



Secrets of Super-Powerful Women

Fourteen-hour days. Endless rubber-chicken dinners. Constant travel. Welcome to the world of your average congresswoman. So how does she stay healthy and fit? Ten top lawmakers share the tricks that will work for you, too. BY ELEANOR CLIFT

BALANCE

Fact

Build small pockets of exercise into your day. Research shows that three 10-minute bouts daily are as effective as one 30-minute workout when it comes to weight loss.

What keeps busy women going and going? Regular workouts, say the congresswomen FITNESS spoke to.



Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-New York

"I love to walk. When I'm in Washington, I walk in Rock Creek Park and around the Capitol grounds. You can get a good workout just going up and down the stairs of the Capitol a few times a day. In New York, I take walks in Chappaqua with my husband and our dog Seamus."

Healthiest habit: "Drinking lots of water."

Worst habit: "Indulging my passion for chocolate more often than I should."

Best stress buster: "Listening to music, spending time with my family and calling friends when I'm on the road."

How she keeps from eating too much: "At events, I don't eat while standing. When I sit down to dinner, I try not to eat the extras, like bread. And if I'm scheduled to go to three dinners, I only eat one!"

Her tips for staying healthy on the go: "Walk whenever you can. Try not to eat in the car. Keep fruit in your briefcase. And if you're driving past an ice cream shop, keep driving!"

The number-one thing women should do for their health: "Never start smoking, and if you do smoke, quit ASAP."



Senator Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska

"I ride my bike to work. I've caught some of the guards by surprise when I wheel into the Capitol and say, 'I've got to vote; where can I leave my bike?' One guard said, 'You're who, and you have to do what?!'"

Favorite workout: "Shooting hoops with my husband and two teenage sons. I'm a lousy shot, but it's good family time."

Healthiest habit: "I'm not a junk food eater. I never have been."

Worst habit: "I can get so busy I forget to eat, and then I'm tired and unfocused."

Best stress buster: "I get home, and one of the boys has a project he forgot to tell me about, and we work on that. Or the dogs need to be walked. Concentrating on family helps me flush my mind."

How she keeps from eating too much: "I'm

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such a motor mouth, I don't think about eating at receptions. When I have to sit down to a rubber-chicken dinner, I don't eat the vegetables if they're overdone; I just pick at the chicken."

What she can't say no to: "Cookies, any and all kinds."

Her daily must-have: "A cup and a half of coffee in the morning, with extra cream. Yep, cream."

Her rules for staying healthy on the go: "Trips back home take up to 12 hours. I make sure I'm drinking water all the time, and that I have an energy or breakfast bar in my purse."

The number-one thing women should do for their health: "Don't take it for granted. Get a checkup every year."



Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wisconsin

"When I exercise regularly, I find I'm more focused, have more endurance and can accomplish a lot more."

Typical routine: "Ideally, I work out five days a week. I do lunges for my legs and Army push-ups for upper-body strength, adding free weights for my arms, shoulders and upper back. For cardio, I use the elliptical trainer. It's a good calorie burn and helps keep my weight in check."

Healthiest habit: "Insisting that workout time is built into my schedule."

Worst habit: "One word: chocolate."

Healthy-eating lesson she learned the hard way: "Talk more and eat

I'm such a **motor mouth**, I don't think about eating at receptions."

less at events with food. In my first term, wanting to be polite, I ate at every gathering and put on the dreaded 'freshman 15.'

The number-one thing women should do for their health: "When I turned 40, five years ago, my doctor told me I would begin to lose muscle mass and bone density. The good news is that it's preventable with the right kind of exercise. My advice to young women is to start exercising now to avoid problems later."



Rep. Jo Ann Emerson, R-Missouri

"As a member of Congress, you never really get to leave your work—or your stress—at the office. But it helps if you can focus on physical activity. Plus, being on an exercise machine keeps you from checking your BlackBerry."

Healthiest habit: "I drink lots of water. There's nothing better, and I know I'm getting no caffeine, preservatives or calories."

How she keeps from eating too much: "I try to begin each day with a breakfast of fruit and then wait an hour before eating anything else. Salads, fruits and vegetables are the focus of my diet, and

I do tae kwon do in the gym three days a week. I'm the first woman member of Congress with a **black belt.**"

I minimize my intake of carbohydrates."

The indulgence she can't live without: "The Wednesday fried chicken blue-plate special in the Capitol dining room. I don't have much of a sweet tooth, but fried chicken can make me weak in the knees!"

The number-one thing women should do for their health: "Establish good habits now. For instance, cooking rather than eating out is almost always a better option."



Rep. Melissa Bean,
D-Illinois

"For a lot of us, the only exercise we get is walking."

You go to the floor and you have three votes, and then you just get back to your office and they call votes again. Sometimes you're making that trip five times in a couple of hours."

Favorite workout: "When I'm home, it's taking walks with my husband. My daughters, who are 16 and 14, are trying to get me into biking."

Best nudge: "My daughters have been on me to stop with the caffeinated sodas and to drink more water."

Healthiest habit: "Walking."

Worst habit: "I have lots—not enough exercise, poor eating habits, no sleep."

Best stress buster: "Reading something that's not political. I loved *Into Thin Air*, by Jon Krakauer."

Best-kept congressional secret: She and other members run back to the cloakroom to grab peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches in the five minutes between votes. "I think that's what keeps most members of Congress alive!"



Senator Mary L. Landrieu,
D-Louisiana

"I used to be so intimidated by the weight machines, I didn't want to use them. But my trainer talked me into it, and now I can't exercise without them."

Her typical workout: "Three times a week, early in the morning after my two kids leave for school, I head to the gym for weight training. I get my cardio from walking—our dog, to work, back and forth from my office to the Senate floor to vote."

Why she loves exercise: "I haven't lost as much weight as I'd like to—it's coming off slowly. But my lower-back pain vanished after I started lifting weights."

Healthiest habit: "I'm not a big snacker. I might eat too much, but it's usually healthy food."

Worst habit: "I let stress get to me more than I should."

The number-one thing women should do for their health: "Try not to work on weekends. Take time for yourself and relax."



Rep. Shelley Moore Capito,
R-West Virginia

"I run about four miles four days a week, whether I'm at home or in Washington. And I lift weights twice a week."

Favorite workout: "My regular tennis game on Saturday with my very good friends whom I've been playing with for years."

Healthiest habit: "Diligent exercise. It shows up in my heart rate and blood pressure, which are healthy, and my cholesterol, which is very manageable."

Worst habit: "Bread and butter. I love it."

The one thing she needs every day: "Eight hours of sleep, at least. Twelve hours is even better!"

How she keeps from eating too much: "I go for nuts first. Almonds are good for you, and they fill you up. I eat small portions of other foods, and if there's dessert, I try to push it away. I can't say I always do."

The number-one thing women should do for their health: "Find someone who has similar interests and build a friendship around your exercise. I have spent some of the most enjoyable parts of my life walking and running with a friend."



Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-New York

“Three days a week, I exercise in the House gym from 7 to 8 a.m. I do tae kwon do. I’m the first woman member of Congress with a black belt. On weekends, I do yoga and Pilates and lift weights.”

Healthiest habit: “I start the day with a high-energy vegetable-juice drink. I grind up vegetables with an apple in my juicer—it’s really refreshing.”

Worst habit: “I’m sleep-deprived.”

Best stress buster: “Walking up the steps of the Capitol and thinking about all that’s gone on there before me.”

Pet peeve: “In the cloakroom, on the House floor, there are always candy and chips. I carry carrots and celery with me.”

The number-one thing women should do for their health: “Make time to exercise. You’re the only one who can make yourself healthy and strong.”



Rep. Deborah Pryce, R-Ohio

“My 5-year-old daughter, Mia, is as demanding as any personal trainer. My weekends are spent with her—biking, hiking and chasing!”

Healthiest habit: “The incredible amount of walking I do in Washington. My office is a quarter mile from the House floor.”

Worst habit: “Not getting enough sleep, thanks to late-night votes and committee activities.”

Best stress buster: “Exercise. It’s as therapeutic for me mentally as it is physically.”

How she keeps from eating too much: “Politics requires me to speak a great deal, making it next to impossible to overeat at functions. I try to stick to salads, fruit and skim milk at lunch.”

The number-one thing women should do for their health: “Stay out of the sun!”



Rep. Loretta Sanchez, D-California

“I just did a nine-day around-the-world trip for work. I could feel myself becoming rundown, so I went for a 10-mile run. It felt so good.”

Her typical workout: “Three days a week, I spend an hour lifting weights, doing core exercises and improving my balance. In Washington, I walk three miles at 6 a.m. with other Congress members. When I’m back home, I run anywhere from three to seven miles at the community-college track.”

What she can’t say no to: “Chocolate. I try to look away and tell myself, ‘No chocolate, no chocolate, no chocolate.’”

How she keeps from eating too much: “I usually have a bag of almonds in my purse. Sometimes I have three events a night. I’ll ask the server for just a vegetable or fruit plate.”

The number-one thing women should do for their health: “Studies show that the more you work out, the smarter your brain is. Find the discipline to exercise and eat right.” ●