

A Dozen Things  
You Can Do  
to Keep Yourself  
—and the Earth—  
HEALTHY



Every day you strive to live a balanced life because you care about your health and the world. But did you know...

- Fruits and vegetables can retain up to 13 pesticides even after washing and cooking
- Only 7 percent of industrial chemicals used in the United States (more than 1 million pounds every year!) have undergone basic testing for toxicity
- One round-trip flight from New York to Los Angeles produces nearly 1 ton of global warming pollution



Simple steps  
can make a  
big difference.

The more information you have, the better choices you can make to keep yourself, your home—and the planet—healthy and safe. Read on for a dozen ideas of how to stay healthy now. And visit [www.simple-steps.org](http://www.simple-steps.org) for more easy, realistic tips!





1.

Choose organic produce when you can to protect yourself from hazardous chemicals. Non-organic apples, imported grapes, bell peppers, and strawberries, in particular, have large amounts of pesticide residue that has been linked to neurological problems such as learning disabilities in children, Parkinson's, and cancer.



2.



Use non-toxic personal care products. Some antibacterial soaps and toothpastes contain a chemical called triclosan that can accumulate inside your body and may harm your health.



3.

Eat fish low in mercury. Eating too much mercury can cause serious health problems, especially in children and pregnant women, sometimes causing permanent damage. Print out NRDC's wallet-sized guide to mercury in fish or our sushi guide at [www.nrdc.org/health/effects/mercury](http://www.nrdc.org/health/effects/mercury). Put one in your wallet—or wherever you'll refer to it when grocery shopping or out for dinner.



4.



Use non-toxic and natural household cleaning products. Americans use an average of 25 gallons of toxic, hazardous chemical products per year in their homes, most of which are in household cleaning products.

Many common everyday chemicals can harm your health, causing headaches, skin rashes, eye irritation, coughing, wheezing, and more. Baking soda, hydrogen peroxide, lemon, and vinegar are safe and effective alternatives.

5.

Choose flea pills for your dog or cat instead of flea collars or powders. Toxic insecticides in flea and tick collars leave behind hazardous chemicals that can get on your skin, furniture, and floors and linger in your home long after you have used them. Many of these chemicals have been linked to neurological problems such as learning disabilities in children and Parkinson's.



6.



Avoid chlorinated household products such as paper towels, toilet paper, and coffee filters because studies have linked chlorine and chlorination by-products to cancer. Unbleached and recycled products can be found at many stores (see NRDC's shopping guide at [www.nrdc.org/paper](http://www.nrdc.org/paper)). Buying tissue paper products made from post-consumer content also helps curb global warming pollution and save forests, water, and energy.

# Saving Energy

7.

Drastically cut the amount of energy your computer and monitor use by putting them in sleep mode when they aren't in use. And avoid screen savers—those moving images on your monitor can cost an extra \$50 or more of electricity a year!



8.



Plug televisions, computer equipment, game consoles and stereos into power strips that can be switched off at night or when not in use. Even when you think these these products are off, together, their standby consumption can be equivalent to that of a 60-watt light bulb running continuously.

9.

Replace regular light bulbs with a compact fluorescent lamp (CFL). A CFL costs more upfront than a standard bulb, but in the end can save you \$30 to \$60 on electricity during its lifetime—and it keeps 1 ton of global warming pollution out of the air.




## Bonus tip!



### Look for the Energy Star.


Energy Star certifies that products are designed to use significantly less energy and save you money on everything from computers and DVD players to refrigerators and washing machines to heating and cooling systems.

## People On the Move

-  **10.** Inflate your tires once a month or as necessary. If every American kept their tires properly inflated, we could save 2.8 billion gallons of gasoline a year—and help curb global warming pollution.



-  **11.**  Replace the air filter and tune up your engine regularly. A new air filter could get you 10 percent more miles per gallon and a tune-up can boost miles per gallon from 4 percent to 40 percent.

-  **12.** Swap a flight for the train or stay local if you can. Air travel is one of the fastest-growing sources of global warming pollution: the average jet pumps almost 1 ton of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere for every passenger it carries roundtrip from Los Angeles to New York. So try a train or host a teleconference instead of face-to-face meetings when possible—and make the most of each time you fly.





[www.nrdc.org](http://www.nrdc.org)

**Natural Resources Defense Council** is America's most effective environmental action organization. Founded in 1970, NRDC combines legal and scientific advocacy with the grassroots power of 1.2 million citizens in strategic campaigns to curb global warming, move America beyond oil, revive the world's oceans, save endangered wild places, stem the tide of toxic chemicals, and accelerate the greening of China.

*New York*

40 West 20 Street  
New York, NY 10011  
Phone 212-727-2700

*Washington, DC*

1200 New York Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone 202-289-6868

*San Francisco*

111 Sutter Street  
San Francisco, CA 94104  
Phone 415-875-6100

*Los Angeles*

1314 Second Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90401  
Phone 310-434-2300

*Montana*

Box 70  
Livingston, MT 59047  
Phone 406-222-9561

*Midwest*

101 North Wacker Drive  
Suite 609  
Chicago, IL 60606  
Phone 312-663-9900

*Beijing*

G.T. International Centre  
Room 1606  
3A Building 1  
Yongandongli  
Jianguomenwai St.  
Beijing, China 100022

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