



Staying Healthy

MU Patient Education Series

Health is defined differently by different people. The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete, physical, mental, and social well-being not merely just the absence of disease or infirmity. Merriam Webster defines health as the condition of being sound in body, mind, or spirit; especially: freedom from physical disease or pain. Regardless of how you define health you can be an active member of society and understand what it takes to stay healthy.

BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE:

Walking briskly, mowing the lawn, playing team sports, and biking are just a few examples of how you can get moving. If you are not already physically active, start small and work up to 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity for most days of the week.

EAT A HEALTHY DIET:

Build a healthy plate, Eat a Healthy Diet

Select the correct amount of fruits, grains, vegetables, protein, and dairy

- Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products are healthy choices
- Lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts are good
- Try to eat foods that are low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars
- Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt
- Monitor your salt, sugar and fat intake

Eat the right amount of calories for you

- Enjoy your food but monitor portion size
- Write down what you eat

Be physically active your way

- Pick activities you like and do them 10 minutes at a time or do what you can tolerate



Use food labels to help you make better choices.

- Choose food with lower calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium

STAY AT A HEALTHY WEIGHT:

Try to balance the calories you take in with the calories that you burn with your physical activities. As you age, eat fewer calories and increase your physical activity. This will prevent gradual weight gain over time.

DRINK ALCOHOL IN MODERATION OR NOT AT ALL:

Current dietary guidelines for Americans recommend that if you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, you do not exceed 2 drinks per day for men (1 drink per day for women). Some people should not drink alcoholic beverages at all, including:

- Individuals who cannot restrict their drinking to moderate levels
- Individuals who plan to drive, operate machinery, or take part in other activities that requires attention, skill, or coordination
- Individuals taking prescription or over-the-counter medications that can interact with alcohol
- Individuals with specific medical conditions
- Persons recovering from alcoholism
- Children and adolescents

AVOID SMOKING:

Smoking has been related to the increased risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

- Avoid smoking
- Look into counseling
- Look into FDA approved medications to help you quit
- Seek a good support system

References:

Internet Citation: Stay Healthy. December 2012. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.

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<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/MyPlate/DG2010Brochure.pdf>

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