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## “Spring to Summer Health Tips”

By Dr. Julie T. Chen, M.D.

Integrative Medicine

San Jose, CA

[www.makinghealthyez.com](http://www.makinghealthyez.com)



As we transition solidly into Spring, we want to work on spring cleaning for our home but we also want to 'spring clean' our health and body as well. During the winter months, our body tends to store more fat which historically likely helped us to survive in cold weather when we as humans were in our hunting and gathering stage.

But in modern times, this tendency towards storing more fat during the winter time along with shorter sunlight hours, really puts a damper on our desire to be in optimal shape year round. So, as the daylight hours start to lengthen, so should the number of hours we spend on re-integrating activity into our daily routine.

Since Spring and Summer months also allow us to shed more weight because our body's not trying to store more fat to keep warm, our hard work with re-integrating activity and exercise into our day will definitely pay off.

In my clinic, I like to give my patients a few tips at a time so that the changes don't seem too daunting of a task. As a foundational concept to our Spring to Summer health transitional steps, it's important to remember that in order for us to make lasting and healthy changes to our body, you have to address three key areas of your life...diet, exercise, and sleep/relaxation time.

In regards to diet, the most important thing early on in a transition phase back into a healthier pattern and body, it's easier to add some healthy lifestyle changes rather than take away something harmful. So, keeping this in mind, my recommendation is to eat a medium size vegetable-laden salad with a vinaigrette-based (not cheese- or cream-based) salad dressing at the beginning of every meal. When you do this, you will naturally be more full and eat less of the less healthy foods. Make sure to drink lots of water as well so that you are again more full and will eat less unhealthy foods.

For exercise, I want you to think about just keeping your body moving at least 1-2 hours per day. It doesn't have to be in a gym. Walking to the store, walking your dog, or climbing stairs instead of taking elevators all count. So, just keep your body moving at least 1-2 hours per day. This will be an easy start to getting your body's metabolism humming a bit more efficiently.

Finally, your body needs to rest and feel relaxed for your metabolism to be at its optimal best. So, make it a priority to sleep at least 7-8 hours per night and implement at least one 5-minute relaxation period in the morning and afternoon so that your body isn't always in a stressed state. When your body is stressed and you are lacking sleep, you tend to be more hungry and are less able to shed weight.

So, for this 2012 Spring to Summer transition time, let's get moving on these changes...so that you can get the fat in your body moving off your hips and waist as well!

*Dr. Julie T. Chen, M.D. an integrative medicine physician who is board-certified in internal medicine and is also fellowship-trained and board-certified in integrative medicine. She has her own medical practice in San Jose, CA, is the medical director of corporation wellness at several Silicon Valley-based corporations, is on several medical expert panels of websites as well as non-profit organizations, is a recurring monthly columnist for several national magazines, and has been featured in radio, TV, newspaper, and magazine interviews. She incorporates many types of healing modalities into her practice including, but is not limited to, medical acupuncture, Chinese scalp acupuncture, clinical hypnotherapy, strain-counterstrain osteopathic manipulations, and biofeedback. To learn more about Dr. Julie, you can check out her website at [www.makinghealthyez.com](http://www.makinghealthyez.com).*

