



9 ways friends can help boost your health

It's true! Amazing new research shows that friends boost your health.

By Yuki Hayashi



Friends come with many health benefits, making you happier and helping to improve your overall health. You've always known it to be true, but medical studies more than back up these claims.

Here are nine incredible health benefits that come from having [best buds](#).

1. You'll live longer

So says a landmark longitudinal 1992-2005 study of seniors over age 70, by researchers in Adelaide, Australia's Flinders University, and published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

Researchers tracked the seniors' annual survival rates and found those with social networks of friends and acquaintances generally lived longer. After controlling for factors like health and lifestyle, the most socially connected seniors were 22 per cent less likely to die over the course of the study than those who were the least social.



And here's the kicker: Having close contact with relatives had no impact on survival rates. Friends make the difference!

2. Friends lower your [stress levels](#)

Nothing can cut work or relationship stress like dishing to a trusted gal pal, right?

Whether it's just chatting on the phone or enjoying a coffee together, yakking it up with friends is vital for health and wellness. So don't blow off your girl-time – consider it part of your preventative-health regimen.

3. Friends your healthy eating habits

Starting a healthy eating plan with a friend is a great way to stay motivated and reach your dietary goals.

Be alert to the flipside of this though: [Friends also reinforce one another's bad eating habits](#), says research from the State University of New York at Buffalo, published in a 2009 issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Make a commitment to one another that meal times together will be spent eating right.

Having a strong-willpower kind of day? Order first. Chances are good that if you order that kids' size ice cream cup, she will too.

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