

MRS.LONGVAL PPL20

UNDERSTANDING YOUR HEALTH

Teen **Health**



What Is Health and Wellness?

Your Total Health

What do you think of when you hear the word *health*? Maybe you picture an athlete competing in a race. Perhaps you think of someone you know who never seems to get sick. Although being physically fit and being free from illness are important, there's much more to good health.

If you had a friend who was always putting herself down, would you think she was healthy? What about a classmate who was always picking fights with other students? Being healthy also involves feeling good about yourself and getting along with other people. **Health** is a combination of physical, mental/emotional, and social well-being.

You make choices every day that affect your health. You decide what to eat, how to spend your time, and who you will spend your time with. How can you tell which choices are best for your health?

JOT DOWN
10 WORDS
THAT COME
TO MIND
WHEN YOU
THINK OF
GOOD
HEALTH...
COMPARE
THEM WITH
A FRIEND

The Health Triangle

Like a triangle, your health has three sides: physical, mental/emotional, and social. Each side affects the other two sides. For example, a teen who skips meals and doesn't get enough sleep may feel irritable and have trouble concentrating. A teen who doesn't express emotions in healthy ways may have difficulty getting along with family and friends.

The key to good health is keeping a balanced health triangle. To have a balanced triangle, you need to keep each side of your triangle healthy. **Figure 1.1** provides more information about the three sides of the health triangle.



FIGURE 1.1

The Health Triangle

The health triangle has three equally important sides.

Which side deals with managing stress?

Social

Social health involves getting along with other people. This includes being a caring family member, making and keeping friends, and giving and receiving support when it's needed.



Mental/Emotional

Mental and emotional health involves liking and accepting yourself for who you are. This includes finding solutions to problems, expressing emotions in healthy ways, and finding positive ways to manage stress.

Physical

Physical health involves taking care of your body. This includes eating well-balanced meals and snacks, being physically active, avoiding disease, getting enough rest, and having regular medical and dental checkups.

What Is Wellness?

Wellness is much more than just being healthy. **Wellness** is *an overall state of well-being, or total health*. To achieve wellness you need to make good health a part of your daily routine.

Every decision you make can affect your wellness. For example, healthy snack choices, such as fruit or yogurt instead of potato chips or candy, will satisfy your hunger and contribute to your wellness. Doing your homework or riding your bike are healthier ways to spend your time after school than playing video games. Keep in mind that developing good daily habits now will have positive long-term effects on your health and wellness.

DRAW YOUR OWN HEALTH TRIANGLE
IF YOUR TRIANGLE IS BALANCED.... DESCRIBE HOW YOU
KEEP THE THREE SIDES EQUAL
IF YOUR TRIANGLE IS NOT BALANCED... LIST SPECIFIC
WAYS YOU CAN HELP BALANCE IT!

Changes During the Teen Years

Changing Times

The teen years involve changes that affect all sides of your health triangle. You might grow two inches, experience mood swings, and make new friends—all within a matter of months. Such changes can be challenging and even a bit scary, but they can also be exciting. These changing times signal that you're on your way to becoming an adult.

Adapting to and coping with changes during the teen years can make you feel physically tired and emotionally stressed. For these reasons, you need to pay careful attention to all sides of your health triangle:

- **Physical.** Be physically active, eat nutritious meals and snacks, and get enough sleep. Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.
- **Mental/Emotional.** Use critical thinking skills. Find positive ways to express your feelings and manage stress. Ask for help and advice from trusted adults.
- **Social.** Do your best to get along well with others. Keep others' needs in mind and offer your support.

DIVIDE YOUR SHEET INTO 2 COLUMNS...
ON ONE SIDE WRITE DOWN 5 THINGS YOU LOVE ABOUT BEING A TEEN...
ON THE OTHER WRITE 5 THINGS THAT CONCERN YOU ABOUT BEING A TEEN

Taking Responsibility for Your Health

Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle

Do you eat nutritious foods even when you're not at home? Do you get at least eight hours of sleep each night? Do you wear a safety helmet every time you ride your bike or skateboard? You might be surprised to learn how such lifestyle factors affect your health. Lifestyle factors are *behaviors and habits that help determine a person's level of health*. Figure 1.4 illustrates certain positive lifestyle factors.

FIGURE 1.4

Positive Lifestyle Factors

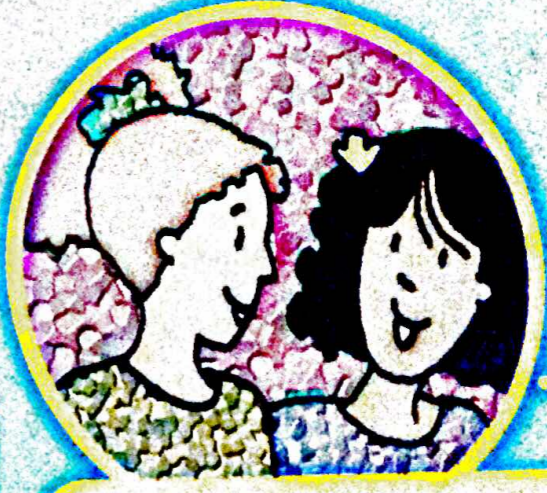
Choosing positive lifestyle factors will help improve your health both now and in the future.



Developing skills and talents



Preventing injuries



Spending time with friends



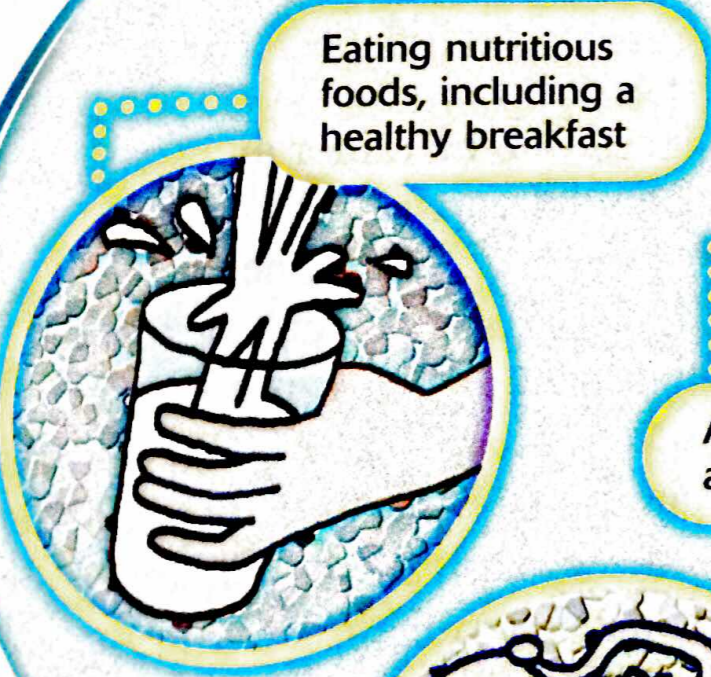
Getting at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day



Avoiding tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs



Getting at least eight hours of sleep every night



Eating nutritious foods, including a healthy breakfast

Recognizing Risk Behaviors

Risks are an unavoidable part of life. For example, you may need to cross a busy street on the way to school, or to use a sharp knife when preparing food. Such risks are not likely to injure you or someone else if you take reasonable care. Some actions, however, involve a high level of unnecessary risk. A **risk behavior** is an action or behavior that might cause injury or harm to you or others.

Some risk behaviors are obvious. Diving into a river when you don't know its depth is obviously risky. The chance of injury is great and immediate. Other risk factors, however, are not so obvious. For example, regularly eating foods high in fat and sugar is a risk behavior. Even though you may not notice any immediate effect, this unhealthy lifestyle factor may have a lasting negative impact on your future health.

Risk Behaviors and Teens

Certain risk behaviors are particularly associated with teens, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These include the use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs; an unhealthy diet; and a sedentary lifestyle. A **sedentary lifestyle** is *a way of life that involves little physical activity*. Another health risk for teens is sexual activity. Other unsafe behaviors include riding a bike without a helmet. Teens who choose a healthy lifestyle can avoid these risks.


Risk Behaviors and Consequences

All risk behaviors carry consequences—some minor and some major. Not getting enough sleep for only one night, for example, will probably just make you feel tired and grouchy the next day. Many risk behaviors, such as the use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs, result in much more serious and far-reaching consequences.

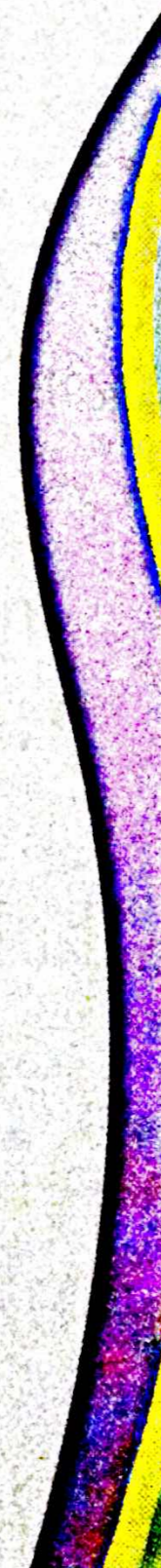
Abstaining from Risk Behaviors

How can you avoid serious consequences like Jason's? You can plan ahead and take precautions. A **precaution** is a *planned action taken before an event to increase the chances of a safe outcome*.

In addition to taking precautions, you can stay safe and avoid negative consequences by practicing healthful behaviors and abstinence. **Abstinence** is a *deliberate decision to avoid high-risk behavior*. You may be familiar with the word *abstinence* used to discuss avoiding sexual activity. Abstinence, however, means *avoiding all high-risk behavior*, including the use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.



Abstinence from risk behavior is the wise choice for teens. It shows that you are responsible and that you respect yourself and others. By practicing abstinence, you protect all three sides of your health triangle. You protect your physical health by avoiding injury. You protect your mental/emotional health by avoiding the stress and worry involved with taking risks. In addition, you protect your social health by not disappointing family members and friends and by maintaining their trust.



Taking More Responsibility

Taking responsibility for your health involves more than just recognizing healthy choices and risk factors. Your personal **attitude**—your *feelings and beliefs*—also plays a role. You need to believe that making wise choices and developing good health habits can have a positive effect on your health.

Your attitude also includes the way you feel about yourself. If you like and respect yourself and believe that other people like and respect you, you will want to take care of yourself. To look, feel, and do your best, you will make choices that protect and promote your health. Taking responsibility for your health also requires **self-control**, or *restraint from your own emotions and desires.* For example, instead of slamming a door when you are angry, you could take a walk to cool off.

Developing Good Character



Self-discipline

Developing a healthy lifestyle takes commitment, but the rewards are worth the effort. For example, you may have to decide to watch less television so that you have more time for physical activity. *How have you shown self-discipline in the past week?*



