right way to help a person you love achieve their goals. But these expert-backed tips are a good place to start. Ask your loved one why they want to get healthy in the first place. Don't assume their reasons for making these changes will align with your own.

"This will help you to understand their goals and make sure you aren't projecting your idea of health onto your loved one," Torri Efron, a marriage and family therapist who specializes in eating disorders, said. "You might want to ask what getting healthier means to them, what their definition of good health is and how will they know when they get there." Help them set and track goals that aren't solely tied to a number on the scale.

Diet culture can be toxic and pervasive, sending the message that our weight, as well as the size and shape of our bodies, dictates our self-worth. It tells us that thin is "good" and fat is "bad," and that thin people must be healthy and fat people must be unhealthy — when that's just not so.

"Remember that weight is not the only indicator of health," Efron said. "Health can be at any size." Together, come up with some goals that go beyond weight loss, calories eaten and calories burned. Perhaps: "I want to run a 5K this fall," "I want to have enough energy to play with the kids after work," or, "I want to cook dinner at home

three nights a week.” Consider also incorporating goals that don’t involve food or exercise at all, Efron suggested, such as starting a gratitude journal or reciting positive affirmations — both of which have mental health benefits.

## **Ask what they need from you to make this happen**

You might think your friend wants you to flood their email inbox with vegetarian recipe suggestions, when in reality, they’re just looking for a buddy to go hiking with on weekends. Instead of jumping to conclusions, exercise physiologist and Running Strong coach Janet Hamilton offered this simple piece of advice: “Ask your family member or friend, ‘What can I do to support you in your goals?’ Then be silent and listen.”

## **Offer to help with meal-planning and cooking**

It’s easier to make healthy choices when you open the fridge and you have nutritious options within reach. But planning out your meals for the week, grocery shopping and preparing the food require time and effort. “One of the biggest hurdles with meal prep and healthy eating is with the convenience and time factor when you’re trying to fit everything into busy schedules,” said McKel Kooienga, a registered dietician and founder of the site Nutrition Stripped. “Meal prep is a true lifesaver because it helps you keep healthy foods available for meals, snacking and whenever the cravings hit.” Text your loved one to see if they could use any help in this department — another set of hands in the kitchen can streamline the process. Plus, it’s more fun than doing it all solo.

## **Compliment your partner’s progress without focusing on their appearance**

“Saying things that call attention to their appearance or weight, even if you’re trying to compliment them, may be misconstrued,” Hamilton said. Instead, Efron suggested praising them in other ways like, “I’m so impressed by your dedication to your health,” or, “I’m loving how much energy you have lately.”

## **See if they want a workout buddy**

It’s not hard to ditch a morning workout when you’d much rather sleep in, or skip an evening session when you’re feeling blah after work. But you’re more likely to stick to the routine when you know a loved one is counting on you. Plus, exercising together can be a bonding activity, an opportunity for the two of you to spend time together and catch up.

“If they’re not familiar with exercise and you are — offer to help them learn,” Hamilton said. “If you’re working out in a fitness facility, they may not know how to use the machines.” Be sure to go at their pace. Don’t push them to keep up with you, as it could lead to an injury. “Keep in mind that if they’re new to exercise, you should let them lead the way, not only in terms of intensity or duration but also in the choice of exercise they feel inclined to do,” Hamilton said.

## **Expect hiccups along the way — they’re part of the process**

Committing to eating better and working out more regularly does not come without its hurdles — so try to be understanding of that. Remember: This is about progress, not perfection. “Give yourself and your loved ones some flexibility and patience with the change too,” Kooienga said. “It may take many, many small steps, but the key is to remain supportive through small wins and small setbacks to create a sustainable shift.”

## **What to Avoid Doing**

Sometimes, our best attempts to assist a loved one in their health efforts can backfire. The things we do and say to help may actually have the opposite of their intended effect. Here’s what to steer clear of:

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## Don't act as the food or exercise police

In your mind, you're just holding your partner accountable when you say: "Hey, are you really going to eat another cookie?" or "Have you worked out today? Get off the couch and get to a yoga class."

"These statements may seem 'helpful' to you — you're pointing out the error of their ways — but your friend or family member is not likely to see it that way," Hamilton said. Rather than tearing them down for a perceived misstep, "stick to highlighting accomplishments," Efron said.

## Don't label certain foods as "good" or others as "bad"

Sure, a cauliflower rice stir fry is probably going to be more nutritious than, say, a calzone. But labels like "good" and "bad" are moral judgments that don't apply to food, and can lead to feelings of guilt and shame. Same goes for calling yourself "good" or "bad" based on what you did (or did not) consume. In other words, you weren't "bad" yesterday because you ate a brownie after lunch.

"Going to the gym doesn't make you more deserving of food, and sticking to a diet doesn't make you a better person," Efron said. "Support your partner in their goals, but remember this is just one small part of what makes up our lives."

## Don't preach about what they "should" be doing

Remember this is your loved one's health journey — not yours. Instead of trying to school them on what they "should" do, lead by example instead. "For example, being a role model and modeling the behavior your loved one is trying to work on can be a great way to show support without verbally communicating, 'You should do XYZ,' or telling them what to do, even if you feel confident you know the 'right' way to do something."

If your loved one asks for your opinion — e.g., "Should I order this dish or that one?" at a restaurant — give it, but do so without judgment. "Healthy habits are a personal thing and everyone has their own way of doing stuff," Hamilton said. "Your way may not work for them."

## When Changes Are Cause For Concern

Sometimes a person on a health kick may take their good habits too far, venturing into unhealthy and potentially dangerous territory. Keep an eye on your loved one. Notice if they're becoming overly restrictive with their food intake, exercising compulsively or engaging in other disordered behaviors. Efron shared some of the other red flags you may want to look out for. "Take note if your loved one is feeling guilty for eating certain foods or for skipping the gym, or if they are avoiding social functions due to the food being served or worries about their physical appearance," she said.

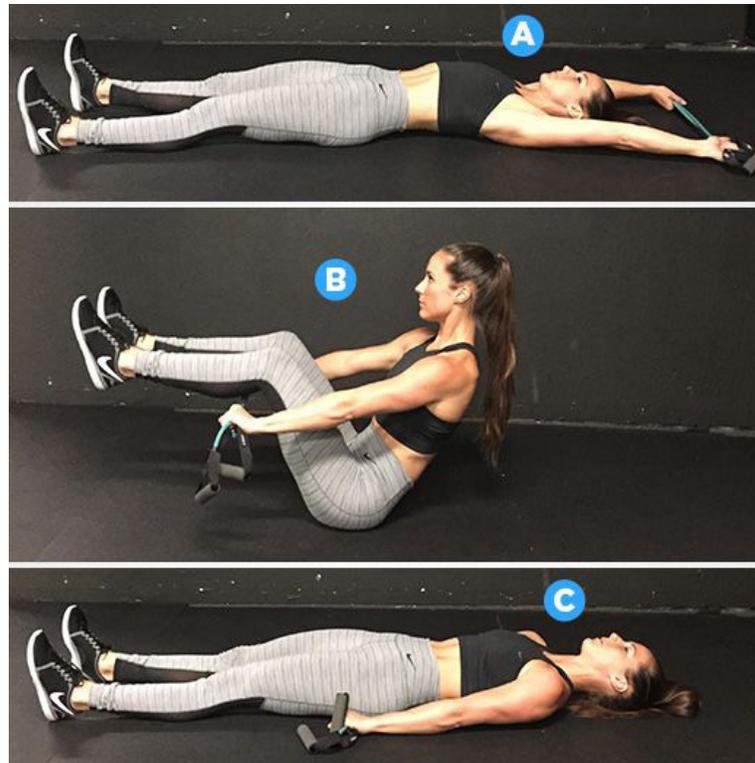
If you are concerned and want to broach the subject with this person, stick to "I" statements that convey your worry, but do not place blame on your loved one. For more information, head to the [National Eating Disorder Association website](#).

Article source: <http://bit.ly/30gr1CA>



# This Week's Exercise

## LOOP THROUGH



### HOW TO DO IT:

1. LIE FLAT ON THE GROUND WITH ARMS EXTENDED OVERHEAD. FOLD THE BAND IN HALF AND HOLD IT WITH BOTH HANDS, PULLING FOR RESISTANCE.
  - (A). LEADING WITH YOUR CHEST, SIT UP, BRINGING YOUR CHEST TOWARDS YOUR KNEES AND HOVING YOUR FEET OFF THE FLOOR. BRING THE BAND OVER YOUR HEAD, PASSING IT OVER YOUR FEET AND UNDER YOUR LEGS.
  - (B). KEEPING THE BAND UNDER YOUR LEGS, LIE BACK DOWN
  - (C). CRUNCH UPWARDS AGAIN, REVERSING THE BAND OVER YOUR LEGS TO RETURN TO STARTING POSITION.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2UtZ8V9>

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

## BURMA SUPERSTAR CHICKEN DAL CURRY



## Ingredients

- 1/2 cup yellow split peas
- 2 1/2 lbs (8) bone-in chicken thighs, skin removed
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 ounce piece ginger
- 2 1/2 cups minced yellow onion
- 1/3 cup minced garlic
- 1 to 3 Thai chiles, optional
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 1/4 cups water
- 1 teaspoon Madras curry
- 1/2 teaspoon Garam Masala
- 1 cup cilantro sprigs for garnish
- 1 lime, cut into wedges for garnish

## Directions

1. Cover the split peas with 1 inch water and soak overnight. Drain the next day. (if you don't get a chance to soak, simmer peas in 2 cups water in a separate pot 20 minutes while the chicken cooks).
2. Season chicken with paprika, turmeric and salt.
3. In a 6-quart pot, heat 2 teaspoons oil over medium-high heat.
4. Add the ginger and cook until browned, 2 minutes.
5. Add the onions and cook, stirring often to prevent scorching until softened, 4 to 5 minutes.
6. Stir in garlic, chiles, bay leaves, decrease heat to medium-low and cook, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and wipe the pot clean.
7. Add the remaining 1 teaspoon olive oil over medium heat.
8. Add the chicken in a single layer and brown on both sides, about 2 to 3 minutes.
9. Return the onion mixture to the pot, add the water and bring to a boil.
10. Lower to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally until the chicken is almost tender, about 25 minutes.
11. Stir in the soaked yellow peas, curry powder and garam masala, cover and cook until the peas are tender, about 45-55 minutes, or longer if needed uncovering the pot the last few minutes if too watery. If too thick, add more water. Remove from heat (if the split peas cooked separately, add them in the last 10 minutes of cooking).
12. Discard the ginger and bay leaves. Adjust salt to taste.
13. Serve with cilantro and lime wedges.

## Nutrition Information

Serving: 2 thighs, 3/4 cup peas  
Calories: 529kcal  
Carbohydrates: 31g  
Protein: 64g  
Fat: 16g  
Saturated Fat: 3.5g  
Cholesterol: 266.5mg  
Sodium: 771mg  
Fiber: 9.5g  
Sugar: 6.5g  
Freestyle Points: 7  
Points +13

Recipe source:

<http://bit.ly/2l8s6WV>