

Healthy Habits

Factsheet



Healthy Habits



A habit is a certain behaviour that's repeated daily, weekly, monthly or yearly. A positive habit is one that's not only repeated but is also beneficial to your mental or physical wellbeing.

Good habits can apply to every aspect of your life such as healthy eating habits, healthy relationship habits, positive living habits and positive mindful habits.

New year, new you!

You're the boss of your body and mind. Do something your future self will thank you for and try a new healthy habit.

Small changes add up to big results, so make it sustainable and start off with something manageable that you know you can stick to.



Healthy Habits

The power of positive habits

Nearly half of everything you do is decided by habits, so it's extremely important that they are strong and positive. If the habits you form have a negative impact on your mental health and physical wellbeing, you'll be stuck in a vicious cycle, repeating these bad habits every day.

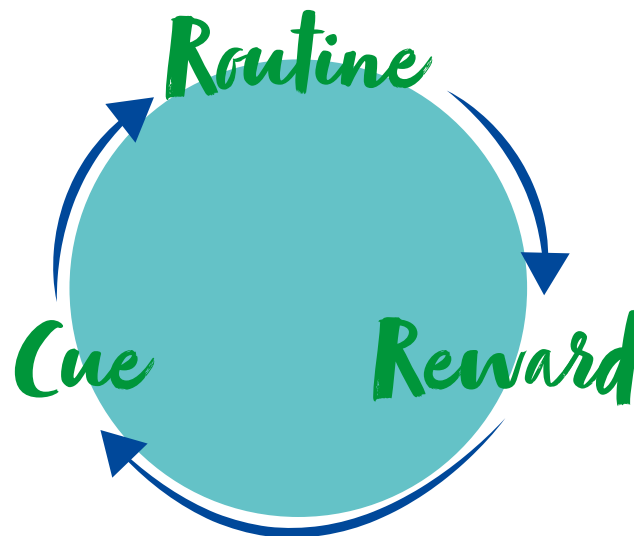
Alternatively, if you incorporate good habits into your everyday routine, you'll unconsciously be contributing to a positive mental wellbeing and a healthy physical state.

On average it takes 66 days for a new behaviour to become automatic.

The habit loop

The habit loop is a neurological loop that controls any habit. It consists of three elements: a cue, a routine, and a reward. Understanding these elements can help in understanding how to change bad habits or form better ones.

- Cue - anything that triggers the behaviour
- Routine - the behaviour you either want to change or reinforce
- Reward - the positive reinforcement that you get from engaging in the behaviour. The reason that the action has become a habit.



Healthy Habits



Ideas to get started

Weight loss

Losing weight has many health benefits, especially if you're overweight. Making small changes to eating healthier and a more active lifestyle will significantly improve your health and help you shed those pounds.

A steady weight loss of one to two pounds is recommended for the most effective long-term weight management which can significantly improve your health.

- Plan your weekly meals
- Ensure your energy intake (calories consumed) is less than energy expenditure
- Eat vegetables with every meal
- Have a healthy breakfast
- Have two healthy snacks daily
- Keep hydrated. Skip sugary drinks, soda, alcohol and replace with water
- Understand portion sizing and food labels to make more informed choices
- Opt for home-cooked meals instead of take-aways and processed meals
- Embrace natural sugars
- Keep active. Take an extra walk where possible
- Check progress and assess plan every 6-8 weeks. Challenge yourself to be stronger
- Practice daily self-care and take time to rest and re-energise
- Gather a support system

Exercise

No matter how much you do, physical activity is good for your body and mind. Adults should aim to be active every day. Some is good - more is better still.

Regular physical activity can improve your muscle strength and boost your endurance. It delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and helps your cardiovascular system work more efficiently. And when your heart and lung health improve, you have more energy, too.

Habits that will help you move more:

- Set a reminder to get up and move every 30 minutes throughout the day
- Go for a walk in your lunchbreak
- Stand up when you'd usually be sitting down
- Track your progress using a tracking app
- Do strength - building activities at least twice a week to keep muscles and bones strong
- Have a walking meeting
- Dance
- Take the stairs instead of the lift
- Park further away than you need to
- Challenge yourself
- Take up a new virtual fitness class
- Gardening
- Jogging

Healthy Habits

Healthy eating - plant-based diets

Many studies show that eating a plant-based diet is beneficial for heart health, as well as hugely positive for the environment.

Plant-based diets are dietary patterns that have a greater emphasis on foods derived from plants (such as fruits and vegetables, wholegrains, pulses, nuts, seeds and oils).

- Vegans don't eat foods that come from animals, including dairy products and eggs.
- For vegetarians who eat dairy products and eggs, a healthy diet is the same as for anyone else, but without meat or fish.

With good planning and an understanding of what makes up a healthy, balanced vegetarian and vegan diet, you can get all the nutrients your body needs to be healthy without the need for supplements. You need to make sure you get enough iron, calcium and B12. Speak to your GP about taking a supplement if you're concerned.

Why choose plant-based?

- Plant-based foods are rich in the nutrients your body needs
- Helps reduce our risk of cancer and other diseases
- Plant-based food boosts mood, lowering the risk of depression and anxiety
- It can help you achieve a healthy body weight
- It can help prevent type 2 diabetes
- Your skin can improve
- It can reduce arthritis pain



If everyone in the country reduced their consumption of beef, pork, and poultry by a quarter and substituted plant proteins, we'd save about 82 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year.

Healthy Habits

Tips to stop a bad habit

Smoking

Smoking can cause lung disease by damaging your airways and the small air sacs found in your lungs. Lung diseases caused by smoking include emphysema and chronic bronchitis. And cigarette smoking causes most cases of lung cancer.

If you want to stop smoking, you can make small changes to your lifestyle that may help you resist the temptation to light up.

- Stay positive and make a plan. Make a date and stick to it. Think about times when it might be difficult (for example, at a party) and plan actions in advance
- Think about your diet and research food links. Studies suggest that certain foods make cigarettes more satisfying. Other foods make cigarettes taste terrible
- Change your drinks. You might find that certain drinks affect your need to have a cigarette
- Identify when you get a craving. A craving lasts for five minutes. Make a list of five-minute strategies
- Get support from friends and family. Suggest you give up together
- Get moving. Research shows that exercise cuts cravings
- Keep your hands and mouth busy. Drinking from a straw, holding a drink, or chewing gum can all help
- Make a list of reasons why you're stopping



"The secret of your future is hidden in your daily routine."

Healthy Habits



Getting support

Download the free **NHS smoke free** app to help you quit smoking and start breathing easier.

This app allows you to:

- Track your progress
- See how much you're saving
- Get daily support

If you can make it to 28 days smoke-free your five times more likely to quit for good!



Apps to help with healthy habits

Start the **NHS weight loss plan**. 12-week plan to help you eat healthily and be more active

Coach to 5K

Start your fitness journey with a running plan for absolute beginners.

Veganuary

Make your one-month pledge to take positive action to protect our health and planet.

Smoking

Find your **nearest NHS Stop Smoking Service**, or call the Smoke free National Helpline on 0300 123 1044 to speak to a trained adviser.

Talk 2 Us



contact our confidential support service Talk2Us on **01246 385 290**


GroceryAid



or GroceryAid on **08088 021 122**

**If you need any further support or are concerned,
please speak to Occupational Health or your local HR team**

**the
Greencore
way**



Making every day taste *better*