

STEPS TO GOOD HEALTH FOR WOMEN

The single most important way you can take care of yourself and those you love is to actively take part in your own health by getting regular checkups, preventive screening tests and immunizations. This will help you take charge of your health and be a decision-making partner with your health care provider.

STEPS TO GOOD HEALTH

Making healthy lifestyle choices can impact your health and well-being now and in the future. Research has clearly demonstrated the potential that healthy lifestyle factors can have on reducing the risk for major chronic diseases, like cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes. Making a few simple lifestyle changes can turn into big health rewards.



Be physically active.

If you are not already physically active, start small and work up to 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise most days of the week. Some examples include walking briskly, jogging, swimming and biking. You can also increase activity by using yard work and household chores as opportunities to get your heart pumping and strengthen your back, arms and legs. Make it a family affair by planning activities that get everyone moving, such as taking a walk after dinner, playing Frisbee or squeezing in a game of kickball on Sunday afternoons.

Eat a healthy diet.

Focus on a balanced diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Choose calcium-rich, low-fat dairy products and lean meats, poultry, fish, beans and other protein sources. Cut back on second helpings and pay attention to portion sizes. Go easy on foods that are high in fat, cholesterol, salt and sugar. Use healthier preparation methods, such as grilling, roasting, steaming or baking, rather than frying or sautéing. Eat regularly timed meals and snacks and don't skip meals.

Stay at a healthy weight.

Step on the scale to know where you are and measure your waist circumference. Try to balance calories consumed with the calories you burn off through activity. Reduce your calorie consumption by 250 to 500 calories per day to promote gradual weight loss if you need to lose weight.

Manage your stress.

Try to seek balance in your life and practice daily stress management. Learn when to say "no" and don't feel guilty about it. Avoid the superwoman trap and delegate when necessary. Strive to take 20 minutes each day to do something relaxing to de-stress. Examples include reading, exercise, taking a walk, listening to music or soaking in a bubble bath.



Be tobacco-free.

It is never too late to quit. Smokers and those who use tobacco are at greater risk of developing disease and dying prematurely than those who do not. Take the first step and set a quit date today. You can also take advantage of the many resources offered by your health insurance plan to help you be successful in your quitting efforts.

No matter what your age or state of health, make the commitment to take care of yourself and share this valuable information with other women in your life.

Drink in moderation.

Women should consume no more than one alcoholic drink per day. A standard drink is one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.

Practice preventive care.

Practicing preventive care can help you live a longer, healthier and more fulfilling life. Early detection through screenings, medical exams and self-exams can help identify health problems and conditions before symptoms appear.



Managing a family, home and career can take a toll on a woman's well-being. Women often put others' needs ahead of their own, leaving little time to focus on their personal health. *You are worth* making that important phone call today to schedule your preventive physical examination and follow the path to good health. You owe it to yourself and to your family and friends who care about you.

