

It's January, which usually means all but the most disciplined are dragging their you know what into a New Year full of healthy resolutions. And coincidentally, at the kickoff of another year, like clockwork, big business bust out their "top 10" list of the hottest health trends. Those lists typically include wearable fitness technology, meditation apps, varying celeb Insta workouts and youtube training, the latest toning shoes, waist trainers, electric ab belts, basically anything that vibrates and jiggles, detox diets, to weight loss pills, powders & potions. Basically, the good, the bad and the too good to be true. Perhaps now more than ever, the health and fitness world seems full of contradictions. We need more rest, but we need to move more. Optimal mindfulness can come from ditching our phones, but possibly from downloading the perfect meditation app. Meanwhile on the nutrition front, drinking kombucha can reduce heart disease and blood sugar levels, but it can also greatly increase calorie consumption. Its all very confusing. Looking ahead to 2020 what fitness trends should we ditch or do?

Ditch: Waist trainers are meant to squeeze your midsection and "train" your figure into an hourglass shape. They're basically a corset with a modern twist. The waist trainer a trend that will wistfully continue into 2020, may be due, in part, to celebrities posting photos and enthusiastic endorsements on social media. The famous may swear by them, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're effective and safe. In my opinion, these corset type contraptions are useless at best, and dangerous at worst. According to the American Board of Cosmetic Surgery (ABCS) blog, a waist trainer will not drastically change your body shape. Even if you have the type of body that lends itself to that shape temporarily, your waist trainer is unlikely to have a lasting effect. In fact, according to Nat Straub a trainer and head product development at Solidcore, wearing a brace or trainer for extended periods of time will actually weaken your core as your muscles are not being trained to support our body. The good news? Your body has its own built

in corset called your transverse abdominals, that work to keep your organs in place. Good ol' fashioned hard work is the only way to cinch the waist and gain abdominal strength.

Fitness trends come and go, and I am hopeful that this one is on its way out for good. Well they are fashionable, toning shoes appear to promise a quick-and-easy fitness solution, which we realize people are always in to. But, before you plunk down your plastic, can a pair of shoes really help you burn more calories, tone your butt, banish cottage cheese thighs, and curb joint pain? A new study, released by the American Council on Exercise (ACE), shows that toning shoes including Skechers Shape-Ups, MBT (Masai Barefoot Technology), and Reebok EasyTone don't help you exercise more intensely, burn more calories, or improve your muscle strength and tone. Based on several study results, and at \$60 for a pair of toning sandals and up to \$250 for toning athletic shoes. "I'm inclined to believe these shoes will only slim your wallet.

Who hasn't wished for a miracle product to hit the market in 2020 that can help you get fit, slim, and toned without putting in any extra effort? Not really a gadget, these products would advertise their effects like an "Exercise in a Bottle" and claimed to do the exercising for you while you go on about your day. There are many different weight loss gimmicks out there. This includes all sorts of pills, drugs and natural supplements. These are claimed to help you lose weight, or at least make it easier to lose weight combined with other methods. They tend to work via one or more of these mechanisms: Reduce appetite, making you feel fuller so that you eat fewer calories. Reduce absorption of nutrients like fat, making you take in fewer calories. And increase fat burning, making you burn more calories. Unfortunately, NO supplement or pill really works that well for weight loss. They may give your metabolism a bit of a nudge and help you lose a few pounds, but that's where it ends, unfortunately. Clean eating, cutting carbs and eating more protein are still the best ways to lose weight, and work better than all the diet pills combined.

It's hard to find a "diet" or product in 2020 that doesn't claim to detox our bodies. Detox diets promise to rid your body of toxins, detox your liver (sounds wonderful after the Christmas break) and cleanse your body, while also contributing to speedy

weight loss. However, there is no diet that can detox your body. In fact, our livers do a fine job of this alone. Often, we forget, and underestimate just how perfectly fine tuned our bodies are. Companies selling these products are out to make a buck. Actually, many of these detox diets can cut out nutritious food groups and lead to micronutrient deficiencies. I would recommend eating real food, unprocessed food and increasing your fruit, vegetable and water intake greatly.

Do: Since the introduction of the Fitbit in 2009, wearable fitness trackers have taken the country by storm and continue to be as popular as we head into 2020. These days, it seems everyone is sporting one of these little gadgets on their wrist or clipped to a belt. People who use them love them, too. Give them a chance and they'll talk your ear off about how many steps they've taken that day, how many hours of sleep they got last night, how much weight they've lost, how their resting heart rate has improved, and on and on. Activity trackers are ideal for any minor or major fitness goal. This includes training for a triathlon, losing weight and keeping fit. A fitness tracker acts like a personal trainer that you carry around. Why do people love their fitness trackers so much? The main benefit, most of them will tell you, is that wearing the tracker motivates them to be more active. For many people, exercise is more rewarding when they can see numbers in black and white telling them how well they're doing. It's their *atta boy/girl*. They get more excited about hitting a specific target, like 10,000 steps per day, than about the vague goal of being healthier. Personal fitness trackers eliminate guess work out of workouts. They ensure that you are able to focus on enjoying better health and getting in shape through tracking the steps you take, calories burned and your heart rate. Whatever works I say.

With the official start of 2020, the desire to be physically fit whatever that means to you? is at a seasonal high. Whether due to that New Year's resolution you promised yourself you would keep, or the spring break vacation only a few months away, you want to look and feel good. Unfortunately, for those late to the gym game, the ones that didn't quite follow through on their New Year's Resolutions but have big plans to crush them starting NOW, what do you do? Do you get a gym membership and promise that you'll go every

morning right before overspending at Starbucks. Maybe. For some yes. But honestly? Probably not. Why? Well one, those gyms are just too damn crowded this time of year. And second, regardless of what many popular gym chains may want members to believe, "gymtimidation" is very real thing. No one likes to enter a gym after a Holiday season of avoiding doing just that, only to glue themselves to the closest cardio machine and hope for the best. Enter the 2020 fitness trend YouTube, the savior to all who hate the gym. There are hundreds of channels that specialize in providing a full workout from the comfort of one's own home. No excuses sit back—don't relax—and get your move on.

Mindfulness as a field of research continues to grow in 2020. And preliminary studies are beginning to show the benefits for the brain, body, and our relationships. Meditation might not be for you -- and that's totally okay. But let's get one thing straight: The suggestion to be more mindful is something we can all benefit from. Mindfulness is not a substitute for medication however it's merely another tool to cope. Should you choose to meditate from the comfort of your smartphones, there are countless meditation apps. Paying attention to the breath is an easy and accessible tool to help you calm down. And just because you meditate to focus on the present moment, doesn't mean you can't also spend some time letting your mind wander. Both are good for you.

There will always be a new fitness trend or fad. The key is to have realistic expectations. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. There are plenty of fantastic products on the market but know how to use them to enhance your workouts, not replace them. Remember, there is no great result that comes from little effort. Minor changes normally do not bring about major results.

Here's to a Healthy & Happy 2020.

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