

Mother's Day, May 12, is an opportunity to celebrate the mothers in your life – but this year, skip the chocolates and instead, give the gift of wellness. Consider the following tips and hints from TOPS Club, Inc. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), the nonprofit weight-loss support organization, for the woman who is starting or simply maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

- **Be her workout partner.** Make an effort to exercise regularly together, and schedule it on the calendar as a reminder. If she's bored with her usual workout routine, gift her a package to a series of fitness sessions that you can attend together. "Deal of the day" websites make it easy to sample a variety of classes and try something new. Exercising with another person will also help hold you both accountable and is an opportunity to find support during the wellness journey.

- **Prepare a light brunch.** Avoid the overpriced, artery-clogging brunch and serve Mom a nutritious meal that will leave energy to spare. Fruit salad, whole wheat pancakes, scrambled or baked eggs, smoked salmon on whole-wheat bread or crackers, and dessert cake made with applesauce instead of oil or butter are all sensible but delicious options. Select recipes from a new, healthy cookbook and leave the book behind to inspire her later.

- **Compile a get-fit basket.** Consider including a reusable water bottle, a set of light hand weights, pedometer, sweat-wicking top, yoga mat, or workout towel. Most fitness DVDs require minimal equipment and can be done anywhere, home or away.

- **Boost her mental well-being** with added rest. Skimping on sleep can leave Mom at a higher risk for a weakened immune system and type 2 diabetes, among other health problems. Give the gift of a good night's rest by investing in high-quality bed linens or a luxurious new pillow. For new mothers, offer to watch the baby periodically so Mom can rest restoratively.

- **Start a garden.** Buy planters and seeds so she can grow healthful and tasty fresh basil, mint leaves, or other herbs. A kitchen or windowsill garden is a convenient option for those with limited space outdoors. For a little something extra, include healthy recipes for using the plants once they've grown.

- **Help her relax.** If you can't afford to splurge for a full day's worth of treatments, a gift certificate for a spa massage, facial, or manicure and pedicure will give Mom the opportunity to de-stress.