

Unexpected ways to be happy (and healthy)

- **It's easy being green.** Make vegetables a central part of your diet. Dark green foods provide essential vitamins and nutrients to your body that protect you from many of life's worst diseases. The FDA recommends 3 to 5 servings a day for pristine health. This is not as hard to accomplish as it sounds. Examples of one serving include 2 broccoli spears, 3 tablespoons of green beans, or 3 sticks of celery.
- **Brush your teeth.** Brushing and flossing your teeth not only prevents tooth decay but gum disease, which has been linked to heart attacks and strokes. Healthy gums are one more way to keep that heart pumping strong.
- **Hear ye, hear ye!** Pick up your local newspaper once in a while. There is more information out there than you can imagine. Sift through the bounty of news because when it comes to your health and health care, no one is more responsible than you are. Take time to understand what's going on in the world.
- **Be a small fry.** Order smaller portions. Even the small fries at fast food drive-throughs.
- **Give yourself a break.** Not only are vacations an important part of maintaining your sanity, but there are many other positives about getting away. Studies have shown that employees come back to work post-vacation more creative and more productive.
- **Scrub a dub dub.** The easiest way to avoid infectious diseases—a common cold, the flu—is by washing your hands often.
- **Then lend a hand.** A study at Vanderbilt University found that volunteer work was good for both mental and physical health. People of all ages who volunteered were happier and had better physical health and less depression. Think about something you like to do in your spare time and find a match at www.volunteermatch.org.

