

## A healthful staycation: One week to a stronger you

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### Get ready

Before the week begins, you'll want to hammer out your itinerary, says [Lisa Himmelfarb](#), a Washington-based social worker who specializes in weight management. Instead of hotel reservations, maybe you'll want to snag spots in yoga and cycling classes. Schedule appointments with trainers and other experts ahead of time. And just like you'd hunt for a new bathing suit if you were headed to the beach, splurge on your exercise wardrobe and gear. Just remember to know your workout limits: Check with your doctor before going from zero to 60, and be careful in the heat.

### Day 1

*Clean the kitchen.* Dietician and TV host [Felicia Stoler](#) commands you to find your trigger foods and dump them. While you're at it, reorganize to make sure your healthiest food is the easiest to access, prepared to pop in your mouth immediately and at eye level. Pull out measuring cups and spoons to encourage you to dole out exact portion sizes rather than eyeballing them.

*Exercise without watching the clock.* If time constraints are your standard excuse for not working out enough, spend an hour or two on what you wish you could do regularly. (Don't have a clue? Consult with a personal trainer for a starter routine.)

*Write it all down.* [Luci Gabel](#), a Washington-based personal trainer and wellness consultant, encourages clients to keep a log of their thoughts, daily diet and problems. For this week (instead of a journal), start keeping track through nightly postcards. You can send them to yourself at the end of the week, so you'll have a reminder once you're back to work.

### Day 2

*Go on a supermarket sweep.* Wind your way through each aisle, examine nutrition labels, linger in the produce section and squeeze an unfamiliar veggie or two. If you happen to live near a farmers market, that's worth a visit, too, Stoler says. And bring home a few bags of healthy souvenirs.

*Walk it out.* Even if you're sore from yesterday, that shouldn't keep you from engaging in the simplest and best forms of exercise. Grab a water bottle and see how far you can go.

*Now you're cooking.* Crack open those bags from this morning's shopping trip and whip up something you've never made before.

### Day 3

*Change it up.* Sample a form of exercise you've never tried. Maybe it's those cannonball-like weights with handles, called kettlebells, at the gym. Maybe it's a water aerobics class. You might just stumble on a new

regular routine.

*Plan a field trip.* Whether you love visiting museums or researching your family history, spend the next few hours doing just that. It'll improve your spirit, says George Washington University weight-management expert [Arthur Frank](#), who adds that improved mental health can boost your physical health.

#### **Day 4**

*Stretch your limits.* Hone that mind-body connection with a yoga class. It'll feel mighty good after using those muscles the day before.

*Take a hike.* Or a bike. Or a swim. Just do something physical in nature that reminds you how enjoyable moving your body can be. Gabel recommends a ride along the [Mount Vernon Trail](#) or renting a boat and paddling the Potomac. Don't forget to pack a healthy picnic.

#### **Day 5**

*Master the music.* The right tunes can energize you or help you calm down, so spend some time assembling personalized playlists. Then test out your cardio soundtrack with a workout to see how motivating your selections are.

*Sample swaps.* Figure out how to satisfy your favorite food cravings with less fat and fewer calories. For local mom Stacey Capers, who appeared on ["The Biggest Loser,"](#) it's been easy to do: "If we have a hankering for french fries, I get sweet potatoes and we bake them," she says.

*Get off the couch.* No plopping down and watching TV after dinner tonight. Clear the table, lace up your sneakers and go for an evening stroll. Your neighborhood would be just fine, or for a treat, Gabel recommends wandering around the D.C. monuments.

#### **Day 6**

*Think ahead.* Take stock of what you've done in terms of exercise and what you'd like to do when "reality" returns. What fitness classes fit into your work schedule? Could you bike to the office? "Give it a trial run so that there are no unknowns to it," Himmelfarb says.

*Make ahead.* Hopefully, you've figured out a few quick recipes you can throw together no matter how busy you are. But it can't hurt to have a few meals in the freezer ready to go. Himmelfarb says it can be more fun to plan a party around it. If your friends dig the idea, you could even set up a regular monthly date, like a book club, to prep food.

#### **Day 7**

*Finish up with one last workout* without worrying about what time it is. But you do have another important appointment today: the spa. Gabel says there's nothing quite like a post-workout massage: "It just feels like you've earned it so much more," she says. A bubble bath at home isn't a bad idea either.