

Lifestyle medicine uses six healthy behaviors — a whole-food, plant-predominant eating pattern, regular physical activity, restorative sleep, stress management, avoidance of risky substances, and positive social connections — to treat and prevent chronic disease like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.

6 WAYS TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH



1 NUTRITION

Extensive scientific evidence supports the use of a whole-food, predominantly plant-based eating plan as an important strategy in prevention of chronic disease, treatment of chronic conditions, and, in intensive therapeutic doses, reversal of chronic illness. Such an eating plan is rich in fiber, antioxidants, and nutrients. Choose a variety of minimally processed vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds.

2 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Although any amount of physical activity is better than none, it is important that adults engage in both general physical activity that offsets the negative effects of a sedentary lifestyle as well as purposeful exercise for targeted health outcomes as part of their weekly physical activity.

3 STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress can lead to improved health and productivity- or it can lead to anxiety, depression, obesity, immune dysfunction, and more. Recognizing negative stress responses, identifying coping mechanisms, and practicing healthy stress reduction techniques leads to improved wellbeing.

4 AVOIDANCE OF RISKY SUBSTANCES

Use of tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption have been shown to increase the risk of chronic illnesses and death. Treatments often take time, different approaches, and many attempts. Patience and support are an important part of breaking substance habits.

5 RESTORATIVE SLEEP

Sleep delays and interruptions are shown to cause sluggishness, low attention span, decreased sociability, depressed mood, decreased deep sleep, decreased caloric burn during the day, increased hunger and decreased feeling of fullness, insulin resistance, and decreased performance. Strive for 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night for optimal health.

6 SOCIAL CONNECTION

Positive social connections and relationships affect your physical, mental, and emotional health. Leveraging the power of relationships and social networks can help reinforce healthy behaviors.