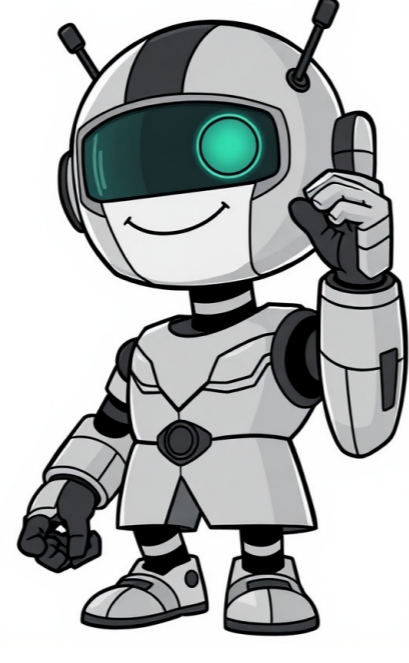


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Skip to main content Start the new year with the evergreen resolution to lead a healthier lifestyle. Here are 10 practical health tips to help you start off towards healthy living in 2025. 1. Eat a healthy dietPhoto:WHO/ Y. ShimizuEat a combination of different foods, including fruit, vegetables, legumes, nuts and whole grains. Adults should eat at least five portions (400g) of fruit and vegetables per day. You can improve your intake of fruits and vegetables by always including veggies in your meal; eating fresh fruit and vegetables as snacks; eating a variety of fruits and vegetables; and eating them in season. By eating healthy, you will reduce your risk of malnutrition and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer.2. Consume less salt and sugarPhoto:WHO/C. BlackReduce your salt intake to 5g per day, equivalent to about one teaspoon. Its easier to do this by limiting the amount of salt, soy sauce, fish sauce and other high-sodium condiments when preparing meals; removing salt, seasonings and condiments from your meal table; avoiding salty snacks; and choosing low-sodium products.On the other hand, consuming excessive amounts of sugars increases the risk of tooth decay and unhealthy weight gain. In both adults and children, the intake of free sugars should be reduced. WHO recommends consuming less than 5% of total energy intake for additional health benefits. You can reduce your sugar intake by limiting the consumption of sugary snacks, candies and sugar-sweetened beverages.3. Reduce intake of harmful fatsPhoto:WHO/S. VolkovFats consumed should be less than 30% of your total energy intake. This will help prevent unhealthy weight gain and NCDs. There are different types of fats, but unsaturated fats are preferable over saturated fats and trans-fats. WHO recommends reducing saturated fats to less than 10% of total energy intake; reducing trans-fats to less than 1% of total energy intake; and replacing both saturated fats and trans-fats with unsaturated fats.The preferable unsaturated fats are found in fish, avocado and nuts, and in sunflower, soybean, canola and olive oils; saturated fats are found in fatty meat, butter, palm and coconut oil, cream, cheese, ghee and lard; and trans-fats are found in baked and fried foods, and pre-packaged snacks and foods, such as frozen pizza, cookies, biscuits, and cooking oils and spreads.4. Dont smokePhoto:WHO/Y. ShimizuSmoking tobacco causes NCDs such as lung disease, heart disease and stroke. Tobacco kills not only the direct smokers but even non-smokers through second-hand exposure. If you are currently a smoker, its not too late to quit. Once you do, you will experience immediate and long-term health benefits. If you are not a smoker, thats great! Do not start smoking and fight for your right to breathe tobacco-smoke-free air.5. Be activePhoto:WHO/Y. ShimizuPhysical activity is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. This includes exercise and activities undertaken while working, playing, carrying out household chores, travelling, and engaging in recreational pursuits. The amount of physical activity you need depends on your age group but adults aged 18-64 years should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity throughout the week. Increase moderate-intensity physical activity to 300 minutes per week for additional health benefits.6. Check your blood pressure regularlyPhoto: WHO/Ahmad YuniHypertension, or high blood pressure, is called a silent killer. This is because many people who have hypertension may not be aware of the problem as it may not have any symptoms. If left uncontrolled, hypertension can lead to heart, brain, kidney and other diseases. Have your blood pressure checked regularly by a health worker so you know your numbers. If your blood pressure is high, get the advice of a health worker. This is vital in the prevention and control of hypertension.7. Follow traffic lawsPhoto:WHO/D. RodriguezRoad crashes claim over one million lives around the world and millions more are injured.Road traffic injuries are preventable through a variety of measures implemented by the government such as strong legislation and enforcement, safer infrastructure and vehicle standards, and improved post-crash care. You yourself can also prevent road crashes by ensuring that you follow traffic laws such as using the seatbelt for adults and child restraint for your kids, wearing a helmet when riding a motorcycle or bicycle, not drinking and driving, and not using your mobile phone while driving.8. Take antibiotics only as prescribedPhoto:WHO/F. TanggolAntibiotic resistance is one of the biggest public health threats in our generation. When antibiotics lose their power, bacterial infections become harder to treat, leading to higher medical costs, prolonged hospital stays, and increased mortality. Antibiotics are losing their power because of misuse and overuse in humans and animals. Make sure you only take antibiotics if prescribed by a qualified health professional. And once prescribed, complete the treatment days as instructed. Never share antibiotics.9. Clean your hands properlyPhoto:WHO/S.PriceHand hygiene is critical not only for health workers but for everyone. Clean hands can prevent the spread of infectious illnesses. You should wash using soap and water when your hands are visibly soiled or handrub using an alcohol-based product.10. Have regular check-ups Photo:WHO/Y. ShimizuRegular check-ups can help find health problems before they start. Health professionals can help find and diagnose health issues early, when your chances for treatment and cure are better. Go to your nearest health facility to check out the health services, screenings and treatment that are accessible to you. Skip to main content A healthy diet is essential for good health and nutrition.It protects you against many chronic noncommunicable diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Eating a variety of foods and consuming less salt, sugars and saturated and industrially-produced trans-fats, are essential for healthy diet.A healthy diet comprises a combination of different foods. These include:Staples like cereals (wheat, barley, rice, maize or corn) or starchy tubers or roots (potato, yam, taro or cassava), legumes (lentils and beans), fruit and vegetables.Foods from animal sources (meat, fish, eggs and milk).Here is some useful information, based on WHO recommendations, to follow a healthy diet, and the benefits of doing so.Breastfeed babies and young children.A healthy diet starts early in life - breastfeeding fosters healthy growth, and may have longer-term health benefits, like reducing the risk of becoming overweight or obese and developing noncommunicable diseases later in life.Feeding babies exclusively with breast milk from birth to 6 months of life is important for a healthy diet. It is also important to introduce a variety of safe and nutritious complementary foods at 6 months of age, while continuing to breastfeed until your child is two years old and beyond.Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit:They are important sources of vitamins, minerals, dietary fibre, plant protein and antioxidants.People with diets rich in vegetables and fruit have a significantly lower risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and certain types of cancer.Eat less fat:Fats and oils and concentrated sources of energy. Eating too much, particularly the wrong kinds of fat, like saturated and industrially-produced trans-fat, can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.Using unsaturated vegetable oils (olive, soy, sunflower or corn oil) rather than animal fats or oils high in saturated fats (butter, ghee, lard, coconut and palm oil) will help consume healthier fats.To avoid unhealthy weight gain, consumption of total fat should not exceed 30% of a person's overall energy intake.Limit intake of sugars:For a healthy diet, sugars should represent less than 10% of your total energy intake. Reducing even further to under 5% has additional health benefits.Choosing fresh fruits instead of sweet snacks such as cookies, cakes and chocolate helps reduce consumption of sugars.Limiting intake of soft drinks, soda and other drinks high in sugars (fruit juices, cordials and syrups, flavoured milks and yogurt drinks) also helps reduce intake of sugars.Reduce salt intake:Keeping your salt intake to less than 5g per day helps prevent hypertension and reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke in the adult population.Limiting the amount of salt and high-sodium condiments (soy sauce and fish sauce) when cooking and preparing foods helps reduce salt intake.More information: Whether you are a seasoned health advocate or just now committing to taking the first steps in becoming more healthy, share your progress and inspire your friends and family to do the same. While you are here, take a minute to sign up to our weekly updates and we'll be in touch with more health advice and latest findings to improve your health and wellbeing. Stay connectedSubscribe to our weekly updates Share your storyInspire friends on social media Do goodBecome a WHO volunteer Skip to main content Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and mental health conditions are the biggest health threat in the WHO European Region and globally. NCDs are responsible for more than 80% of all deaths in the Region. These diseases are strongly linked to risk factors including unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, excess body weight (a body mass index over 25), and tobacco and alcohol use. Each year, tobacco kills 1.1 million people in the Region. Of those, 153 000 die from exposure to second-hand smoke. 7 of 10 lung cancers in men of the Region are related to tobacco use. 1 in every 11 deaths in the Region is due to alcohol consumption. About 800 000 deaths a year result from alcohol use almost a third of the global total of 2.6 million deaths. In most countries, salt intake is above the WHO-recommended maximum level (5 g per day). High salt intake raises blood pressure, which increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks, heart disease and strokes. Cardiovascular diseases cause more than two fifths (42.5%) of all deaths annually in the Region, which is around 10 000 deaths every day. Overweight and obesity are the fourth most common risk factor for NCDs in the Region, after high blood pressure, dietary risks and tobacco. 1 in 4 school-aged children lives with overweight or obesity. 27% of adults do not meet physical activity recommendations. Physical inactivity contributes to about 9% of all premature deaths. Tobacco is deadly in any form. Smoked tobacco products, including water pipes, contain over 7000 chemicals, including at least 250 chemicals known to be toxic or to cause cancer. Use of smokeless tobacco products can result in serious, sometimes fatal, health problems. Lifelong tobacco smokers lose at least 10 years of life on average. Tobacco use or exposure to tobacco smoking affects almost all organs of the human body and has a negative impact on health across the life course.Learn more about the harms of tobacco use in the WHO/Europe factsheet linked on this webpage.For your health, less alcohol is better, none is best.Alcohol is a toxic, psychoactive, dependence-producing substance. Alcohol consumption is equally linked to over 200 health conditions and other risks, including liver diseases, cancers, cardiovascular diseases, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, road injuries, violence and suicide. For all of these, there is a direct link between the amount of alcohol consumed and the likelihood of illness, injury or death the more alcohol you drink, the higher the risk.Learn more about the harms of alcohol use in the WHO/Europe factsheet linked on this webpage.Enjoy a healthy, balanced dietA healthy diet helps to protect against malnutrition in all of its forms, as well as NCDs such as cardiovascular diseases (including heart disease and stroke), type2 diabetes and some cancers.It is important to have a diet that includes a variety of foods across all food groups. Healthy dietary practices start early in life. Healthy diets can also contribute to an adequate body weight. Opting for a balanced, adequate and varied diet is an important step towards a healthy lifestyle.Healthy diet for infants and childrenExclusive breastfeeding is recommended for the first 6 months of life to ensure optimal growth, development and health. From 6 months onwards, breastfeeding should continue alongside the introduction of safe, diverse and nutrient-dense complementary foods. These foods should be prepared without added salt or sugar. Continued breastfeeding is encouraged up to 2 years of age and beyond, as it remains an important source of nutrition and immune protection.Healthy diet for pregnant and postpartum womenNutritious, safe diets are essential before and during pregnancy and while breastfeeding to support maternal and child health.Learn more about healthy nutrition in the WHO/Europe factsheet linked on this webpage.Stay physically active Physical activity includes any movement of the body that expends energy: walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, sports, exercise, taking the stairs, doing housework, etc. Benefits include:improved mental and physical health;reduced risk of cardiovascular diseases, cancers (especially breast and colon), diabetes, obesity, dementia, anxiety and depression;enhanced cognitive function and academic performance, especially in children and adolescents; andbetter mobility, balance, independence and quality of life in older adults.How can everyone lead an active lifestyle?Infants (under 1 year of age): Several active sessions daily, including at least 30 minutes in a prone position (tummy time) spread throughout the day.Children (14 years):At least 180 minutes of any physical activity per day.For children 34 years of age: at least 60 minutes of this time should be moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity.Children and adolescents (517 years):An average of 60 minutes per day of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity.Include muscle- and bone-strengthening activities at least 3 times per week.Adults (1864 years):At least 150300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week, or 75150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, or a mix of both.Include muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 times per week.Older adults (65+ years):Same as adults, with added focus on functional balance and strength training to prevent falls.Pregnant and postpartum women:At least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity.Include a mix of aerobic activity, muscle-strengthening activities and gentle stretching.Learn more about the benefits of physical activity in the WHO/Europe factsheet linked on this webpage.WHO response in EuropeWHO is committed to supporting countries in creating a healthier living environment for all citizens of the Region.Investing in policies and interventions that create enabling environments such as healthier food systems, opportunities for physical activity, and measures to reduce tobacco and alcohol use can contribute to a more equitable, sustainable and prosperous world. To address the overwhelming burden of NCDs in the Region, WHO/Europe identified the best buys proven, cost-effective measures to address NCDs. As a next step, WHO/Europe analysed how specific public health measures can have a positive impact on population health across Europe and central Asia in as little as 5 years. Based on this work, WHO/Europe introduced the quick buys the 25 policies targeting key risk factors (tobacco, alcohol, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity) and disease groups (cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases and cancers). The quick buys clearly demonstrate how policy-makers and politicians can achieve measurable results in tackling NCDs within a single political cycle.WHO recommended policies help achieve many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including better health (SDG3), quality education (SDG4.1 and SDG4.2), gender equality (SDG5), economic growth (SDG8), reduced inequalities (SDG10), stronger communities (SDG11), and climate action (SDG13).WHO/Europe is advancing NCD prevention by supporting countries to implement evidence-based policies that give measurable results. WHO works with countries to integrate best practices to prevent and treat NCDs at all levels of care.By promoting comprehensive strategies from legal frameworks and school-based programmes to digital policy regulation WHO helps countries create healthier environments that empower individuals to make informed choices and reduce NCD risks. Skip to main content Skip to main content Every person in every country in the world should have the opportunity to live a long and healthy life. Yet, the environments in which we live can favour health or be harmful to it. Environments are highly influential on our behaviour, our exposure to health risks (for example, air pollution or violence), our access to quality health and social care and the opportunities that ageing brings. Healthy ageing is about creating the environments and opportunities that enable people to be and do what they value throughout their lives. Everybody can experience healthy ageing. Being free of disease or infirmity is not a requirement for healthy ageing, as many older adults have one or more health conditions that, when well controlled, have little influence on their wellbeing. What is functional ability and how does it relate to healthy ageing? WHO defines healthy ageing as the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age. Functional ability is about having the capabilities that enable all people to be and do what they have reason to value. This includes a persons ability to:meet their basic needs,learn, grow and make decisions,be mobile,build and maintain relationships, andcontribute to society.Functional ability consists of the intrinsic capacity of the individual, relevant environmental characteristics and the interaction between them. Intrinsic capacity comprises all the mental and physical capacities that a person can draw on and includes their ability to walk, think, see, hear and remember. The level of intrinsic capacity is influenced by several factors such as the presence of diseases, injuries and age-related changes. Environments include the home, community and broader society, and all the factors within them such as the built environment, people and their relationships, attitudes and values, health and social policies, the systems that support them and the services that they implement. Being able to live in environments that support and maintain ones intrinsic capacity and functional ability is key to healthy ageing. What are the key considerations for healthy ageing? Diversity: There is no typical older person. Some 80-year-olds have levels of physical and mental capacity that compare favourably with 30-year-olds. Others of the same age may require extensive care and support for basic activities like dressing and eating. Policy should be framed to improve the functional ability of all older people, whether they are robust, care dependent or in between.Inequity: A large proportion (approximately 75%) of the diversity in capacity and circumstance observed in older age is the result of the cumulative impact of advantage and disadvantage across peoples lives. Importantly, the relationships we have with our environments are shaped by factors such as the family we were born into, our sex, ethnicity, level of education and financial resources. How does healthy ageing differ from active ageing? Healthy ageing is the focus of WHOs work on ageing between 2015-2030. Healthy ageing replaces the World Health Organizations previous focus on active ageing, a policy framework developed in 2002. Healthy ageing, like active ageing, emphasizes the need for action across multiple sectors and enabling older people to remain a resource to their families, communities and economies. >> .

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