

# How Lifestyle Impacts Your Health

## ***YOUR LIFESTYLE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN YOUR HEALTH.***



Lifestyle includes the behavior and activities that make up your daily life. This includes:

- the work you do,
  - your leisure activities
  - the food you eat,
- your interaction with family, friends, neighbors, coworkers and strangers.

### **Making Decisions about the Way You Live:**

People make decisions based on beliefs, attitudes, and values. Our life experience and interaction with others also shapes our thoughts and actions.

Personal behavior is affected by the information you learn at home and school, and from the radio, newspapers, and television. The good news is: **you can change the way you live.**

### **Thinking about changing your lifestyle?**

- Pay attention to the way you live (or your lifestyle and health habits) and the work you do every day.
- Talk with friends and family about lifestyle and health decisions.
- Discuss what you may want to change with them.
- Improve the quality of life for you and your family.

**Make a Healthy Choice Today!**

## **Work and Leisure Activities**

The work we do affects our health. Apart from exposure to environmental hazards such as UV radiation and toxic chemicals like smoke, asbestos or pesticides, certain types of work involve prolonged repetitive actions and/or reduced levels of activity that may lead to muscular or skeletal problems, strained vision, and other health problems.

Even the person with the busiest schedule can make room for stretching, physical activity, and having fun. Before or after work or before meals might be a good time to do this. Think about your daily schedule and look for ways to be more active.

### **Tips for Becoming More Active:**

- Walk as much as possible
- Park the car farther away
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator
- Try gardening or home repair activities
- Dance!



Studies have shown that regular mild aerobic exercise four times a week may help lower cholesterol, reduce the risk of heart disease, and improve diabetes management.

Leisure activities such as reading, playing cards, listening to music, and other pastimes have also been shown to have a positive impact on health by reducing stress.

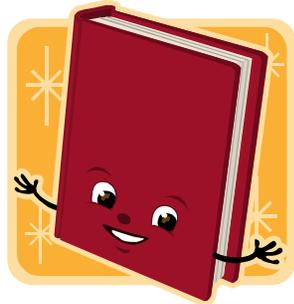
## Making Decisions about the Foods We Eat:

The foods we eat affect on our health. Many studies show that good nutrition lowers the risk for many diseases. Our food habits can bring on heart disease, stroke, some types of cancer, diabetes, and osteoporosis ...or help prevent them!

You may like to eat foods from your family's country of origin, following their customs and traditions. You can usually improve traditional family recipes for better health by substituting ingredients.

## Make a Family Recipe Book:

- Collect family recipes in a booklet.
- Share the recipes with a nutrition expert and find out which recipes are healthy ones.
- Ask how to change some ingredients of old favorites that are sort of unhealthy.
- Make those changes to the recipes and taste them with your family.
- Share the book of healthier recipes with everyone in your family.



**Change the way you eat. It can be fun and tasty!**



## Steps to Healthy Eating:

- Make good nutrition part of every day living.
- Eat healthy at home, work and play.
- Eating healthier will make you be and feel healthier.

## Tips for Healthy Eating:

- Eat at least 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Try them canned, frozen, or as juice.
- Choose whole grain bread and cereal.
- Choose low-fat milk and cheeses.
- Choose lean meats, poultry, fish.
- Eat more beans and grains
- Use less salt, sugar, alcohol, and saturated fat.
- Drink lots of water between meals.

## Other Things You Can Do to Stay Healthy:

- If you smoke now, quit!
- Get a handle on stress!
- If you drink alcohol, beer, or wine only drink in moderation.

If you have questions on how to make these changes in your life go to: [www.dsf.health.state.pa.us](http://www.dsf.health.state.pa.us)