



Caring for yourself – both physically and mentally – is vital to living a healthful life. That is one of the reasons we created the [Head-to-Toe Wellness Guide](#) on [drweil.com](#). It offers lifestyle, nutrition and supplement recommendations for various areas of the body, from brain and vision to sleep. This issue of *Balanced Living* keys off the idea of caring for

yourself by taking a look at a few topics: we give simple suggestions for protecting your skin during the summer months, look at supplements that can help to promote gut health, offer up a yoga pose that can help moderate unhealthy stress, link to some recipes featuring one of my favorite healthful foods, blueberries, and more.

Yours in health,

Andrew Weil, M.D.

## 4 Ways To Protect Your Skin This Summer

As the sun is making a more frequent appearance for those living in the Northern Hemisphere, it's even more important to protect the skin. No matter where you live (sunny or not), everyone should be aware of the risk for skin cancer. To help reduce this risk, [check your body for warning signs](#). Studies show that people who regularly inspect their skin can reduce their risk of melanoma by as much as 63 percent.

In addition, you can help prevent melanoma by protecting your skin from sun damage with the following tips:

- 1 Wear UV-protective clothing** or comfortable clothes that offer adequate coverage. Wear a hat with a tightly woven brim that's at least four inches wide. Make sure your sunglasses block at least 99 percent of UVA and UVB radiation to help prevent macular degeneration.

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## 7 Supplements To Promote A Healthy Gut

Gastrointestinal health and healthy digestion is important to overall health. Eighty percent of your immune system resides in your gut, and gut health promotes healthy immune function. While bowel function may not be near the top of your list of health priorities, it should be - [irritable bowel syndrome \(IBS\)](#) and inflammatory bowel disease are serious issues. If your gut is not healthy, you are not optimally able to digest, absorb, and assimilate nutrients, nor are you able to adequately detoxify waste. If you suffer from occasional indigestion, constipation, gas, IBS or other digestive complaints, simple changes to your diet, such as eliminating caffeine, food intolerances, and alcohol, and eating more ginger, turmeric and fermented foods can help. Stress man-

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# Monthly Wellness Challenge



## Starting A Gratitude Journal

Expressing gratitude is an effective way to enhance emotional well-being. This month start a Gratitude Journal - dedicate a notebook to record daily thoughts on what you are grateful for. Make mental notes during the day, keep the journal by your bed and enter your thoughts before sleeping.

## 4 Ways To Protect Your Skin This Summer

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- 2 The safest** and most effective way to protect yourself from sunburns, skin damage and skin cancer is simply to stay out of the sun - particularly between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., all the way through September.
- 3 Buy new sunscreen** with an SPF of 30 or higher. The sunscreen you used last summer should be replaced. (And don't be shy about using up the bottle - be generous with it.) The environmental working group ([www.EWG.org](http://www.EWG.org)) website lists healthier options for sunscreens with less chemical additives.
- 4 If you are planning a vacation** somewhere sunny, know that sand and water can reflect extra sunlight, so be vigilant if you go to the beach.

## 7 Ways To Promote A Healthy Gut

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agement, whether through practicing breathing exercises and guided visualization or getting regular, moderate exercise, can also be effective.

Prudent supplementation also has its place - the following have been found to help promote healthy digestion:

- 1 Psyllium.** This dried seed husk derived from the plantain does double duty: it can be used as a laxative when you experience constipation, but may also prevent diarrhea by adding bulk to your stool. It is helpful for those with IBS, and is good for general bowel maintenance. Always take psyllium with plenty of water.
- 2 Probiotics.** If you plan on traveling, are taking antibiotics, have slow digestion or experience excessive gas, [probiotic supplements](#) may help. These products contain "friendly" bacteria that can stabilize the digestive tract and aid in digestion.
- 3 Triphala.** This [ayurvedic](#) herbal mixture is designed for ongoing use. Triphala promotes regular bowel function through its mild laxative properties and helps regulate bowel tone.
- 4 Plant-Derived Digestive Enzymes.** For example, bromelain, derived from pineapples, can help digest specific nutrients and help in cases of food sensitivity.
- 5 Artichoke-Leaf Extract.** It may help relieve indigestion by increasing bile flow needed to digest fats.
- 6 Deglycyrrhized Licorice (DGL).** This herbal extract can soothe and protect the lining of the esophagus and stomach. It may be useful to treat acid reflux symptoms.
- 7 Peppermint Oil.** Enteric coated peppermint oil can be helpful with reducing symptoms of indigestion, but may worsen acid reflux symptoms.





