

## The Benefits of Volunteering

Volunteering can benefit both you and the people you serve. While it may be hard to find time in your hectic schedule to volunteer, **the rewards of volunteering can make it worth the effort.**

Volunteering can help you strengthen your current skills and learn new ones, explore different cultures and different areas of interest, use your creativity, reach out to your community and maybe even help you advance your career. In the process, it may also help protect your health and well-being.

### Benefits of Volunteering

Recent studies have shown that people who volunteer often experience a number of fringe benefits, including:

- Greater sense of happiness
- Higher levels of physical health
- Greater life satisfaction
- Greater sense of self-esteem
- Lower rates of depression
- Higher sense of control over life
- Having a sense of purpose

According to a study in *Science and Social Medicine*, people who volunteer tend to be happier than those who do not. Researchers found that people who volunteer on a monthly basis are 7% more likely to consider themselves “very happy,” when compared to people who do not volunteer. This statistic increases to 12% among individuals who volunteer every 2-4 weeks. Various studies have also found that people who volunteer tend to have greater longevity, higher functional ability, and lower rates of depression, heart disease, and mortality when compared to individuals who do not volunteer.

### Tips for Getting Started

Before you volunteer, it's helpful to think about your areas of skill and interest.

Ask yourself:

- How can my skills be best put to use?

- Do I have any hidden skills or talents?
- Are there any areas I'd like to learn more about or increase my skills?
- What would I really enjoy doing?
- What opportunities would best fit my personality? (For example, working alone or with others, tutoring, writing, marketing, etc.)

### Share the Benefits

Volunteering can be an enjoyable and beneficial experience, so consider sharing it with others. Volunteer with friends or loved ones. This can give you a chance to do something meaningful for your community while bonding with someone close to you.

Volunteering is a simple act of serving that allows you to give of yourself. The beauty of it is that so often you get back much more than you've given. □



# How to Get Stronger, Leaner Abs

Most people want to look trim and fit, and “**six-pack abs**” are often thought of as the holy grail of being in shape. Go beyond crunches to tone and strengthen your abdominal muscles.

Your abs are actually part of a whole system of trunk muscles, including your obliques and lower back muscles. The outward appearance, or “six pack” depends upon one’s body fat levels and therefore one’s diet and overall activity level, not just your “ab” training.

## Overall tips and precautions

- Always start slowly and pay attention to how your body is responding—you shouldn’t feel back or neck pain while doing any of these exercises.
- If you are feeling discomfort or pain, try repositioning/retightening. If this does not help, stop the exercise and consult a physician.

### LEG LIFTS >

1. Lie flat on the floor.
2. Lift your legs straight up, bringing them to a 90-degree angle with the floor - pause. If you are new to this exercise or if your lower back bothers you, bend your knees as you lift. You can also lift one leg at a time, if that makes you more comfortable.
3. Pause.
4. Lower your legs.
5. Repeat.



### ^ BICYCLE

1. Lie on the floor with your hands behind your head.
2. Lift your torso up until you feel tension.
3. Gently twist your torso and bend one knee towards the opposite elbow.
4. Gently twist to the other side to bring the other knee to the opposite elbow.
5. Alternate from side to side.



### ^ PLANK

1. Put your body into a “push-up” position, then lower your elbows slowly toward the floor.
2. Hold this position, keeping your whole body elongated, parallel to the floor. Stay tight through the midsection.
3. After your abs fatigue, lower your knees to the floor.



### < PIKE

1. Lie flat on the floor.
2. Bring your torso and your legs up at the same time (“pike”) as if you’re trying to reach your toes.
3. Repeat.

# “Way to Go!”

## Inspiring Your Coworkers

Burnout can be a real threat to productivity and job satisfaction. When you feel like your hard work is not appreciated or that what you do is not meaningfully contributing to your team’s goals, it’s difficult to stay motivated. **You can help your fellow workers with the following tips.**

### Let Your Enthusiasm Show

Start by inspiring yourself. One of the best ways to motivate your coworkers is to lead by example. Always try to approach your work with a positive and enthusiastic attitude, and demonstrate a high level of competence and dedication. You’ll probably inspire your coworkers to do the same. This can be especially true if they see you receiving recognition or special assignments due to your enthusiastic performance.

### Share the Glory

When you’re getting credit for a project, always acknowledge the contributions of your team. This can be helpful when it comes to building team pride and motivation.

### Recognize Accomplishments

Make sure that you acknowledge the accomplishments of your coworkers. A thank-you note or short email expressing your gratitude is sometimes all it takes for your coworkers to feel valued—and encouraged.

### Appeal to People’s Strengths

Explore who on your team has areas of expertise that may be being underused, and don’t hesitate to ask for input, advice, or help.

### Collaborate and Have Shared Goals

Build collaborative relationships and think of your coworkers as team members. Share best practices and creative solutions from others in your field. This could be in the form of

links to articles or websites, or print material shared at meetings.

### Be Generous with Praise

Give on-the-spot praise to your team members for good ideas or good solutions. This will inspire them to continue using their imagination and creativity.

### Listen Actively

Be a compassionate listener and serve as a sounding board for your coworkers. They may have creative ideas and solutions, and it’s important that you are supportive of their ideas and encourage others to be supportive as well.

### Share Inspiration

Share work-appropriate inspirational quotes specific to your team’s situation at meetings or via email.

### Praise Before Constructive Evaluation

Always start with what’s going right, before addressing issues that may need an adjustment. This helps people feel valued, while also realizing that there’s room for improvement.

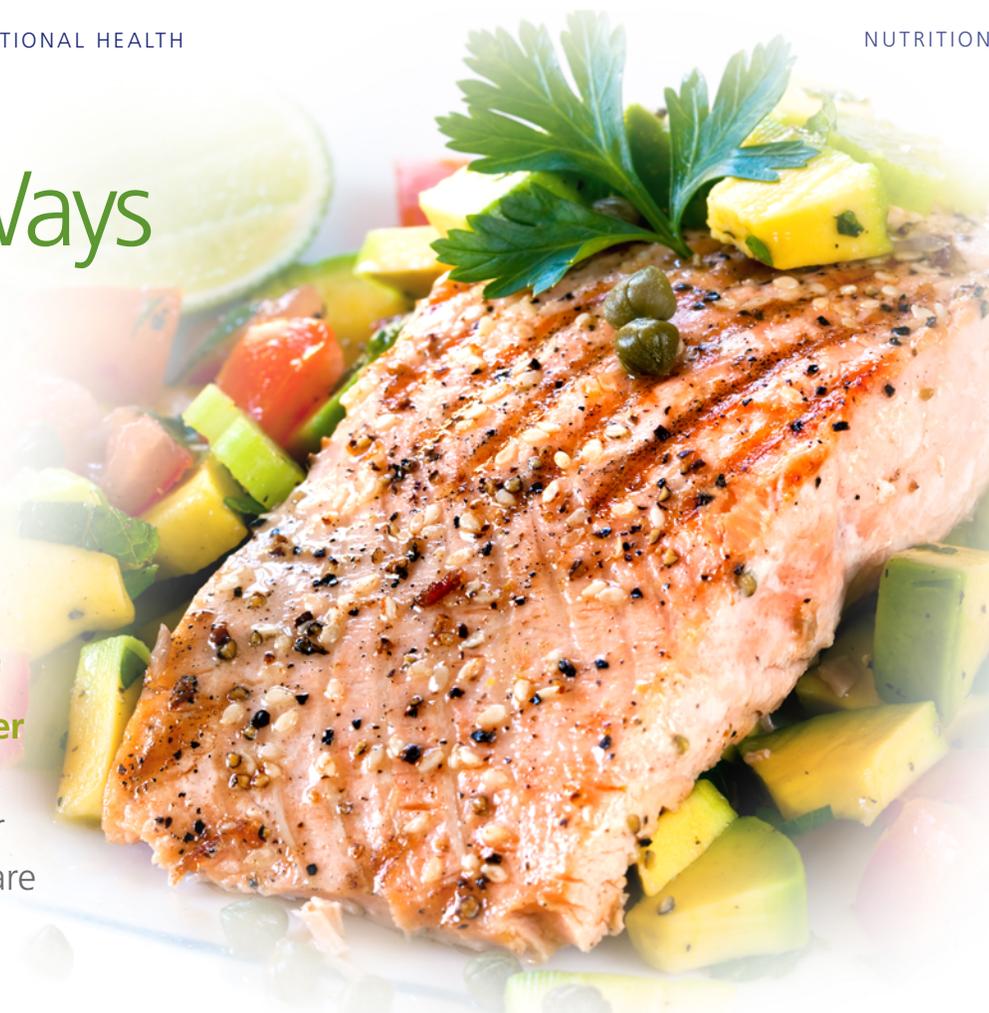
### Encourage Respect

When coworkers feel respected and valued, they’re usually more likely to put forth an extra effort in their job. Inspiration can bring out the best in people, so share it with your coworkers every chance you get. □



# Top Four Ways to Prevent Vitamin D Deficiency

Recent studies have shown that as many as **two out of three Americans may suffer from vitamin D deficiency**, which can lead to a number of medical problems. Here are some tips for getting more vitamin D into your system.



**one GET YOUR DAILY DOSE OF SUNLIGHT** – One of the best ways for many people to naturally increase vitamin D levels is through safe and limited exposure to the sun (without sunscreen). Early morning or late afternoon are the safer times for 10 to 15 minutes of uninterrupted exposure to sunlight. If you have darker skin tones, you may need to speak with your physician about this.

**two EAT FOODS THAT ARE RICH IN VITAMIN D** – Vitamin D-fortified foods, like breads, cereals, and milk, for example, are always a safe bet. Read the labels to see which products provide a good supply of vitamin D. Other food sources higher in vitamin D include liver, egg yolks, and some fatty fish like salmon.

**three TALK TO YOUR PHYSICIAN ABOUT VITAMIN D** – Certain people are at a higher risk for being deficient, such as people with darker skin tone and those who live in places that get less sun. You may become more susceptible to deficiency during the winter months, too. If you think you are suffering from vitamin D deficiency, talk to your physician to see if you need a blood test to determine your blood levels of vitamin D.

**four TAKE A VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENT** — If you're taking a multi-vitamin, you may already be getting enough vitamin D from that product. Check the label to see. Since vitamin D is fat soluble, your body stores it rather than eliminating it every day (as it does with water-soluble vitamins). Therefore, try to avoid exceeding the daily recommended amount. Talk to your doctor before taking any dietary supplements.

## WHAT DOES VITAMIN D DO FOR THE BODY?

Vitamin D serves a number of important purposes, including:

- Absorbing calcium for the health and growth of our bones and teeth
- Promoting normal cell growth
- Maintaining hormonal balance
- Promoting a healthy immune system
- Suppressing inflammation

## HOW MUCH VITAMIN D DO I NEED?

Most adults need about 600 IU (international units) of vitamin D per day on average. Most people can get this amount from a combination of sun exposure and eating fortified foods. If you think you are deficient in vitamin D, the first step is to talk with your physician. He or she may recommend ways that you can increase your intake of this essential vitamin. □