

Being Healthy is a Lifestyle.

How healthy are you? If you're like many of the people around you, that's a question you don't ask yourself very often. Maybe it's because you aren't overweight and you don't have health trouble on a daily basis, so you assume there are no problems. Or maybe you recognize that you aren't as healthy as you could be, but you think that changing your habits would be too big a change to make.

Health is Not a Hobby

You don't have to be a professional athlete to take your own health seriously. In fact, healthy living isn't just a hobby that some people choose to engage in. It's a responsibility that each person has to their future self, their family, and the other people in their life that care about them. What you eat and do today will have a direct influence on what your quality of life is like in ten, twenty, and thirty years; it can make the difference between staying happy and energetic well into your senior years or making regular trips to the hospital, treating one preventable disease after another.

A Healthy Mindset

Living a healthy lifestyle is not all about the body; it's also about the mind. Research has shown that the state of your mind has a direct impact on how you maintain your body. Stress and depression contribute to unhealthy habits, while a confident, empowered person is far more likely to keep his or her body ready for whatever life holds.

What does this mean for you? Simply being aware of the relationship between your mind and your body can help you think more clearly about your health. Don't let stress drive you to eat unhealthy food as a source of comfort, and don't give up control of your diet just because you don't feel like keeping up with it. As your body's health improves, so will your mental health!



LEARN MORE

Make smart decisions about your health and visit a physician or health specialist for advice and questions.

American Society for Nutrition

www.nutrition.org

CDC Physical Activity

www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity

WELLNESS: STAYING HEALTHY FOR LIFE



Habits must be developed over time. It is easier to adopt healthy habits at a young age than to try to change bad habits later in life.



©2023 Prevention & Treatment Resource Press, LLC
www.PTRPress.com • 877-329-0570 • product #PB-PH31
This pamphlet may not be copied.





Penalties of Unhealthy Living

Each health-related choice that you make contributes to your lifestyle as a whole. If you consistently make unhealthy choices, you set yourself up for some penalties, both physical and emotional:

Disease

Obesity, heart trouble, and diabetes are the biggest risks for unhealthy people. These diseases do not always wait for old age, either— it is becoming more common for young people to experience heart attacks and develop diabetes, starting them on a long road of constant treatment in order to stay healthy.

Poor Quality of Life

If you are unhealthy, you are not prepared for the things you were built to be able to do. This could be as simple as passing up an invitation to join a softball team or as dramatic as spending your last ten years in a wheelchair, unable to get out of the house. You only get one life, so make sure that you are not holding yourself back by cheating yourself out of your health!

Get a check-up with your doctor to find out the best exercises for your body and which nutrients you need to focus on in your diet.

Diagnose Your Health

It may be that you already know you are unhealthy. But even if you are not overweight or lacking in energy, you could still face potential health pitfalls that you do not know about. For example, many people have high cholesterol without showing any outward signs. Whatever your current physical state, a checkup with your doctor is the best way to find out just what areas of health you need to focus on most. After you begin your efforts to improve your health, continue visiting your doctor to monitor your progress.

How to Stay Healthy

There isn't a fast, easy way to get healthy, especially if you are working against a history of bad habits. The only way is to eat the right foods and keep your body active.

Diet

Your body needs certain nutrients to thrive, and it takes real focus to make sure that you get those nutrients. Manage your diet and be sure that it is balanced. Minimize your intake of artificial ingredients like preservatives and colorings. A balanced diet might seem like a radical change from the way you're used to eating, but stick with it— in time, your body will grow accustomed to your new diet and you will actually prefer it over the kinds of foods you used to eat.



Exercise

The best diet in the world is useless unless you put those nutrients to work. That means staying active, and most of us have to make a conscious effort to exercise outside the course of our normal workday. Don't put off exercise because you don't have the right clothes or equipment. Just start doing it, and you can add accessories later if necessary. Jogging and doing simple pushups and sit-ups are the easiest ways to start moving your body.

Rest

Do not underestimate the necessity of sleep for your health. Your overall wellness is dependent on the rest your mind and body receive on a daily basis. Overexerting yourself through exercise and activity can lead to damaging physical and mental affects. Be sure to make getting adequate rest a priority in your busy schedule so that your body will be restored and relaxed enough to take on each day's challenges.

Avoid Tobacco & Alcohol

Tobacco use is a very dangerous habit. Smoking causes over 480,000 deaths in the United States every year. Many preventable illnesses, such as emphysema, mouth, throat, and lung cancer, and heart disease are caused by tobacco use. Drinking too much alcohol can damage the liver and contribute to liver and throat cancer. Limit your drinking to no more than 2 drinks per day for men and 1 drink per day for women.

Are You Sun Smart?

1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer. Early prevention is the best defense. Find shade during the afternoon, when the sun is directly overhead – between the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Use SPF 30 or higher for optimal protection. Cover exposed skin with long sleeves, pants, and a wide-brimmed hat.



Don't Give Up!

Even with good habits in place, there are many obstacles to healthy living. Don't let them stop you. There is always a way to make a healthy choice instead of an unhealthy one, even if it requires some sacrifice or creative thinking. Each time you overcome an obstacle, you will build your self-confidence and it will be easier to do the same in the future.

Don't let age or health issues stop you, either! Even when it becomes impossible to keep up with your previous exercise routine, you can still do something to stay active. Scientists have found that even small amounts of walking or upper-body stretching help seniors stay strong, mentally sharp, and resistant to sickness.

Your life will be made better with proper nourishment, exercise and rest. A healthy lifestyle that focuses on overall wellness is sure to be a long one!