



# PARTY HEALTHY

## Tips from a Rock Star Doctor

by April Thompson

**T**he holidays can emulate a rock star's life: a wearying travel schedule and social calendar, overindulging in rich food and drink, restless nights in unfamiliar beds. Fortunately, celebrity tips and tricks can help us through a hectic season, according to Gabrielle Francis, naturopath and author of *The Rockstar Remedy: A Rock & Roll Doctor's Prescription for Living a Long, Healthy Life*. The New York City doctor has toured with some of the biggest rock acts in the world as their on-call naturopath, chiropractor, acupuncturist and massage therapist.

"Health is the new rock-n-roll," says Francis. "Today's artists are more health and socially conscious. I believe you can 'party' and be healthy, and the stars I work with are proving that." She approaches clients' lifestyles flexibly and openly, understanding where they are, instead of forcing big, sudden changes on them. "Life is a celebration. My philosophy is that what you do for your health must fit into your lifestyle and be enjoyable, rather than isolating or extreme," says Francis.

This can mean mitigating habits, not necessarily dropping them. For example, rather than force clients off coffee, which is acidic, Francis suggests adding spices like cinnamon, vanilla, cardamom or nutmeg that can help neutralize the acid.

Many stars Francis has worked with maintain a stricter regimen off the road, knowing that touring is more about damage control and doing their utmost to stay healthy under more difficult circumstances. The same holds true for those of us that inevitably encounter disruptions due to work, travel or holidays that can throw off healthy habits.

### The Healthy Traveler

Knowledge is power, and so is planning ahead for travel away from healthy options at home. Francis arms clients with best choices for on-the-go foods and beverages at the airport, gas station or restaurant. Musician and actor Adrian Grenier, quoted in Francis' book, developed a "food tripping" app available at [Tinyurl.com/SHFT-com-app](http://Tinyurl.com/SHFT-com-app) to help travelers find alternatives to fast food on the road.

My favorite healthy recipe? Don't smoke anything. No drugs. Easy on the drink. Eat a balanced diet with friends whenever possible. Avoid crazy health fads. Don't drink and drive. Don't walk and text. Be a good person.

~Joe Satriani, guitarist

Most airports are blessed with healthy options, says Francis, who suggests choosing wraps over sandwiches and easy-to-carry energy bars delivering at least 10 grams of protein. She also likes coconut water, seltzer water and herbal teas.

Spent wisely, time in airports can offer healthful opportunities. "Connecting to other people is one of the most important keys to our emotional well-being. Layovers are a great time to call and catch up with loved ones," says Francis. "You can also get some points on your step tracker by taking the stairs rather than escalator and walking around or stretching rather than sitting in the airport." Meditation is also recommended, whether in the airport or on the plane, she adds.

## Small Adjustments

For rock stars and holiday travelers alike, restful sleep can be one of the hardest habits to maintain. When changing time zones, Francis recommends staying hydrated, avoiding alcohol and taking melatonin before bed for three nights after landing in a new time zone to help reset the body's circadian rhythms.

"I know I'm not likely to get eight hours of sleep at night, so I try to supplement that during the day by taking naps or just shutting down for a couple hours," says Dave Navarro, a guitarist who came of age with the rock band Jane's Addiction.

If imbibing at the bar or a holiday soiree, Francis suggests gluten-free alcohol like tequila, gin, sake or vodka.

While wine is blessed with antioxidants, conventionally grown varieties can have a high pesticide content, Francis notes. "Order organic or biodynamic wine when possible, or else go with an Old World wine from France, Italy or Spain, which tend to have fewer pesticides."

Help offset overindulgence the day after by eating eggs or other protein to stabilize blood sugar levels, taking vitamins C and B complex supplements and drinking eight to 10 glasses of water, plus an electrolyte replacement like coconut water.

Anyone looking to make changes in the new year should strive for progress, rather than perfection, advises Francis. "Perfect health is an elusive idea that is impractical and unattainable for most of us, including celebrities. Instead, take the small, but life-changing shifts you can make in how you live in order to move toward greater vitality, happiness and longevity."

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