

## BlackEnterprise.com Health & Wellness Checklist

No matter how many loved ones are in your life, no one will ever care more about you than you. So why not start putting you first this year? From unhealthy eating to stress, all of these can negatively impact your day-to-day functioning. “It’s not just about organizing clutter on your desk,” says [Peggy Duncan](#), productivity expert. “It’s also about clutter on your computer, your inbox, and on your mind. All of that adds to unnecessary stress,” she says.

Use the BlackEnterprise.com Health and Wellness Checklist to develop healthy eating habits and transform wellness from a phase into a complete lifestyle.

\_\_\_ **Schedule check-ups regularly.** Routine health exams are a good preventative measure that can usually catch small problems before they become life threatening. Women should schedule breast exams and pap smears which can greatly reduce their risk of cancer. Men should get colorectal screenings to reduce their risk of cancer, according to [Web MD](#).

\_\_\_ **Turn a healthy diet into a lifestyle.** A healthy diet can boost energy and morale. You shouldn’t moderate your eating just for the short term. Healthy eating is a lifestyle change. The [United States Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA) provides tools to help monitor your eating. If a weight-loss plan is on the schedule for the New Year, set a realistic goal and choose a healthy, doctor-approved plan.

\_\_\_ **Develop a workout plan.** Schedule your walks, trips to the gym, or a run on your weekly calendar like every other appointment and commitment. But if you still can’t find the time to add cardio to your schedule, try adjusting daily routines. If you take public transportation, get off a stop or two early and walk the rest of the way. If you’re running errands, park near the back of the parking lot. Try purchasing a pedometer and wear it to work. Health and wellness organization [Kaiser Permanente](#) advises people to make it a goal to take 10,000 steps a day,

\_\_\_ **Get adequate rest.** Lack of sleep doesn't just make you cranky-- it can also reduce your ability to concentrate and excel. While the amount of sleep each person needs varies, [Web MD](#) recommends most people need 7-9 hours to feel fully rested. While this may not be possible every night, try to sleep a full night whenever you get the chance.

\_\_\_ **Keep healthy snacks around.** Stock your pantry with fruits and other healthy snacks. You'll be more likely to reach for these than junk food if you keep them in your home and at your work space. Reduce your intake of sugary delights which can help cut down your sugar consumption. But a little treat now and then is a great way to reward yourself for eating a healthy diet, according to [RNCentral.com](#), a resource center for nurses.

\_\_\_\_ **Keep hydrated.** Drinking enough water can help boost your concentration as well as keep you from overeating. The Institute of Medicine advises that men consume roughly three liters (about 13 cups) of total beverages a day and women consume 2.2 liters (about nine cups) of total beverages a day. Lack of water can lead to dehydration, says the [Mayo Clinic](#). Even mild dehydration can drain your energy and make you tired.

\_\_\_\_ **Don't work in bed.** Toiling away in your place of rest can make getting to sleep harder. Keep your work space separate from your sleep space to keep insomnia at bay, according to [RNCentral](#).

\_\_\_\_ **Give yourself a break.** If you've been working steadily for hours, give your eyes and mind a chance for a rest by taking a break. You can come back feeling more refreshed and ready to go. Put limits on work hours. Fun and relaxation have to be part of your routine as well.

\_\_\_\_ **Just say no.** You can't please everyone. Concentrate on making yourself happy first and you'll eliminate lots of stress and hassle from your life. If you're overcommitted and under a lot of stress, there's a greater chance of you becoming sick and tired. Saying no can free you up for more quality time with friends and family and allow you time to pursue other hobbies or interests, says the [Mayo Clinic](#).

\_\_\_\_ **Get organized.** Clean up your environment. Whether you're at home or at work, a clutter free environment will help you feel more peaceful, therefore keeping the stress away, says Duncan.

-- *Renita Burns, BlackEnterprise.com*