

7 EASY LIFESTYLE HACKS TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH



Dr. Stephen Sinatra

About Dr. Stephen Sinatra

Dr. Stephen Sinatra is one of the most highly respected and sought-after cardiologists whose integrative approach to treating cardiovascular disease has revitalized patients with even the most advanced forms of illness.

He has more than 40 years of clinical practice, research, and study since starting his career as an attending physician at Manchester Memorial Hospital in Connecticut where he then went on to serve as chief of cardiology, director of medical education, director of echocardiography, director of cardiac rehabilitation and director of the weight-reducing program. Dr. Sinatra is also the founder of the New England Heart Center, where he became known as one of America's top integrative cardiologists by combining conventional medical treatments for heart disease with complementary nutritional, anti-aging, and psychological therapies.

Dr. Sinatra is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology (F.A.C.C.) and American College of Nutrition (F.A.C.N.), a Certified Nutrition Specialist with the American Nutrition Association (C.N.S.), and a Certified Bioenergetic Psychotherapist (C.B.T.).

He is a best-selling author of more than a dozen books, including, *The Great Cholesterol Myth* and *Reversing Heart Disease Now*, and a speaker and advisor for the research and development of nutritional supplements with Healthy Directions. Through his books and educating the public on major media outlets including CNN, MSNBC, and *The Dr. Oz Show*, Dr. Sinatra has helped tens of thousands of people to achieve better heart health and lead long, healthy, and active lives. He also co-hosts the Be HEALTHistic weekly podcast with his son, naturopathic physician Dr. Drew Sinatra.

He joined the Healthy Directions family of experts in 1995.

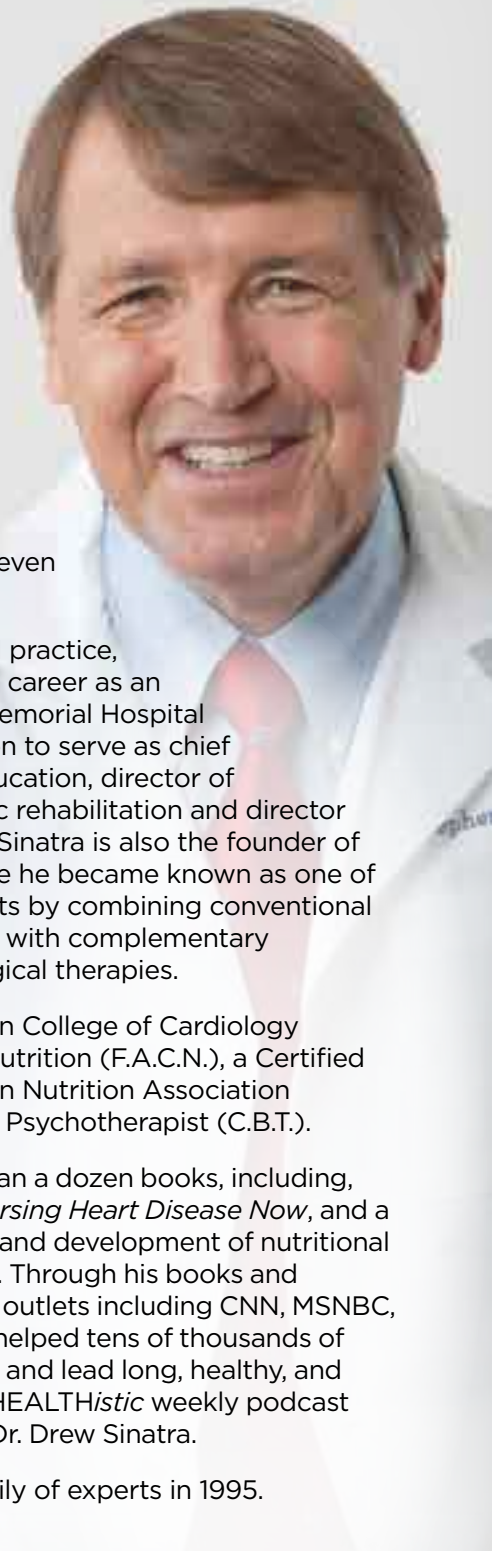


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Introduction

Dear Friend,

When we're faced with a health challenge—whether it's lowering our blood pressure, preventing diabetes, or trying to lose weight—it's easy to feel overwhelmed. It's human nature to think that improving a health metric will take a huge amount of effort and time.



But the reality is, our health isn't something we need tackle all at once, or in isolation. Instead, true wellness is the sum result of all of the small decisions we make each day.

For example, did you know that staying well-hydrated is a very important part of maintaining healthy blood pressure? Or, that eating more cinnamon can help you maintain healthy blood sugar? These are just a few of the many small—yet powerful—things you can do that will make a real difference in your health.

Plus, there are things you can do to make your everyday life easier and healthier. For example, did you know that tilting your head forward (instead of backward) can make it much easier to swallow a pill? Or, that getting EMFs out of your bedroom can improve your sleep?

In this report, I'll share all of these lifestyle hacks, and more. Plus, for more advice like this, I encourage you to visit my website at healthydirections.com. You can also join me on Facebook at [/SinatraMD](https://www.facebook.com/SinatraMD).

From my heart to yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Sinatra, M.D." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen Sinatra, M.D.

DISCLAIMER: The content in this report is offered on an informational basis only, and is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the guidance of a qualified health provider before making any adjustment to a medication or treatment you are currently using and/or starting any new medication or treatment. All recommendations are "generally informational" and not specifically applicable to any individual's medical problems, concerns, and/or needs.

1. Stop allergies in their tracks

Seasonal allergies are a real issue for many people. Big Pharma would like you to think that the best remedy for allergies includes popping a pill—one riddled with questionable chemicals and unwanted side effects. Fortunately, you can get natural allergy relief.

- **Use sea salt.** Mix one teaspoon of salt (I prefer Celtic sea salt) into a sink full of warm water, immerse your hands and face in the water and blink several times. This will clean the pollen from your eyes. You can also draw some of the water into your nostrils and expel it to flush pollen from your nasal passages.
- **Avoid mucus-producing foods.** Dairy products—especially milk, cream, and cheese—can aggravate sinus congestion.
- **Stay indoors & keep car windows up** on days with high pollen activity.
- **Use a good air purifier system**, especially in your bedroom, and be sure to clean and replace the filters regularly.
- **Be mindful of allergen “hitchhikers.”** Many people inadvertently bring pollen into their bedroom on their clothes, skin, and hair. Remove your clothes outside your bedroom. Plus, take a shower and wash your hair before you go to bed. Also, remember that anyone who shares or spends time in your bedroom with you—whether it’s a spouse, kids, or a pet—is another allergen “hitchhiker” to consider.
- **Take vitamin C.** This vitamin acts as a mild antihistamine and can reduce the severity of allergic reactions. For allergies, aim for 1,000 mg three times days. Higher doses can be taken, but if you develop loose stools cut back on the dose.
- **Take quercetin.** Quercetin is a bioflavonoid that acts as a mast cell stabilizer. Mast cell stabilizers prevent mast cells from releasing histamine and other pro-inflammatory cytokines,

which helps to reduce allergy symptoms. You can take it in capsule or powder form. I recommend during allergy season to opt for the powder version (quercetin ascorbate) and add one scoop (1,000 mg) to a glass of water. Do this once or twice a day.

2. Lower your blood pressure with water

Did you know one benefit of drinking water is normal blood pressure? Staying adequately hydrated is one of the simplest ways to lower your blood pressure naturally.

Water intake affects blood pressure in two ways:

- First, when you don't drink enough water your body attempts to secure its fluid supply by retaining sodium. Sodium is your body's "water-insurance mechanism."
- Plus, dehydration forces your body to gradually and systematically close down capillary beds. This puts more pressure on your capillaries and arteries, elevating your blood pressure. So, one of the best ways to lower your blood pressure naturally is to stay well-hydrated.

How much should you drink?

To get the maximum health benefits of drinking water, you need to drink eight to ten 8-ounce glasses of water per day. But don't overdo it. Like a sponge, your body can absorb water at a limited rate. It will require some time to adapt to your new level of water intake and become fully hydrated.

A few cautions to remember. Drinking too much water can overwork your kidneys and digestive system. Hypertension, diabetes, and stress all leave the kidneys in a weakened state, so be careful.

Finally, if you have congestive heart failure, kidney issues, are taking diuretics and/or are on fluid restrictions, consult your physician before increasing your water intake.

3. Sleep your way to better heart health

Did you know sleep directly impacts your heart health? A lack of sleep can lead to a heart attack or stroke and can increase your risk of developing atherosclerosis and high blood pressure. Plus, it ups your risk of getting type 2 diabetes.

While sleep needs vary from person to person, in general, you want to strive to consistently get between seven to eight hours of sleep each night. Here's how to ensure you're getting enough sleep.

- **Keep a consistent bedtime.** Going to bed at about the same time each night, preferably by 10:00 p.m., puts you in line with your body's natural sleep/wake cycle.
- **Cut your caffeine and alcohol intake.** Caffeine is a stimulant that can keep you from falling asleep, so if that's an issue for you restrict your caffeine intake later in the day. As for alcohol, it may make you drowsy initially, but wake you up in the middle of the night—disrupting sleep.
- **Skip the warm milk.** We've been told to drink a glass of warm milk at bedtime because the tryptophan will help you sleep. But while milk does contain some tryptophan, it's also high in sugar, which can stimulate you instead of helping you get to sleep. Instead, I recommend eating other tryptophan-rich foods such as turkey, pumpkin seeds, almonds, cheese, whole grain oatmeal, and poached eggs.
- **Keep your bedroom cool and dark.** Darkness signals your body to produce melatonin, the hormone that helps you to sleep soundly.
- **Have a cup of herbal tea near bedtime.** Choose one that contains valerian or chamomile, both of which help to make you drowsy.

- **Remove electromagnetic fields (EMFs) from your bedroom.**

EMFs, which are emitted by electronic devices such as televisions, computers, cell and cordless phones, create chaotic vibrations that interfere with sleep and can lower your sleep-producing melatonin levels. If you must have an electronic clock in your bedroom, keep it at least four feet away from your bed.

- **Sleep grounded.** Grounding (also known as Earthing) is the practice of reconnecting the body with the energy naturally present on the Earth's surface, which helps reduce stress and balance the body. Practicing grounding is as simple as walking barefoot outside, or sitting, lying, or sleeping on special conductive devices (such as pads for the floor or bed) that are plugged into grounded standard three-pronged electrical outlets.

4. Dine your way to lower blood pressure

As a trained cardiologist and certified nutritionist, a big part of my approach to treating high blood pressure is healthy eating—including foods that specifically target blood pressure. Here are some of the top foods I recommend adding to your diet.

- **Apples:** This delicious fruit is a great source of quercetin, a flavonoid that is quickly absorbed into your system and attacks free radicals, supports veins, and lowers blood pressure naturally. If you want to lower blood your blood pressure, eat more apples (organic is best).
- **Raw Onions:** Like apples, onions contain quercetin, which lowers high blood pressure. For the best medicinal results, eat onions raw since cooked onions don't have the same effect.
- **Garlic:** Clinical research has shown garlic inhibits platelet aggregation (stickiness and clumping), which helps to thin the blood much like aspirin or thrombolytic drugs do. Plus, garlic lowers high blood pressure and reduces fibrinogen (a blood

clotting component), preventing the formation of blood clots. Although evidence to date indicates that raw, cold-aged garlic offers the greatest medicinal value, studies have demonstrated that cooked garlic is also effective.

- **Olive Oil:** I consider olive oil to be one of the best heart-healthy foods, and it has a solid reputation for lowering blood pressure. Light olive oils are best for cooking up to 130 degrees F (above this temperature, these oils can become more saturated). Thicker, more deeply hued extra virgin or virgin olive oils are often tastiest for drizzling on salads or to add to dishes after cooking.
- **Flaxseed:** The key to getting your blood pressure numbers in a healthy range is to add more omega-3s to your diet—and eating flaxseed for your blood pressure is an excellent option. Ground flaxseed is a better choice than flaxseed oil because it's fresher. Another positive benefit of flaxseeds is that they contain a significant amount of fiber, which promotes regularity and fullness. This can lead to weight loss, which also lowers blood pressure.
- **Coldwater Fish:** Omega-3 fats and other healthy (monounsaturated) fats, such as those in cold-water fish (and avocados), stimulate the production of nitric oxide that keeps arteries properly dilated. Nitric oxide also counteracts the vasoconstricting effect of stress that can cause high blood pressure. For best results, eat cold-water fish, such as wild-caught Alaskan salmon, one to two times per week.
- **Blueberries:** The high flavonoid content and powerful antioxidant properties of blueberries help to reduce blood pressure. Researchers suspect that the anthocyanins in blueberries promote the release of nitric oxide, the chemical in arterial walls that keeps the blood vessels relaxed and dilated.
- **Asparagus:** Not only is green asparagus delicious, but it can also help to reduce high blood pressure naturally. That's because it contains sulfur-containing metabolites that act as natural ACE inhibitors. I like to quickly roast asparagus spears

for two to five minutes, then season with a drizzle of olive oil, chopped garlic, and a few squeezes of fresh lemon juice.

5. Swallow vitamins (and other pills) more easily

I have some readers who do not choose their nutritional supplements based on what's best for their health, but rather on which pills are easiest to swallow. As you get older, pill swallowing can get tough. Fortunately, there are simple ways to solve the problem:

- **Lubricate your mouth and throat.** Drink a few sips of water before taking your vitamins to make them go down more easily.
- **Tip your head forward.** Many people put their heads back when taking a pill but putting your chin down can make it easier. That's because the pill will float to the back of your mouth as your throat opens, making swallowing a cinch.
- **Use a water bottle.** Keep your lips pursed and attached to the bottle using a sucking action to drink. Your throat will automatically open, followed by the natural urge to swallow.
- **Take one pill at a time.** It is easier on both your throat and esophagus.
- **Swallow using cold water or juice.** Hot beverages can cause trouble swallowing pills, making them disintegrate or become sticky.

If you're still having trouble swallowing pills, you can blend your vitamins into a smoothie. Just be sure you open any capsules and dump in the contents separately. You can also break open your capsules or crush tablets, mixing the contents into a cold food such as plain yogurt or unsweetened applesauce.

6. Prevent & control type 2 diabetes naturally

If you suspect your blood sugar is going up, ask your doctor to order a hemoglobin A1C blood test, which is like doing three months of finger stick tests, all at one time. If your HbA1C is above 5.9 it's an early warning sign that you could soon develop diabetes. Another red flag that you could soon develop diabetes is if your HDL "good" cholesterol numbers are down and your triglyceride levels are elevated.

The good news is that even if you're in the "diabetes warning zone" you can knock it out before it develops. Plus, if you already have diabetes, the same steps can work to help you control your blood sugar.

- **Lose weight.** Shedding extra pounds is the single most effective way to keep diabetes at bay. To help stabilize your blood sugar and lose unwanted pounds, lower your carbohydrate intake, especially avoiding products made with white flour and sugar. If you want to sweeten your coffee or tea, add ribose, which is sweet but has a negative glycemic effect. Plus, add blood-sugar-stabilizing healthy proteins to your diet including organic eggs, wild salmon, buffalo, organic chicken, and lamb.
- **Eat these 5 foods.** Avocados, nuts (macadamia nuts, walnuts, and almonds), chickpeas, lentils, and broccoli require very little insulin for your body to process. Plus, they help to slow the release of glucose into your bloodstream.
- **Exercise your way out of trouble.** Daily exercise, such as 30 minutes of brisk walking, helps you shed extra pounds and build muscle. Having more muscle helps your insulin receptors to function far more efficiently. Don't like to walk? Yoga, Pilates, tennis, and golf (without a golf cart) are great options as well. The best exercise you can do is one that you enjoy and will do regularly.
- **Eat cinnamon.** More than just a delicious spice, cinnamon helps to support insulin sensitivity and function. For blood

sugar support, I recommend eating ½ to 1 teaspoon of cinnamon a day.

- **Take blood sugar supporting nutrients.** *Gymnema sylvestre* extract (300 mg daily) slows the release of glucose into your bloodstream. You can also help to protect against the oxidation of excess blood sugar with alpha-lipoic acid (ALA) (100 to 300 mg daily).

Plus, berberine (500 mg, 2 to 3 times a day) is a plant alkaloid that has been used for centuries in Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine. Berberine targets a regulator of metabolism called activated protein kinase (AMPK). For people with diabetes, this means better glucose uptake into cells, improved insulin sensitivity, and reduced glucose production.

7 To lose weight, do these 2 exercises

Regular exercise is one of the most powerful weight-loss boosters you can find—and it doesn't need to be rigid or rigorous for you to get good results. Two of the best exercises for weight loss are walking and weight training. These gentler forms of exercise help to keep your metabolism high, and allow you to loosen up, let go, and relax.

1. **Walk.** The simple act of walking helps to improve your metabolism, so you burn more calories even at rest. Plus, walking regularly lowers your risk for heart disease, lowers your blood pressure, helps to prevent diabetes, and even lowers your risk for certain cancers.

Ideally, you want to walk for 30 to 45 minutes five times a week. But if you aren't already walking, start gradually and slowly. Researchers have found that speed doesn't matter; it's the length of time you walk that's important when you are walking to lose weight.

Start on the “installment plan,” walking 10 minutes every

other day for one week, gradually increasing by increments of 5 to 10 minutes each week. In a month, you'll be taking 30-minute walks. Walk every other day and you'll have a good workout routine. Five days a week is optimal.

- 2. Do weight training.** Muscle burns more calories than fat, so improving muscle mass is important for weight loss. Plus, a simple weight-training program tones your body, while significantly reducing your insulin levels and blood pressure, and consequently lowering your risk of diabetes and heart disease.

Before you begin a strength-training routine, check with your physician to discuss any possible restrictions you may need to follow. Go easy with strength training—10 to 20 minutes two or three times a week, and always take a day off between strength-training sessions to give your muscles time to heal.

Getting a balance of aerobic exercise and weight training kicks your weight-loss efforts into high gear in several important ways. It revs up your metabolism and helps to build muscle, so you burn more calories even at rest. The higher your metabolism, the more quickly you'll lose those extra pounds.

Finally, remember to consult with your doctor before beginning a new exercise program.

Dr. Sinatra

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