AAA Members Live Active & Healthy Lifestyles

Every issue, *Your AAA* dedicates a full page of editorial content to **Health & Wellness.**

YourLife

How Will Use Your Time Off This Year?

It's called 'earned time off' because you deserve a vacation. Don't let it go unused.

BY MARISA PERJATEL

YOU NEED A vacation – admit it. You work hard. You plow through everyday tasks and responsibilities with masterful dexterity and vigor. You are awesome. Sleep? What's that? Take a break? No time.

But will you take a vacation? According to Project: Time Off, 60 percent of New Yorkers do not use all of their vacation time, a total 40,909,174 days.

Being overly worked can lead to mental and physical stresses that can be just as detrimental to your health as being sick. You need a vacation so that you can stay your awesome self.

If you're displaying any of the 10 signs below, you might want to book yourself a vacation – ASAP.

1. You're on edge. You snap at your significant other for leaving dishes in the sink or curse every time the phone rings – don't they know you're busy (aka Netflix binging)?

2. You, um, forget stuff. You know those days when you put on two different socks or maybe even forget to pick your kids up from school? Too many of those days are a clear sign you need to recharge.

3. Your passport is looking a little empty. When's the last time you used that thing, anyway?

4. You're low on sunshine. Vitamin D deficiency is surprisingly common. Approximately 90 percent of vitamin D is made naturally by the body from sunlight, so go somewhere far from the fluorescent lights above your cubicle and soak in some rays.

5. When you order a pina colada at happy hour but it's just not the same. And getting caught in the rain isn't fun, either.

6. New vice. Whether it's a drink after work, snacking throughout the day, or sneaking in an occasional smoke break, you've picked up an unhealthy habit to deal with the stresses of one long day after another. Try exercising to release tension instead.

7. Vacation commercials make you overly emotional. What a perfect life that couple is having, splashing around on the beach and clinking wine glasses in an infinity pool while you're busy eating chips in your sweatpants.

8. You don't care. Motivation is lacking and you've been feeling depressed.

9. The most excitement your sunglasses have seen lately is the glare on your commute home – which, incidentally, is causing everyone to drive 5 mph (not a good combination with No. 1).

10. You're always tired. Too much stress can lead to trouble sleeping, which can lead to trouble staying awake. If the snooze button is among your best friends, your body's saying "take a vacation."

Check out more travel trends. AAA.com/Go

YourLife

Boost Your Healthy Habits

Snooze, step and nibble your way to a healthier 2019.

BY CHRISTINA ELSTON

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS are fun, but your health is a year-round thing. So instead of breaking promises to yourself by mid-March, pick up three simple habits that will stick with you.

SLEEP RIGHT

"We've become a very sleep-deprived society," said Dr. Lawrence Epstein, medical director of clinical sleep medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. That's because we don't pay attention to our bodies' cues.

If your schedule permits, spend a week going to bed when you're tired and sleeping until you naturally wake up, to see how much sleep your body needs. "Most people will find that it's more than they're actually getting," Epstein said. You could also add 30 minutes of nightly sleep each week until you hit your sweet spot.

You'll feel better and be more productive, and you won't need to sleep in on weekends.

EAT YOUR VEGGIES

Eating 2 cups of vegetables a day gives you essential nutrients, plus fiber that squeezes less-healthful foods out of your diet.

Add veggies to your breakfast smoothie or bake up an egg-and-vegetable casserole you can slice and heat all week, suggests Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics spokesperson and registered dietitian Libby Mills. Pack a healthy lunch (and save some cash).

Half of your dinner plate should be filled with vegetables, but it doesn't have to be all one vegetable, Mill said. Add a second of a different color just for fun. "You can just know that you're doing something super-healthy for your body," Mills said. That makes each meal an instant success.

MAKE YOUR STEPS COUNT

About 94 percent of us get no regular exercise, says Walter R. Thompson, Ph.D., president of the American College of Sports Medicine. Moving from zero to 10,000 steps a day is too big a leap, so he suggests taking it slow. Park your car farther from your destination. Take the stairs.

"As you start making those small adjustments, you become more used to them and you become more comfortable making long-term adjustments," Thompson said. Next, track your daily steps for a week, then increase your steps monthly until you reach 10,000.

Eventually, you'll be ready to join a gym, take a class, play a sport or go cycling with friends. But by then, you'll be able to stick with it.

Read more articles about travel-related health topics. AAA.com/LiveWell

YourLife

Spread Joy, Not Germs, While Traveling

From bites to bugs, these tips will help you avoid common travel illnesses.

BY CHRISTINA ELSTON

IT ONLY TAKES a tiny bug to spoil a wonderful trip – and possibly cause lifelong health problems. Here are a few types of infectious you should work to prevent while traveling:

Insect-borne infections: Malaria, Zika virus, West Nile virus and dengue are transmitted via mosquito bites. Malaria is mainly found in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Zika is mainly transmitted in parts of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America and Mexico. Cases of West Nile virus have been reported throughout the continental U.S., and dengue is the leading cause of illness and death in the tropics and subtropics. Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever are among those transmitted by ticks – in the U.S. and abroad.

To protect yourself against insect bites, use an insect repellent containing DEET or picaridin on all exposed skin, wear long-sleeve shirts and long pants – especially at dusk – and sleep only in screened areas. If you are traveling to an area where malaria is prevalent, you'll also need to take preventive medication.

Food- and waterborne infections: Norovirus, salmonella, E. coli and Campylobacter can all lurk in food that is undercooked or has been contaminated during preparation, or from contaminated water. On the water front, tap water, fresh-squeezed juice, ice and fountain drinks can be risky in certain parts of the world.

Cook it, boil it, peel it or forget it is a basic guideline for safer eating, and bottled water is recommended in many parts of the world. The so-called "Can I Eat This?" app from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lets you search by country, source and type of food or drink to guide you to a safe meal.

Airborne infections: In transit and when you arrive, your travel will bring you into contact with lots of new people. That means you could also be exposed to many different types of infections.

A good pre-travel practice is to see your doctor for any vaccines you might need at least six weeks before your trip. These could include a flu shot or Tdap booster, or a vaccine against a disease that's prevalent where you're headed, such as hepatitis, typhoid or yellow fever. You should also take practical steps such as washing your hands frequently and keeping your distance from people who are ill.

You can also visit cdc.gov/travel for a wealth of additional information that will keep you healthy wherever you roam.

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Exercise Habits	%	AAA Index
Part of Regular Exercise Program (2+ times/week)	33%	122
Exercise at a Fitness Club	34%	129
Own Exercise Equipment	38%	141
Own Wearable Tech Device	34%	127
Own Ellipticals	34%	127
Own Treadmills	35%	131
Participate in Physical Exercise at Home	33%	122

Dieting Habits		
Actively on a Diet for Better Physical Fitness	35%	131
Actively on a Diet to Maintain Weight	35%	130
Actively on a Diet to Lose Weight	32%	120

Actions Taken as Result of Healthcare Advertising		
Obtained Information about Ailment/ Prescription Drug due to Magazine Advertisement	34%	128
Obtained Information about Ailment/ Prescription Drug due to Online Advertisement	33%	123
Asked Doctor to Prescribe a Specific Drug due to Advertisement	29%	109
Discussed an Ad with Doctor	35%	132

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