

Being Social: The Secret to a Healthy Life

Eat right. Work out. Get enough sleep. We all know the keys to a healthy lifestyle and have probably made all of them part of our new year's resolutions (I swear I'll use that gym membership this year!). But a surprising [study by the National Academy of Science](#) recently added to the list: be social.

Sure, our relationships matter to our happiness, but we now know that the depth of our interpersonal relationships have just as much impact on our overall health as diet or exercise. You read that right – having a lot of friends affects the likelihood of, say, keeping a healthy blood pressure just as much as maintaining a healthy diet does.

To conduct the study, researchers looked at the relationships and health of 14,000 people. Relationships were classified both quantitatively and qualitatively (number of friends as well as depth of friendship) while health was tracked by basic markers such as obesity and hypertension rates.



Perhaps most surprisingly, at different times in life the number of friends we have matters more than the depth of the friendship. At each end of the age spectrum – childhood and senior years – the more friends the better. But to middle-aged adults, the quality of the relationships has a greater influence on health. Researchers surmise that the stress that comes along with balancing careers, children and aging parents might make the middle aged more likely to value fewer, stress-free relationships.

So what do we learn from this? Fundamentally, it's obvious: no matter your age, be around people more often. If you tend to prefer Netflix dates with your cat to a dinner with friends, then consider changing it up this weekend. If you are a social butterfly then good for you! It pays to invest in those

relationships—in more ways than one.

But there is also an institutional lesson to be learned. CNSI is now has more than 1,000 employees. As we continue to evolve and improve our company's culture and benefits, these findings will come under serious consideration. How can we encourage employee interaction, collaboration and friendship in and out of the office? Stay tuned – we'll keep you updated on what we come up with.

How would you encourage a social atmosphere in the workplace? Do you think it helps or hinders performance? Let us know by joining the conversation on Twitter. Find us [@CNSICorp](#)