



## **Go on, reap the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle!**

Do you ever wake up after sleeping for eight hours feeling tired? Do you feel emotionally and physically depleted everyday? Are you overweight and inactive? Do you smoke? If you answered “Yes” to any of the above, you may be leading an unhealthy lifestyle.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes a healthy lifestyle as a way of living that lowers the risk of being seriously ill or dying prematurely. Being healthy is not about avoiding a disease; it is about taking care of your physical, mental and social wellbeing in an effort to prevent disease and illness. Living a healthy lifestyle allows you to enjoy all aspects of your life for a longer time and lowers your risk of developing chronic lifestyle diseases such as heart disease, obesity, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease, hypertension and cancer.

Many assume that healthy living is expensive and unsatisfying, and that healthy eating is bland and regimented. Research interviews conducted at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) revealed many “theories” on healthy living. Yanga Tunzi, a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Events Management student at CPUT, made the following statement about healthy food: “healthy food tastes like cardboard. It is not appetising at all. Food is expensive these days especially fruit and vegetables. It is much more affordable to buy take out, especially if you’re a student”. Another misconception found is that healthy eating is for a particular race group and demographic as they are the most affected by disease i.e. an elderly white person. This is very untrue. Research confirms that cardiovascular disease, hypertension and diabetes are lifestyle diseases which affect people from all backgrounds.

Our recommendation to adopting a healthy lifestyle and living a quality life are to make small changes to your every day routine eg. take more walks, add fruit to your cereal and drink more water. Below are a few more tips to help you get started the *heart smart* way:

### **Education is Key**

You can learn how to improve your health by doing research on a reputable health website or visiting a professional on a regular basis – knowledge is power! For free information, visit [www.heartfoundation.co.za](http://www.heartfoundation.co.za) or contact the Heart Mark Diet Line on **0860 223 222** for expert nutritional advice.

### **Know your numbers!**

Have your cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure checked on a regular basis, especially if you have a family history of conditions like heart disease, diabetes and hypertension. These tests are inexpensive and can save your life!

### **Ask for Support**

Do not be afraid to ask for help from someone you trust and surround yourself with a positive support system. Accountability to others can help you stay on track.

### **H 2 the O**

Everyday you lose water through your breath, perspiration, urine and bowel movements. Drink eight glasses of water a day, to replace water loss. H<sub>2</sub> the O – let this be your mantra for 2010.

### **Add movement to your life**

Do anything that will get your body moving - take brisk walks, use the steps instead of the elevator, park further away from a mall entrance or even jog on the beach. All forms of exercise benefits your heart and overall wellbeing – the key is: do what is most appealing and enjoyable to you, in this way, you are more likely to maintain it.

### **Eat Healthily**

Follow a balanced meal plan which includes fibre rich starches, lean proteins, plenty of vegetables and fruit, low fat dairy and some healthy fats.

### **Relax**

Take time to unwind and relieve yourself from stress. De-stress at least once a day, your health is more critical than anything else which you may deem as important.

**Zzzzzzzzzzzzz**

Get enough sleep. Sleep is the best way to de-stress, and is beneficial to the body and mind. Investing in a comfortable and supportive mattress is also vital.

**Quit smoking today, you have the power!**

Smoking increases your risk of cardiovascular disease as the toxic chemicals found in cigarette smoke damages the lining of the coronary arteries. Women who smoke and use oral contraceptives should be alert as it greatly increases their risk of cardiovascular disease. Cigarette smoking combined with a family history of heart disease also seems to greatly increase the risk, so take the necessary measures to quit smoking. Secondary smoking is equally dangerous, so be aware and take care.

Adopting an overall healthy lifestyle is one of the most satisfying, painless and beneficial things you can do for yourself. These tips will help you get a head start on living healthily in 2010. The results...a healthy, happier, new YOU.

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