



Daily wins for a healthier life

You don't need to follow a list of complex dos and don'ts to change your lifestyle for the better.

'I absolutely love strict health regimes,' said no-one ever. But guess what? We can live the longer, happier lives we all want *without* following difficult rules. This handful of easy, everyday steps can have a major impact on your health and transform the way you feel.

Get enough sleep

A good night's rest is key to good health. It's your body's reset button, during which it repairs itself and your brain reboots. Aim for seven to nine hours of sleep per night in a quiet, dark room.



Plate up properly



Your body works hard and deserves to be well fed. Wholesome food helps increase energy, improves digestion and lowers the risk of conditions like diabetes and heart disease. So go for the good stuff: five to seven servings of fresh fruit and veg a day, lean meat like chicken, and whole grains like wholewheat bread. You can already boost your nutrition simply by substituting healthier options for your usual choices, such as having grilled fish instead of deep-fried and switching brown rice for white.

Sit less, move more!

Get off the couch and get active. The less we move, the more our health suffers, including the heart, joints, digestion, concentration and mood. Up your movement a bit at a time: push back from your desk and stretch every hour, park further from the mall entrance, have a dance-off with the kids, do a five-minute YouTube workout. As your fitness grows, add more activities. A step-counting app or a pedometer is a wonderful way to stay motivated by showing you how all those little bits add up.



Savour the moment



Turn simple pleasures into daily mindfulness mini breaks. Savour a warm cup of tea, sing along to your favourite song, sit outside and gaze at the clouds for five minutes – whatever works for you. Pleasant activities calm your mind and reduce stress levels, which is proven to support immune function and longevity.

Breathe

Unbelievably, most of us don't breathe properly, and that saps our energy. You should be inhaling through your nose and letting the air move right down so that your belly expands.



Bonus tip: Think 80/20

You don't have to deprive yourself of everything 'lekker' to be healthier. A clever way to think about it is the 80/20 rule: make 80% of your choices healthy ones, and you have 20% flexibility for 'less healthy' ones. That means you can have that glass of bubbly at a wedding or a Netflix night on the couch, as long as you make good choices the rest of the week.

For support with healthy lifestyle choices, reach out to the Employee Health and Wellness Programme.

References:
Momentum Hello Doctor

▶ Education department toll free:
0800 111 011

▶ Send a USSD to:
***134*664*38#**

▶ Email:
wced@mhg.co.za

Let us stay mindful of caring for one another and ourselves