

## July 2016: Your Lifestyle and Your Health

You may be surprised to learn that your lifestyle choices can directly impact your mood, ability to focus, memory and your interactions within your social environment. Eating right, exercising and getting enough sleep every night are necessary for creating balance in your life and achieving your academic goals.

Follow these guidelines to begin or maintain a happy, healthy life.

### **Eat a Healthful Diet**

A diet high in saturated fat and trans-fat can increase your risk for heart disease and certain cancers. The American Heart Association (AHA) and other health organizations recommend limiting your total fat intake to no more than 30 percent of your daily calories. Diets that are high in fat and sugar also promote obesity, which not only affects your appearance, but also is a risk factor for many diseases. An unhealthy preoccupation with weight loss, however, can also take its toll on your appearance and can lead to serious eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia.



For optimum health and appearance, strike a healthy balance by eating meals rich in whole grains, vegetables and fruits, with small servings of chicken, fish and lean meat. Be sure to drink plenty of water every day. Good hydration helps keep the skin taut and elastic and reduces bloating.

### **Exercise Regularly**

Regular exercise improves muscle tone, so you stand taller, walk with more confident strides and look people straight in the eye. Good cardiovascular conditioning also improves blood flow to muscles and skin, so your skin tone is more likely to have a healthy glow.

Do some kind of moderate physical activity for 30 to 60 minutes most days of the week, the AAFP says. Include anaerobic strength training and aerobic activities, such as walking, running, swimming or cycling. Include daily stretches to maintain flexibility. Be sure to check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

### **Get a Good Night's Sleep**

Give your body the rest it needs to restore itself, says the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). You'll feel refreshed, you'll look better, have more spring in your step and your day will be filled with vitality. Getting too little sleep creates a "sleep debt" that eventually must be repaid. Operating on a sleep deficit, negatively affects your judgment and reaction time.

***Do you need help getting motivated to make a healthy change?***

***WellConnect can help you get started!***

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