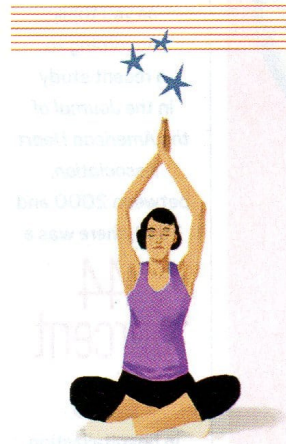




# BOOST YOUR HEALTH IN Two Minutes or Less

Five speedy tricks to work a little wellness into even the busiest days. BY Kate Rockwood

condition that can lead to stroke, even in people who were otherwise healthy or weren't exhibiting any symptoms. If you topple easily, don't panic—but it might be time to see your physician for a checkup.



## 5 SECONDS: REACH FOR THE STARS

A small 2015 study in *Health Psychology* found that people who sit up straighter feel stronger than their slouchy counterparts. Before you start to sag, stretch. "You don't even have to stand up," says Renee Chester Levine, an instructor at Bloom Yoga Studio in Chicago. "Reach overhead, cross your right arm over your left, and touch your palms. You'll release the tension that makes it so easy to slump."

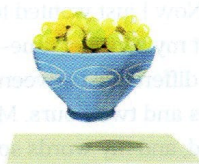
## 20 SECONDS: STAND ON ONE LEG

It's a quick way to test your brain health: A 2015 study in *Stroke* found that the inability to balance on one leg for at least 20 seconds was linked to reduced cognitive function and an increased risk of cerebral small vessel disease, a



### TRY THIS!

When researchers from Cornell University studied the food that subjects kept on their kitchen counters, they found that women who had breakfast cereal on their counter weighed 20 pounds more, on average, than those who stashed it in a cupboard or didn't buy it in the first place. The ones who displayed a fruit bowl were about 13 pounds lighter than women who did not. So swap that cereal box for a bowl of grapes.



## 60 SECONDS: NUKE YOUR DISH SPONGE

"If I come back in my next life as a bacterium, I would love to live in a sponge. They're moist and full of food—everything bacteria need to thrive," says Charles Gerba, PhD, a microbiologist at the University of Arizona in Tucson. When Gerba analyzed 325 kitchen sponges, he found that about 15.4 percent contained salmonella and many more had *E. coli*. To nix the ick, microwave a damp sponge on high for one minute.



## 2 MINUTES: TAKE A LOOP AROUND THE OFFICE

A quick stroll can help offset sedentary desk time. Sitting or standing didn't have much effect on participants' mortality risk in a 2015 study, but an extra two minutes of light movement per hour reduced it by 33 percent. So get going!

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