

**The Outpost Exchange**  
**2005 Wellness Guide**  
**“Essential 10 Practices for Well-Being”**  
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We all want well-being. But the path to get there can be confusing and overwhelming.

To help you chart your course to health, I’ve sifted through the information, talked to experts and pared it down to **The Essential 10 Practices for Well-Being**. Dr. Rose Kumar, M.D., co-founder of the Ommani Center for Integrative Medicine in Pewaukee and Dr. Meredith Young, N.D., of Integrative Health Services in Shorewood, provided professional input in addition to my own extensive research and experience as a holistic lifestyle coach.

**Time Is of the Essence**

Time constraints are one of the reasons many of us fail to adhere to, or even start, a regular health regimen. In addition, research shows that when such activities don’t seem purposeful, we fall off the wellness wagon. So for each practice I’ve given you the reason why it’s important, factored in the time it will take you to do it each day (it’s less than you think!) and also provided a few tips.

Make room in your life for wellness. Time and again, the road to you-know-where is paved with good intentions which are quickly forgotten. Tear out this article and post it in a prominent place--your refrigerator, your bathroom mirror, your desk at work--to remind you. Add one practice at a time to keep from being overwhelmed, and start with the one to which you feel the least resistance.

**The 10 Essential Practices for Well-Being**

- **Eat a Healthy Diet**

**Why:** Eating a diet that’s “as close to the earth” as possible, one packed with fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains, provides your body with the fuel it needs to run optimally. Fresh foods--versus processed and packaged ones--naturally provide critical vitamins, minerals and fiber to give you energy and assure proper elimination. Dr. Young emphasizes that effective elimination—one-three bowel movements a day—is necessary to remove toxins.

**Time investment:** An estimated hour total each day to prepare three fresh meals, more if you choose.

**Tips:** When eating processed or packaged foods, at least avoid those with processed wheat, white flour and partially hydrogenated oils. See the article, “Convenience Foods” on p. XX for more tips on how to eat healthily, quickly.

- **Drink water**

**Why:** Water hydrates the skin (our largest organ) and helps all our other organs work better. “At least 50% of the people who come to see me, if they just drank more water, would feel better,” says Young.

**Time investment:** Minutes

**Tips:** Fill a 32-ounce pitcher of water and drink it throughout the morning. Repeat it for the afternoon. This assures you drink the suggested eight-12 ounces, and spreading it out helps your body absorb it better.

- **Exercise—aerobic and stretching**

**Why:** “When the body gets rigid, the mind gets rigid,” says Dr. Kumar. “To flow in life we need to flow in our bodies.” Exercise also helps us to get out of emotional ruts, manage stress, lower cholesterol, improve cardiovascular health and oxygenate our brains and heart. Breaking a sweat has the added benefit of detoxifying the body. “You just feel better when you exercise,” Kumar adds.

**Time investment:** Minimum of 20 minutes five-seven days a week.

**Tips:** Sign up for a class or join a gym. Spending the money makes it more of a commitment and also provides exercise camaraderie. If working out at home, use fast-paced music to keep your aerobic exercise moving along. Brisk walking is considered an ideal aerobic exercise as it is free, can be done anywhere and is low-impact.

- **Get adequate sleep**

**Why:** Sleep is the time that our body rebuilds and regenerates. The body produces melatonin—which gives us a sense of well-being—only in a pitch dark environment.

**Time investment:** Seven-eight hours each night

**Tips:** Don’t eat a large meal less than two hours before bedtime as it hinders the sleep cycle. Make sure your bedroom is completely dark, to produce the melatonin.

- **Supplements**

**Why:** Basic supplements can fill in where diet is lacking. However, both Kumar and Young highly recommend limiting supplements so that we don’t rely on them to get our nutrients, which are better achieved through a healthy diet of real food.

**Time investment:** Minutes

**Tips:** Take a multi-vitamin and 2,000 mg of Omega 3’s daily. Fish oil, either in food like salmon, or as a supplement, provides critical brain food.

- **Sunlight**

**Why:** Sunlight provides vitamin D, which is absorbed through our skin. Sunlight also provides a sense of well-being.

**Time investment:** 15 minutes a day.

**Tips:** Combine your sun absorption with outdoor exercise and get a two-for-one benefit. In the winter months when sunlight can be scarce, Kumar suggests using a full spectrum light for the first 15 minutes of every day.

- **Read skin and hair product ingredients**  
**Why:** “What goes on your skin goes into your bloodstream,” Kumar says. “We tend to ignore this one.” Most conventional skin and hair products are full of chemicals, which, among other things, leach calcium from our blood and from the ground water into which it goes.  
**Tips:** Choose products without EDTA, propylene glycol (Kumar calls it a “cousin to anti-freeze”!), ethelyn glycol, ethylparaben, methylparaben. Some lines Kumar recommends include Burt’s Bees, Jason’s and some Aveda products. Be aware of terms like “organic,” which have become a marketing ploy.
- **Breathe Deep**  
**Why:** Deep abdominal breathing creates a sense of well-being, provides cardiovascular benefits and helps you stay grounded.  
**Time investment:** 10-15 minutes a day of deep breathing. (Of course, you should breathe the rest of the day as well!)  
**Tips:** Practicing deep breathing in the evening as you’re preparing to sleep gets you into a relaxed state.
- **Tend to your soul**  
**Why:** Body, mind and spirit are intertwined; you cannot ignore one side of the triad and maintain well-being.  
**Time investment:** Varies. Start with 10 minutes a day and work up to 30 minutes or more.  
**Tips:** Prayer, meditation and journaling all count as part of your soul work. Incorporate deep breathing into your prayer or meditation time and get a double benefit. Do a walking meditation, perhaps outside or by walking a labyrinth, combining body movement with soul tending.
- **Live from the heart**  
**Why:** Research by the Institute for HeartMath and other sources in the emerging field of neurocardiology reveal that the heart emits a signal that is 50 times more powerful than the brain. It therefore sets the pace, so to speak, for the rest of the body’s systems. From a spiritual standpoint, living from the heart—from love—is the opposite of operating out of fear, which is a destructive force.  
**Time investment:** Ongoing  
**Tips:** Practice heart-centered meditation or techniques such as HeartMath. Seek out ways to do acts of kindness and service for others—and yourself—on a daily basis.

Total time investment to practice the Essential 10 on a daily basis: approximately two hours (not including sleep time). Return on investment: optimum well-being.

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