

## Food Forward Health Strategies for 2020

“You are what you eat,” is a maxim that most of us have heard at some point in our lives. More and more studies come out backing up this phrase, proving that the best way to be your best self whether that means losing weight, eating whole, or just feeling good is through your food.

A lot of people will transition into the new year (and new decade) with strong goals for their health and wellness. And like every year, around 80% will fail. I don’t say this to discourage, I say this to maximize. Instead of setting goals for your health that are far away, try implementing some simple rules into your life that act as baby steps to get you to where you want to be.

Whether you are consistently travelling for business via plane or car, or simply needing a refresh in what you eat, here are some science-backed ways to improve your health.

1. **Eat Whole and Eat More Plants.** Grab a fresh fruit or some nuts instead of a pre-packaged snack. This especially applies with airport/hotel food. Instead of the candy bar at the front desk, shoot for an apple and some nuts. Dr. Michael Greger from [How Not to Die](#) and [How Not to Diet](#) and his team of scientists discovered that a handful of nuts a day can reduce the risk of dying from heart disease, stroke, cancer, respiratory disease and infections. They are also high in calories and fiber, leaving you fuller for longer. Also virtually every study shows the benefits of a plant-based diet. Whether you go vegetarian or not, add more fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains as much as humanly possible.
2. **Don’t Skip Breakfast.** New studies from Dr. Greger show that this has no weight-loss benefit and that calories consumed in the morning don’t appear to count as much as evening calories. This is explained through chronobiology or how our body’s natural cycle is affected by the sun, moon, and seasons. Part of our built-in circadian rhythm is to burn more calories in the morning than any other time (read more in [How Not to Diet](#), Chapter 10). A good breakfast is also a great way to prepare for a day of travel, and crowd out the not-so-great food decisions that may come later.
3. **Stay Hydrated.** Especially on a plane. Nutritionist Lisa T. Kimmel explains, “Low humidity and recirculating air within the cabin as set-up for dehydration, which can worsen jet lag and cause fatigue.” Bring an empty reusable water bottle through TSA and refill before you get on the plan. “A good rule of thumb is to drink 8 ounces of water for every hour of the flight.”
4. **Keep Moving.** And I don’t necessarily mean through structured workouts. If you’re travelling to a new city, exercise and sightsee at the same time by walking or even running. Don’t sit in the uncomfortable airport chairs, walk and window-shop until you board burning both calories and time. Or engage in NEAT, Dr. Greger’s term for NonExercise Activity Thermogenesis or the heat given off by regular activities such as standing, moving, and fidgeting. These activities burn at least five times more calories a day than average exercise. Take the stairs instead of the escalator and spend more time singing, cleaning, gardening, laughing, and cooking dinner.
5. **Drink more tea and coffee.** Dr. Greger found that drinking a cup of tea can help you burn up to 10% more calories within an hour. And two cups of coffee increases your resting metabolic rate by about 10% over the next couple of hours. Better yet, drink both without milk.

Pick one, or all, as new habits and become one of the 20% who succeed in their health goals for 2020.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-7720689/The-12-diet-tricks-need.html>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/business-travel-diet-8-rules-to-lose-weight-and-stay-healthy/>