



## 10 Tips for a Healthy Spring

from Elson Haas MD

I live next to an old apple orchard in Sonoma County, California, a region now famous for grapes and wine, but once synonymous with names like Gravenstein and Granny Smith rather than Chardonnay or Pinot Noir. Each April the trees blossom and it is a brief, delightful period when Nature's renewal is manifest. This always encourages me to look for rejuvenation in my own life. Here are my Spring Health Tips.

**1. Become Current in your Life** in this inspiring Spring season. Embrace yourself honestly as you look at all of your habits and areas of your own life. Even with all the worldly concerns, care for yourself and your loved ones. Assess the various aspects of your lifestyle to see where stresses or weaknesses exist with special attention to what I call ***The Five Keys to Staying Healthy*** - your **Nutrition, Exercise, Stress, Sleep and Attitude**. Focus on those areas that need improvement.

**2. Choose Three Habits** that inhabit you and likely undermine your current and future health.

- How and when did these habits begin, and are you ready to let any of them go?

- Which ones are most important for you to change to create a healthier you?
- Do you need help, or can you do this on your own?

Then decide on what you can do for the change you want. Here's my list that I have seen affect my day-to-day health and energy:

- Eat more lightly at night so that I can digest more fully to be ready for sleep.
- Take more time for stretching and yoga.
- Create a nutritional plan with some other medical experts to reverse some plaque build-up I have and to help clear my coronary arteries.

Remember that it's easier to give up old habits if you start something new, like breathing and relaxing more, walking, dancing, romancing, and overall, making more time for health.

**3. Look at your Dietary Choices.** What do you choose to put in that mouth of yours? And what do you fuel your other mouths with; those areas of energy intake, like your eyes, ears, skin, and heart? Write down a few days of your typical diet, then assess it and write a new plan based on your knowledge of what is right for your body. You may also wish to take a break from the TV, news, violent movies, and stressful people while you are purifying your life. It is good to have a reference point by taking a break, even with substances like caffeine and sugar (as outlined in my book, *The Detox Diet*), to see how you feel and assess your level of dependence on your favorite substances. I can assure you that it feels good to release yourself from those habits. Remember, **Better Choices create Better Health!**

**4. Do some Cleansing or a Detox Program** for 1-3 weeks this Spring. This could include juice cleansing, *the Detox Diet*, Nutritional Smoothies, or taking a break from sugar, chocolate, sodas, milk products, wheat, or whatever you believe undermines your health. To do this successfully, it helps to write out a plan and focus more on what you *will* eat and less on what you're not. Make a list of your good foods, shop for them, and have them available whenever you are

hungry. And drink lots of good water. At a minimum, take a break from the **Big Five: Sugar, Caffeine, Alcohol, Wheat and Dairy.**

**5. Now let us look at your Nutritional Supplements.** What are the best ones to use during a detoxification diet? During a food-based Detox Program I suggest a simple age-and gender-appropriate multivitamin/mineral along with additional antioxidants that include Vitamins C and E (mixed natural tocopherols), and selenium as the basic supplement plan. Also helpful for most people are herbs that stimulate bowel function such as aloe vera capsules or ones containing herbs like Cascara sagrada or senna leaf. Blue green algae, like Chlorella or Spirulina, can be used for energy and detox support. I also suggest drinking plenty of water and herbal teas. Calcium and magnesium before bed can help with relaxation and sleep, or a buffered vitamin C formula with those minerals (plus potassium) help to alkalinize and cleanse the body. For sleep support, we can use amino acids 5-HTP (100-200mg) or L-Tryptophan (500-1,000 mg) at bedtime.

**6. Clean and Organize your Home.** Spring is the season for clearing out the old and bringing in the new. I love this feeling of looking at my desk, my closet, and every nook and cranny around my house and office, and wanting to freshen them all. And it is a good way to stay out of the kitchen (which also gets cleaner along with my fridge) and look at other areas of my life. Of course, after all my years of accumulating and with all the communication and medical/health journals I receive, it is harder to handle everything in my life than it was in my earlier years of cleansing. Yet, I do what I can and sometimes have my support team keep moving things forward and recycling what we can. Then, my life feels and looks cleaner and lighter at the end of my Spring Cleaning, and has space for the new to land. What can you do to help clean up your home space and your life?

**7. Get Outdoors and Exercise** — move your Body! Stay Fit and Stay Healthy. *Friluftsliv* is a Norwegian word for healing and de-stressing by going

outdoors and exercising in the free and fresh air. Hike and explore your neighborhood and extended community, or find a place you have heard about and want to visit. I love the lightness and easiness I feel when I am cleansing, and my body feels more flexible and able to do my aerobic exercise. A yoga class is also a good experience for expanding our flexibility. Breathe and relax as well. Play music, dance, and make time for romance. Remember, this is the Spring season!

**8. Next look at your Emotional and Spiritual aspects.** How do you usually feel? Are you low or depressed, or more positive and energetic? Ideally, we can feel a wide range of emotions based on our daily life experience and not dwell on one particular emotion, which is the real problem. I can tell you that many factors ranging from your diet and digestive health to your early childhood behavior patterns influence your mood, energy level, and emotions, and thus your Spiritual Well Being. Embrace the whys of moods and energy levels with greater honesty about your true feelings, which is the beginning of healing feelings. Review your personal relationships and how they affect you and how you affect them. Invite your significant other, friends, or relatives to go along with you on your Spring Cleansing diet for their own good and for mutual support. In my cleanse groups, I find that personal support is extremely valuable for many people to achieve the success they want.

**9. Let's become more Earth-aware and Earth-friendly** as the beauty of Nature's renewal inspires us this season. Be conscious of where things come from and where they go – and the real (often hidden) cost of products you use – such as plastics and chemical products. Re-use and Re-cycle. Support more earth-conscious businesses and products. How do you vote for personal and planetary with your dollar?

**10. Make your Overall Plan and Commitments.** Once you have reviewed the key areas of your life and made your list of some specific changes you want to

make, don't forget the Big Picture. If LOVE moves into all those areas, that's all the better, as you will care for yourself and your life, plus your relationships, in a more positive way. Human love is temporary for many, yet love in the Spirit is everlasting. We are all blessed to share this garden, this Earth, which needs our Love and Protection. We must take the time to Nurture Nature, in order to be Nourished and Flourish in return.

Stay Healthy!

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