

Smart ways to live well

# Prevention

14 time-

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...and healthier  
ones to try instead


It's no secret that leading a healthy lifestyle often feels like it takes more time than most of us have. That was recently confirmed in a survey by the American Public Health Association in which 34% of adults said they were too busy to fit in things they knew were good for them, like eating right and exercising regularly. So how surprising is it that as you hurry through the day, you

BY LORIE A. PARCH

cut a few corners: "I'm too tired to take out my contacts, so I'll leave them in overnight," you say, or, "I won't bother with my seat belt; I'm not going far." What you may not realize is that these moves could actually be taking a costly toll on your health. Here, the scoop on 14 time-savers that really aren't, plus safer alternatives that fit easily into a tight schedule.

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off, you'll need to reapply more often—and that's true even if you're using a long-lasting waterproof sunscreen," says Andrew Kaufman, MD, a dermatologic surgeon in Thousand Oaks, CA, who specializes in skin cancer.

**Next time** Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen that contains zinc oxide and/or avobenzone (aka Parsol 1789), which are the most protective ingredients, and one you won't mind applying several times a day. Because

studies show that most people apply only enough sunscreen to get half the SPF listed on the bottle, Kaufman recommends opting for a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, at least during the months of April through September. Some light, nongreasy options with high SPFs include Neutrogena UltraSheer Dry-Touch Sunblock and Coppertone Endless Summer Ultra-sheer Sunscreen.

**8 Your nail splits, but you don't have clippers or an emery board on hand, so you chew off the ragged edge.**

This is a bad idea for several reasons, the least of which is that your nails will look lousy. "When you bite your nails you risk transferring infectious organisms between your mouth and your fingers," says Emmanuel Robert Loucas,

MD, a dermatologist in New York City. "This could result in a bacterial or yeast infection of the nail bed."

**Next time** Stash nail clippers and emery boards in places where you spend a lot of time—at your desk, in the car, in your purse, in a kitchen drawer. Neither item is expensive, so it's easy to keep multiple sets around.

**9 It's been 2 years since you replaced your exercise shoes.**

The first thing that goes with old (but comfy) shoes is shock absorption, which helps protect your feet and joints as you exercise, says Pribut, chairman of the AAPSM's shoe evaluation committee. This can put extra pressure on bones, leading to soreness and possibly a stress fracture. To prevent injury, stick to this shoe-replacement schedule: Buy new running shoes every 350 to 500 miles (don't forget to add the mileage you put

Swiss cheese (and about as much shock absorption), it's time to spring for a new pair. When you find a shoe you love, buy two or more pairs.

**10 You're starving. You turn into the fast-food joint just ahead, even though you know there's a deli about 10 minutes away.**

Have you ever noticed how soon you feel hungry again after eating a typical fast-food meal? That's because there's so little fiber in it to keep you satisfied. Of the salt, sugar, and saturated and trans fats that fast food is loaded with, Somer says, "You're basically putting greasy sawdust in your gas tank." And don't get us started on the calories in most drive-thru meals: A Burger King double hamburger packs 440 calories, while six McDonald's Chicken McNuggets weigh in at 250 calories—but that's for a little more than 3 ounces, which isn't likely to

“Eating a fast-food meal is like putting greasy sawdust in your gas tank. It's loaded with salt, sugar, and saturated and trans fats, and contains little of the fiber that will keep you satisfied”

on shoes if you wear them to do things such as walking the dog); purchase new walking shoes every 6 to 9 months if you walk up to 4 miles a day; replace aerobic shoes every 6 to 9 months if you do 3 hours of aerobics each week.

**Next time** Long before the old ones have more holes and a stronger odor than

fill you up for long. Meals like these put you on a fast track to being overweight, and all the health problems that tag along with it.

**Next time** Anticipate—and avoid—these “must eat now” situations. “We're so busy that if we wait to listen to our bodies, it's often too late,” says Cindy