

Tips For Extending The Life Of Your Car TM

(NAPSA)—You are what you eat, just like you are what you drive. Take a minute to think about how you treat your body. What you eat and how you maintain it can affect the way you feel. Automotive expert, Ron Ananian, known as “The Car Doctor,” says you should apply the same mindset to how you treat your car. Many factors can affect your car’s lifespan and by understanding its basic functions, you can help to keep it in top shape. Ananian has compiled the following ten tips to help you extend the life of your car:

1. Fuel provides the food, or energy, for your car. If you were to eat a diet filled with fatty foods, you would build up blockage in your arteries. Your car works in much the same way. If you were to only fill it with unbranded fuel, your car’s valves, similar to your arteries, could begin to show deposit buildup. Much like eating healthy food can keep your body running well, continuous use of a cleaner-burning gasoline with enhanced cleaning power like Amoco Ultimate[®] at BP, can restore performance in cars with engine deposits and keep new car engines running clean. This can result in faster acceleration and reduced fuel consumption.

2. Air filters act like lungs which provide oxygen to the engine. Filters prevent harmful particles such as dust and dirt from reaching the engine. When bad air is absorbed into the engine it can cause irreversible damages, so change your air filters regularly.

3. Oil is like the blood that flows through the veins bringing nutrients to the body, helping it to perform better and last longer. Using a synthetic motor oil, like Castrol

SYNTEC[®], can provide superior protection against the formation of power rubbing deposits and will help prevent corrosive particles such as acid, soot and oxidized fuel fragments from causing costly damage to critical engine parts. Don’t wait for the warning light to appear on your dash. Change your oil every 3,000 to 5,000 miles (or whatever your owner’s manual recommends).

4. Well-maintained tires, like healthy feet, are critical. Take a close look at your tires and make sure the tread is still raised and the tires haven’t “balded” or worn down. Check the air pressure on all four tires monthly to ensure that they are properly inflated, giving you balanced performance and reducing the chance for flats.

5. Brakes serve as the conscience of your car and help to stop you before you encounter sticky situations. Keeping the brake pads clean will prevent wear and tear leading to quicker stops. If you experience grinding or loud squealing when pressing on the brake, replace the pads. If they get too worn down it can cause damage to other parts of the car, including the wheels and rotors.

6. The battery is the nervous system of the car, giving the engine its starting boost while keeping the car’s electrical system strong. A battery has an average lifespan of three to five years. Periodically inspect for corrosion or leaking fluid which can lead to battery failure.

7. Fluids are necessary for a car’s survival, just like water is to the human body. Check your coolant, radiator fluid, power steering fluid, transmission fluid and brake fluid so that your car can stay hydrated and operate at its full potential. Some of these fluids may

require a professional mechanic to change them properly, so be sure to inquire about them when you bring your car in for a checkup.

8. Wiper blades are like your eyelashes, they help keep debris out of your view and provide you with clear vision. If your wiper blades are leaving streaks, cracking or making noise, replace them. Also, if you plan to drive in ice or snow, you may want to consider winter blades.

9. Regular tune-ups are just as important to your car as regular visits to the doctor are for you. Even if your car seems fine, take it in for periodic maintenance to make sure everything is running in order. Find a trustworthy mechanic who will listen to your questions and explain what is done to your car. An AAA or ASA chapter may be able to point you to a reliable mechanic.

10. The body of the car is much like your skin. Unsightly bumps and scrapes can show up on a car just like they do on their drivers. To keep your car looking its best, try to avoid tight squeezes and parking in spots too close for comfort. Inspect your car regularly and take note of the cars around you. Washing and waxing your car will also help keep the exterior shiny and free from corrosion.

Next time you get into your car and start the engine, take a moment to pause, listen and look. See if you feel any abnormal vibrations or inconsistencies in the start up process. Listen for any irregular noises which could lead to bigger problems. Finally, check your gauges to make sure all your fluids are filled and no warning lights are illuminated. If anything seems slightly off, you might want to take your car in for a checkup.