

Healthy Lifestyle

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A healthy lifestyle is one which helps to keep and improve a person's health and well-being. Healthy living should be made part of your everyday life.

A healthy lifestyle is, mostly, associated with:

- Proper & balanced diet (See page 86-88)
- Physical exercise (See page 89-90)
- Proper sleeping pattern
- Personal hygiene
- Absence of bad habits or addiction
- Health education
- Safe environment
- Physical fitness
- Love through social support and healthy relationships
- Emotions
- Avoiding drugs and alcohol
- Stress management

A healthy lifestyle will make you more happy and decrease your risk factors for, among others, the following conditions:

- Mental health problems
- Heart diseases
- Pregnancy complications
- Osteoporosis
- Cancer



Healthy diet

A healthy diet is a balanced diet where your food choices maintain or improve your overall health. A healthy diet provides your body with essential nutrition, such as fluid, macronutrients, micronutrients, and adequate calories. A healthy diet consists of simple food that is minimally processed, with a low sugar content. A healthy diet mostly consists out of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Protein, such as meat, in smaller amounts can also be added.

Salt intake can cause high blood pressure (See page 95-96) and should only be used in very small amounts. It is furthermore also extremely important to drink at least 8 glasses of water per day, with even more on a hot day and when exercising or spending time in the sun.

A good example of a balanced diet is the 'Plate Model':



Size of Plate	Food Type	Food Examples
50%	Non-Starchy Fruits & Vegetables	Apples Carrots Tomatoes Butternut
25%	Grains & Starchy Foods	Whole-wheat bread Potato Mealiepap
25%	Protein	Chicken Fish Red meat

Processed foods, fast foods, bread and soft drinks should be avoided as much as possible. Minimal alcohol intake and smoking cessation can also lead to a healthier lifestyle and the reduction of certain health risks.

A healthy diet, together with exercise and a healthy lifestyle lowers your chance of getting certain diseases, such as obesity, heart diseases, diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer.

Eat less, move more, eat lots of fruits and vegetables and go easy on junk foods and sugar.



Tips to help you reduce or quit drinking

To stop or reduce your alcohol intake will not only be beneficial for your physical health, but also for your mental health.

- **Put it in writing.**

Making a list of the reasons you would like to stop drinking, such as sleeping better, or improving your relationships, can motivate you.

- **Set a drinking goal.**

If you are initially trying to drink less alcohol than usually, it is best to set a limit on how much you may drink.

- **Keep a diary of your drinking.**

Keep track of the time, place, amount and type of drink in the beginning. Compare this to your goal. If you are having trouble sticking to your goal, discuss it with your doctor.

- **Don't keep alcohol in your house.**

- **Drink slowly.**

Drink soda or water after having an alcoholic beverage. Never drink on an empty stomach.

- **Choose alcohol-free days.**

Decide not to drink for three or four days each week or even for a full week or month. Taking a break from alcohol can be a good way to start drinking less and feel the physical benefits of not drinking alcohol.

- **Watch for peer pressure.**

Practice ways to say no to alcohol politely. You do not have to drink because others are drinking or because you are offered a drink. Stay away from people who encourage you to drink.

- **Keep busy.**

Play sports, catch a movie or pick up a new hobby. Activities are great alternatives to drinking.

- **Ask for support.**

Cutting down or stopping your drinking may not always be easy. Let friends and family members know that you need their support.

- **Guard against temptation.**

Steer clear of people and places that make you want to drink. Monitor your feelings and try new, healthy ways to cope with stress.

- **Be persistent.**

Most people who successfully cut down or stop drinking do so only after several attempts. You will have setbacks, but do not let them keep you from reaching your long-term goal. The process requires ongoing effort.



Need support?

Contact 'Alcoholic Anonymous' – 0861 435 722 (9.30am-5pm, Mon-Thurs & 9.30am-3pm, Friday)

Contact 'Substance Helpline' – 021 940 4500 (24 hour)

Tips to help you quit smoking

Giving up smoking can be a very difficult challenge to overcome. One thing to remember is that any amount of success is a success.

The Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA) provides 10 tips to help you quit:

- Decide on a date to quit smoking and do it.
- Throw away all reminders of smoking, like cigarette packets, ashtrays and lighters.
- Drink lots of water – it will help flush the nicotine from your body.
- Become more active. Do exercise like walking or running on a regular basis.
- Change your routine. Avoid smokers and things that make you want to smoke for the first couple of days.
- Tell your family and friends that you are trying to quit so that they can offer you support.
- You may experience some dizziness, headaches or coughing once you have stopped smoking. This is normal and should improve after a day or two.
- If you are worried about gaining weight, eat at regular times during the day; snack on fruit between meals; and make time for exercise. Not all ex-smokers gain weight.
- Do not use a crisis or special occasion as an excuse for 'just one' cigarette. One cigarette leads to another, and another...

Alternate methods

There are some other ways to quit smoking. A doctor or social worker can be seen to discuss other options. Many people prefer to use nicotine replacement therapy like patches, sprays or chewing gum.

Need support?

- Contact the 'National Council Against Smoking QUIT Line' - 011 720 3145 & 082 840 3548 & www.againstsmoking.co.za
- Contact CANSA's toll free call centre at 0800 22 66 22 or email them at info@cansa.org.za.



Physical exercise

Physical exercise is when you repeatedly move your body to make it stronger or better at doing something. Physical exercise is extremely important to maintain a healthy lifestyle and lower your risk factors for certain diseases. Physical exercise is not about losing weight and having big muscles, it's all about moving your body to become the healthiest version of yourself physically and mentally. An active lifestyle can lower your risk for various diseases, such as:

- Heart Attacks
- High Blood Pressure
- High cholesterol levels
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Stress related diseases

There are a few types of exercises:

- Flexibility exercises – This helps your body to reach farther and bend better. This includes any stretching exercises.
- Aerobic exercises – This helps the body to work hard for a long time and include things like running or walking or climbing stairs.
- Anaerobic exercises – This increase your muscle strength and includes exercises like lifting weights.

It is important to do exercises that are fun and that you like. It is also very important to drink water while you exercise. Here are a few examples of how to stay active:

- Participate in team sports, such as soccer or netball.
- Invite a friend to go for a walk with you.
- Climb the stairs at work
- Dance or just move your body on some music.
- Go for a jog.
- Start your own exercise group, where you can exercise together and motivate one another.

If you would like to find more examples of training programs that you can follow you can find multiple workouts on the internet. Your doctor will also be able to suggest simple exercises that can be done.



Here are some examples of exercises that will improve your cardiovascular health: (Do each exercise for 30 sec – the fitter you get, the more sets you will be able to do)

1. JUMPING JACKS



2. SQUAT JUMPS



3. MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS



4. BUTT KICKS



5. BURPEES

30s break



6. WALL SIT



7. HIGH KNEES



8. PLANK JACKS



30s break

