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Healthyroads™

01

Wellness and Healthy Living Detox Your Life: Toxins in Your Home

Can your furniture make you sick? How about your clothes, your cleaning products, your home, or your workplace? The answer: possibly. In the second of a 3-part series on everyday toxins, this article looks at those you breathe or absorb through your skin—and what you can do to limit them.

- * **Home and office:** Radon gas can seep into homes and other buildings. Radon is a deadly gas formed when natural uranium in soil and water breaks down. It enters buildings through cracks and, over time, can cause lung cancer. A test kit is needed to check for radon. Learn more or find a kit at <https://www.epa.gov/radon>.
- * **Furnishings:** There are 2 issues here. One is flame retardants. The other is “off-gassing.” Items like sofas and mattresses are treated with flame retardants to slow fires. But these chemicals move out of foam into house dust. Inhaling it may disturb the thyroid, affect the brain, and cause cancer. Also, many common items—such as paints, drapes, carpets, and upholstery—give off chemical gases. Some of these may cause headaches, problems breathing, harm to organs, or cancer. To limit toxic dust indoors, vacuum often (use a HEPA filter). Cover any rips that expose foam. To limit off-gassing issues, buy floor models that have off-gassed in stores. Skip air fresheners. And open doors and windows to boost air flow.

- * **Cleaning products:** Many products contain hazardous chemicals. These include ones used to clean kitchens and bathrooms, polish floors, wash clothes, and more. Some may burn skin, irritate eyes, or damage lungs. Natural cleaners like baking soda mixed with vinegar and water clean just as well without these toxins. They’re cheaper, too. To learn more, do an online search on “make your own natural cleaning products.”
- * **Dry-cleaned clothing:** The liquid solvent used in dry cleaning stays in clothes and builds up with each cleaning. It also releases into the air in your home. This solvent is linked to many health issues, including dizziness and eye, nose, and throat issues. To protect yourself, limit dry cleaning or choose a green cleaner.

It’s a sad truth: Just because you can buy a product or service—or even a house—doesn’t always make it safe. Be savvy, and do what you can to limit your exposure to indoor toxins.

Welcome to
HEALTHYROADS!

In this monthly newsletter, you’ll find a collection of articles on popular health and wellness topics. If you’d like additional support in your quest to lose weight, improve nutrition, develop an exercise plan, reduce stress, or quit smoking, visit us online at www.healthyroads.com. There, you can find a collection of tools to help you reach your health goals.

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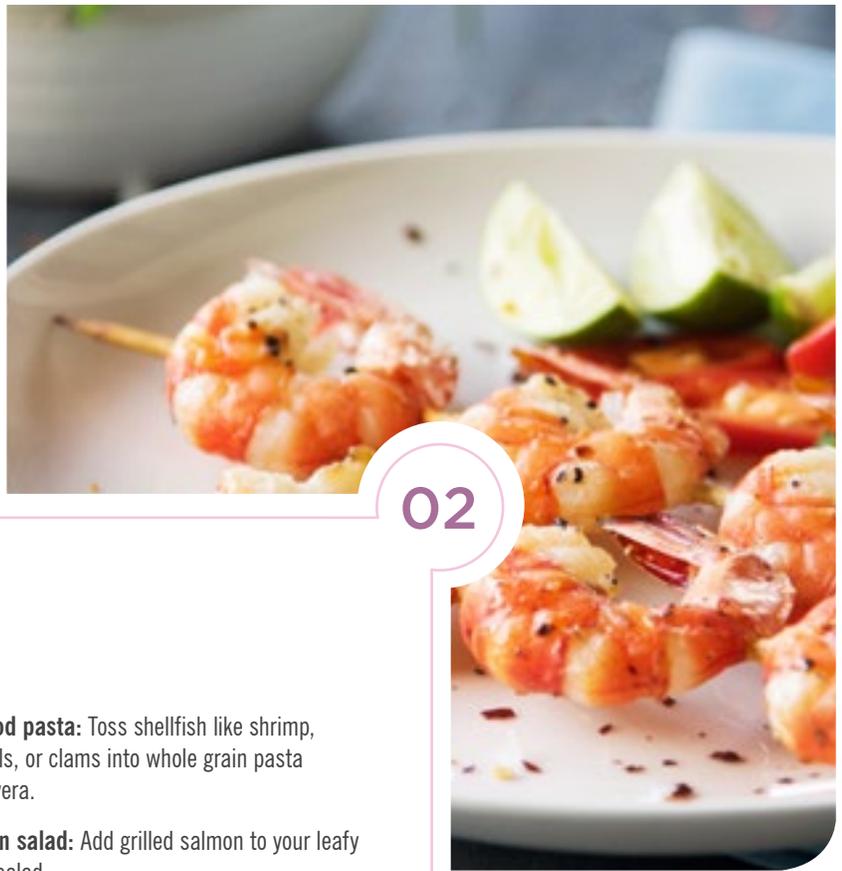
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02

Nutrition and Weight Management Easy, Super-Healthy Seafood Dinners

Fish and shellfish offer wonderful health benefits. And there are tasty ways to prepare them that may surprise you.

Seafood serves up a unique nutrition package. It's a high-quality source of protein. It also has vitamins A and D. And it is either very low in fat or—depending on the species—rich in a type of fat your body needs. Fatty fish like salmon and sardines are the best source of healthy omega-3 fats, which have been shown to help protect against heart disease.

Still, there are 2 issues to keep in mind when choosing seafood. First, fish can be tainted with mercury. This is toxic to the brain and nerves. It may also harm a fetus. Fish to limit or skip are king mackerel, shark, swordfish, tuna steaks, and tilefish. Second, high demand for seafood and fish oils has caused many species to be overfished. To navigate these waters, choose seafood that is high in healthy fats, low in mercury, and sustainably sourced. Some of the best sources are anchovies, herring, mackerel (not king), oysters, salmon, sardines, and trout.

Adults are advised to eat 8 ounces (2 servings) of seafood a week for good health. Here are some easy ways to enjoy a range of healthy seafood:

- * **Fish tacos:** Wrap grilled fish and veggies in corn tortillas with salsa and lime.

- * **Seafood pasta:** Toss shellfish like shrimp, mussels, or clams into whole grain pasta primavera.
- * **Salmon salad:** Add grilled salmon to your leafy green salad.
- * **Grilled fillets:** Grill or barbecue fish fillets, serve with brown rice and veggies.
- * **Seafood paella:** Add some tasty shellfish to vegetable paella.
- * **Salmon burgers:** Serve healthy salmon burgers on whole grain buns.
- * **Shrimp kabobs:** Skewer shrimp or cubed fish with veggies or pineapple.
- * **Soups:** Add diced fish, scallops, shrimp, or oysters to soups or stews.
- * **Broiled oysters:** Toss oysters with fresh herbs, seasoning, and olive oil; then broil.
- * **Pizza:** Add anchovies or sardines to pizza, along with onion and veggies.

If you don't like a "fishy" flavor, try mild-tasting fish like cod, flounder, or tilapia. Or start with shrimp, scallops, or mussels. They naturally taste sweet.

HEALTH TIP:

Fish is a high-quality source of protein and can be a source of healthy omega-3 fat. If you aren't a big fan of how fish tastes, try cod, flounder, or tilapia. They have a milder flavor.



SERIOUS ABOUT QUITTING?

We at Healthyroads understand the challenges of quitting smoking. That's why we offer a variety of online tools and articles to help you quit—once and for all. Our web-based tools give you every chance to succeed. For anyone considering quitting smoking, take the first step and visit www.healthyroads.com.

Active Living Getting Started With Fitness Trackers

So you've just bought your first fitness tracker. Now what? While some work right out of the box, many require a little setup. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to get started.

Charge your device. In some cases, you might need to install a battery. But most fitness trackers these days come with a cable to charge the battery. You'll want to charge your device fully before you start to use it.

Download the app. Most trackers have a free app that you can download to your smartphone or your computer. Download the version (Android or iOS) that matches your device. The app allows you to access all of the data that your device captures. And it displays it in a way that's easy to understand. Once you have the app downloaded, you can create an account—with a login and password—and log in.

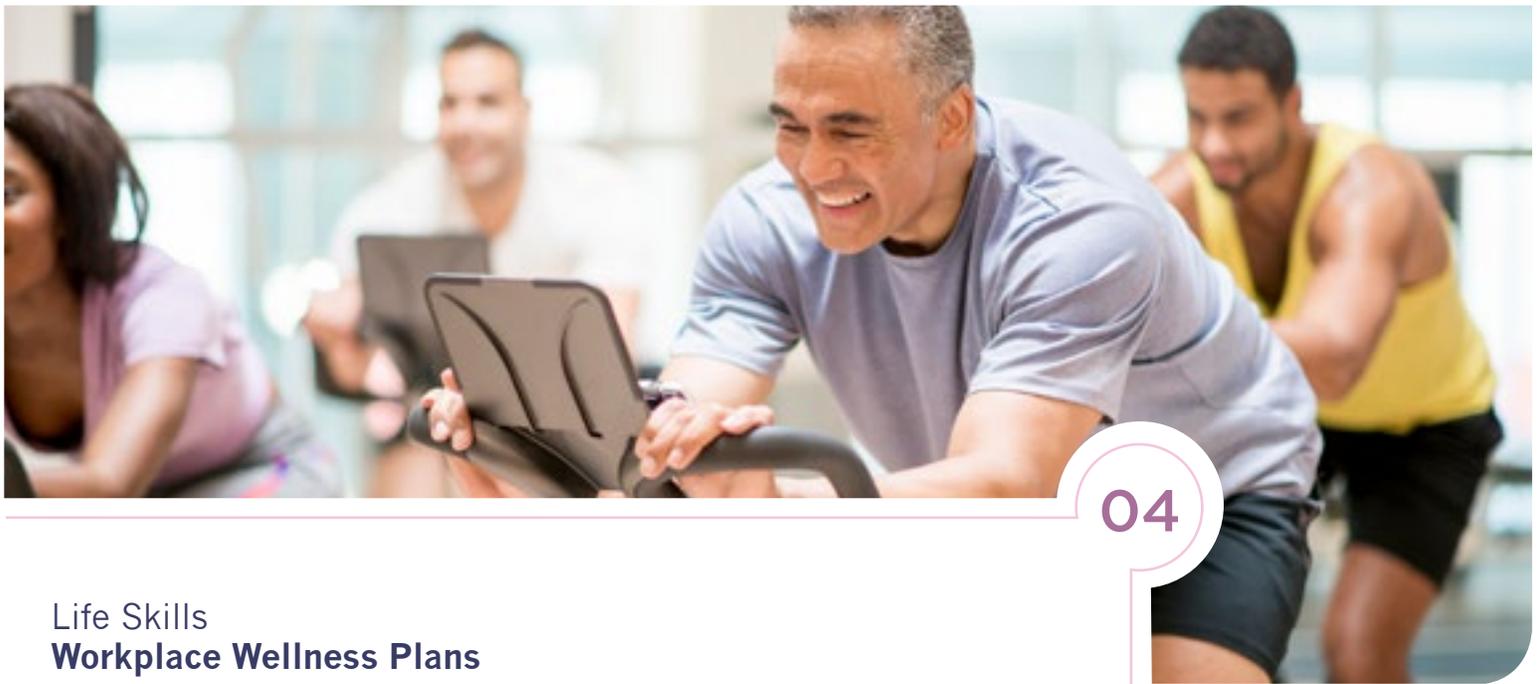
Pair your device. Once you're logged in, the app will guide you through the process of connecting—or pairing—your tracker with the app. Once paired, your fitness tracker will be able to talk—or sync—with the app. This is what will enable you to see the data collected by your tracker in the app.

Create your profile. Within the mobile app, there will likely be a section for personal information. For instance, you can list your sex, age, height, and weight. The app uses this information to estimate the number of calories you burn. You may be able to flesh out your profile further with more information on your health habits. And some apps also allow you to take or upload a picture of yourself.

Familiarize yourself with the features of your tracker. Fitness trackers these days can do so much. They can track your steps; monitor your heart rate; estimate the calories you're burning; and calculate how much sleep you're getting. Figure out what your tracker can do so you can get the most out of it.

Set some goals. Most trackers let you set step goals for the number of steps you want to take each day. Some also let you set other fitness or health goals. You may be able to set a goal for how much time you want to spend being active. Or select how much sleep you aim to get each night. Or choose a target weight loss goal.

After you've finished the setup, you're ready to get started. Get moving! Try to meet your health and fitness goals, and let your tracker help motivate and encourage you.



Life Skills

Workplace Wellness Plans

Does your employer offer a health and wellness program? If so, you may want to learn more about it. Wellness programs offer resources that may help you get healthier, as well as save you money. Talk with your human resources (HR) representative to learn what is offered. Some of the more well-known benefits you might find include:

- * **One-on-one or group health coaching.** Work with a health coach to help you get started with any number of health concerns you may have.
- * **Fitness club perks.** Many programs offer gym memberships at a lower rate. Check with your HR rep about your options for joining.
- * **Daily challenges.** Take part in fun challenges to help reach your health goals. Challenge formats can be team-based, one-on-one with a coworker, or individual goals to meet on your own.
- * **Health education.** Read online health articles or take a self-guided health class. Onsite health lectures may also be offered.
- * **Personal Health Assessment (PHA).** A PHA can help you track health habits by answering a few basic questions.

- * **Health screenings.** Your company may offer a yearly basic health check-up. These check your blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index, and blood sugar. Screenings are voluntary and all results are private.
- * **Incentives.** Many companies offer incentives for taking part in wellness programs. The perks can include health insurance discounts.
- * **Employee Assistance Program (EAP).** An EAP offers counseling for a wide range of issues. Issues may include problems with money, relationships, and addiction. This service is often free of charge.

Try to learn about any health benefits your employer may offer. These programs can be a wonderful way to reap some of the perks of your job, as well as boost your health and well-being.

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