

READING COMPREHENSION

MAKE HEALTH A HABIT

Get some physical activity daily. Activity reduces many risks to your health. It improves your mental health. Activity is more important than what you eat. The activity can be simple. It can be making time to play with your kids. It can be dancing. Or it even can be walking up the stairs. These activities make a difference.

This is important. Do not take on more than you can do. A doctor said, "Some people like to sweep floors. Others like walking, others like peeling vegetables." He continued, "I don't care what it is, find something you like so you can stick with it."

Get enough sleep. One-third of Americans do not get enough sleep. Sleep is essential to good health. It affects your immune system and your hormones. Sleep also affects your appetite, weight, thinking, energy, concentration, temper, mood, and even life expectancy.

The need for sleep ranges from seven to nine hours for most people. But sleep quality matters too. What should you do if you are feeling tired or having disrupted sleep? Find out if you have a sleep disorder and if you do, treat it.

Do not smoke. This one is easy. Smoking can cause lung cancer, emphysema, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. A doctor said, "Cigarette smokers with diabetes are certain to get cardiovascular disease." He continued, "It is not if they get it, it is when they get it."

People should use nicotine patches and medications with a plan to reduce or stop their smoking. Their chances of quitting increase by five or six times.

What about use of e-cigarettes or vaping? Most evidence shows they are less toxic than cigarettes. There is not enough evidence yet on their toxicity or ability to help people quit. Also, the long-term effects of their use are less well known.

Eat more fruits and vegetables. Vegetables offer more benefits than fruits. That is, in vitamins and minerals. They have fewer calories. The best way to get more fruits and veggies is to cook more meals at home. This also decreases the intake of sodium, sugar and calories.

A doctor said, "Focus on cooking more with whole fresh ingredients. That will lead to an increase in fruits and vegetables." Do not just drink your fruits or rely on dried fruits. The doctor continued, "Any concentrated form of fruit sugars is not as helpful. Fruit drinks and dried fruits both pack a lot more calories and add up faster."

Get vaccinated. Before vaccines, thousands of children never reached adulthood. Even today, thousands die from the flu. So the advice here is straightforward. Vaccines can save lives. Keep up with and follow the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

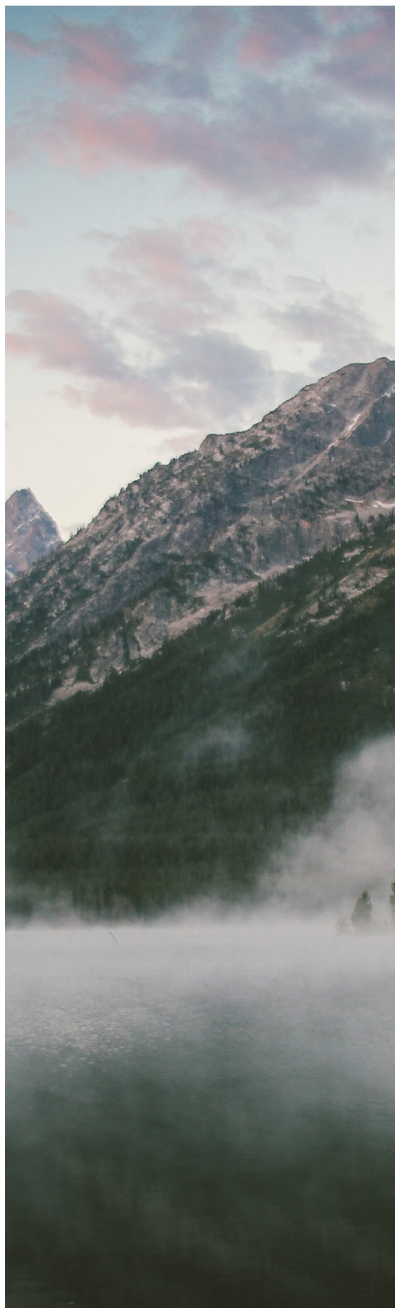
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Spend time in the sun, but not too much time. Light helps your sleep and mood. Being out in the sun increases your chances of physical activity. Sunlight is the only natural way to get vitamin D. Bright light is important for healthy sleep. Not getting enough light during the day can hinder sleep. And again, healthy sleep helps mental health.

Too much sun is not good either. The sun's UV light is a leading cause of skin cancer. Protect yourself with sunblock, hats, and clothing.

Eat and drink less sugar. Weight and diabetes can come from too many calories and too much sugar. Cutting down on sugar is a good start. Going from soda to water is an easy thing to do.

Source: The New York Times January 2, 2018 and <http://www.thetimesinplainenglish.com>



QUESTIONS

Physical activity reduces many risks to your health, including your mental health. True or false? [True.]

The adequacy of sleep affects many aspects of human health. What elements of health are affected by sleep? [Human immune systems, hormones, appetites, weight, thinking, energy, concentration, temper, mood, and even life expectancy are affected by the adequacy of sleep.]

Smoking can cause lung cancer, emphysema, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Do any readers smoke, and if so, have they tried to stop and with what success?

Vegetables offer more benefits than fruits in terms of vitamins, minerals and fewer calories. What did a doctor suggest as the best way to get more fruits and veggies? [A doctor suggested cooking more meals at home with fresh whole ingredients.]

Vaccines can save lives. Do any readers keep up with and follow the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention?

Fruit drinks and dried fruits are not as good for you as fresh fruits. Why not? [Fruit drinks and dried fruits both pack a lot more calories.]

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ANSWERS

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