

¡Cuídate, Mujer! Self-Care and the Modern Latina

18 OCTOBER / 2019

How many times do you say “¡Cuídate, Mujer!” to your amigas and comadres?

How many times do you hear them say it to you? I hear it a lot. My comadre, Liz, almost always ends our phone calls with, “¡Cuídate, Mujer!”



The Age of Self-Care

Self-Care, or at least talking about self-care, is definitely trending right now. And that’s a good thing, Comadres.

How are you doing when it comes to self-care? Latinas are famosas for putting everyone else first. We put ourselves last. Siempre estamos cuidando a somebody else.

At De Las Mías, we are all about inspiring you to take good care of you.

In the days of our mothers and grandmothers, when you heard some Chismosa say “ La Fulana se cuida muy bien,” it meant she had her hair and nails done. “Se cuida bien,” meant she took care of her looks and wore a girdle. Maybe she went out and bought herself new shoes or an outfit.

For us, self-care means much more than a mani-pedi. It means genuinely taking care of your mind, body, and soul.

Physical Activity & Taking Care of Your Body

What I’m talking about today, though, is for you to think about self-care in the context of taking care of your body.

Right now, take a moment and ask yourself, “How do I take care of my body?”

Make a list.

Does moving your body get on that list?

If you are like most Latinas, even if you know that moving that cuerpo of yours is key to self-care, you probably don’t do it. No tienes tiempo, ni ganas. But because we want you healthy and poderosa, we want you to stop and think about taking care of your body as a vitally important part of being a healthy Super Mujer!

Here are some research-based facts to consider:

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that adults ages 18 to 64 get 150 minutes of moderate activity per week. That’s about 30 minutes a day for 5 days.
- Only 23% of all American adults meet these guidelines.
- By some estimates, only 9% of Latinas meet these guidelines.
- Almost half of Latinas in the U.S. report never engaging in any leisure time physical activity.

Here’s the good news: Research shows that Latinas who know others who exercise are much more likely to exercise themselves. ¡Así que dale gas, Mujer! And start hanging out with those ladies who go for walks, or Zumba, or to the gym, or dance in front of the mirror when no one is watching!

Allégate a las buenas y serás unas de ellas.

#DELASMIASDICHOS

Move for 30 Minutes a Day

If you are using our Healthy Lifestyle Checklist, you will see that “Move for 30 minutes” is right there on the list for you to check off every day.

Move for 30 minutes a day. It is one of the healthiest habits you can practice. And it doesn't have to be hard. Here are some simple ideas:

- Break it up in 10-minute chunks. My comadre Mary with diabetes goes for 10 minutes after each meal. This helps lower her blood sugar and makes her feel great.
- Go for two 15-minute walks, like I do with my dog. One in the morning, one in the afternoon. Remember, it doesn't have to be all at once.
- Call your comadre and go for a walk n' talk! Come on, you know you want to. Walking and

talking with your comadre is good for the body and the soul!

- Find a physical activity that gives you joy and do it for 30 minutes every day!
- Anímate and go to Zumba! Dancing to Latin tunes is so much fun! I haven't made it the full hour yet, but so what? I feel great when I go and the music is great!
- Get a bike! Go for a bike ride. It's the closest thing to flying!
- Take a yoga class. It doesn't have to be from a fancy studio. Check out the local YMCA or rec center. There are lots of on-line resources for yoga too. Try one!
- Dance to the music in your own living room. Dance with your kids!
- Clean the house! Do it for 15 minutes at a time. Mopping is good exercise and so is vacuuming.
- If you sit in front of a compu all day, get up every hour and walk for 5 minutes.
- Take the steps instead of the elevator. Park your car further away from the store so you can add a few steps.

The Benefits of Physical Activity

Research proves that the benefits of physical activity are great:

- Prevent chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and stroke (the three leading health-related causes of death)
- Help manage your weight
- Make your muscles stronger
- Improves your mood
- Promote strong bones, muscles, and joints
- Condition heart and lungs
- Build overall strength and endurance
- Improve sleep
- Lower your chances of depression
- Get more energy
- Build your self-esteem
- Relieve your stress
- Increase your chances of living longer

Sources: Centers for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services