

## Avoid Smoking and Drugs. Use Alcohol Responsibly.



Not smoking tobacco products (including hookah pipe), not using drugs, and using alcohol responsibly will lower your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, strokes, lung and other cancers; and will prevent addictive habits which harm not only our own physical and mental health but also those of our family and community.

### Tips for Healthy Lifestyle Actions – START TODAY!

- Replace unhealthy habits (smoking, drug and/or alcohol use) with healthy habits such as physical activities, hobbies and social activities (community, family and work commitments).
- Set a date to STOP unhealthy habits and decide on how to manage stress, any cravings and withdrawal symptoms.
- Physical activity can help with withdrawal symptoms and cravings for cigarettes, drugs and alcohol. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
- Make friends and build strong social networks for peer support.
- Avoid reminders, triggers and temptations of your unhealthy habits. For example, stay away from places and people associated with your smoking, drug and alcohol use.
- Get professional help such as counselling, therapy or medication. Contact your healthcare provider for guidance. Treatment Centres in the Western Cape: [www.westerncape.gov.za/directories/facilities/736](http://www.westerncape.gov.za/directories/facilities/736)
- A pregnant woman should avoid smoking, drugs and any alcohol to protect her unborn baby from permanent physical and mental damage. A responsible father/partner will be supportive by avoiding unhealthy habits during their pregnancy. It is a team effort!

## Manage Stress



Stress is a part of life and should therefore be managed to prevent negative effects on our health and wellness. Feelings of stress include muscle tension, sweaty palms, increased sweating, rapid heart rate, stomach turning, rapid shallow breathing, irritability, mood swings, depression, sadness and withdrawal. We all experience stressful moments! The good news is that there are ways to manage those moments of initial panic and stress and take control!

### Tips for Healthy Lifestyle Actions – START TODAY!

- Take a moment every day to do something that makes you feel good. Don't feel guilty about this! These moments reduce your stress levels.
- Physical activity releases feel-good hormones and gives you energy to tackle your challenges. Aim for at least 30 minutes of activity most days of the week.
- Stretching leads to deeper breathing and relaxation.
- Eat a healthy balanced diet. Avoid foods that are high in caffeine, fats and sugar.
- Getting a change of scenery can help put things in perspective and allow you to get some distance from a stressful situation, e.g. go for a walk during lunch time.
- Get help, don't suffer alone! If you're struggling to manage stress, speak to a friend, your healthcare provider, spiritual advisor or a counsellor.
- Make friends and build strong social networks for support.
- Get a good night's sleep (7-8 hours) so that your body is well rested and energised to deal with challenges. Avoid influences that prevent good sleep such as bright lights, noise, electronics (e.g. TV, cell phone), foods and drinks containing caffeine, alcohol and sugar.

## WesternCape on Wellness



Creating A Culture Of Wellness Together

## Healthy Lifestyle Actions!

WoW! (WesternCape on Wellness) promotes and activates Healthy Lifestyle Actions to prevent, reduce and better self-manage common chronic diseases.

Through a partnership approach, WoW! encourages and invites government departments, academic institutions, private organisations, community organisations, community-based groups and the public to **Create a Culture of Wellness Together!**

**Be Healthy! Be Happy! Be You! Be WoW!**



**WOW! LEARN LIVE  
EAT PLAY**

# Live a Healthy Lifestyle

LEARN



To live a healthy lifestyle, we need to make smart behavioural choices including about the food we eat, how we prepare our food, the time we are physically active, how we manage stress, our sexual behaviour and other habits such as not smoking, not taking drugs and not abusing alcohol. Unhealthy lifestyle choices increase the risk of developing common chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart problems, gout, cancers and mental health problems.

Chronic diseases are a serious problem in South Africa, affecting both adults and children. So Healthy Lifestyle Actions are required by all of us!

This leaflet offers several actions you can take immediately towards increasing your health for protection against developing chronic diseases. Important lifestyle choices not included in this leaflet relate to our sexual behaviours. Our choices should protect us from unplanned pregnancies and from getting Sexually Transmitted Infections, such as HIV.

## Today you can Take Actions that promote and protect your health for a happier and longer life!

### For further information:

SMS the keyword WoW and your message to 35395 (standard data charges apply)

Email: [wow@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:wow@westerncape.gov.za)  
Website: [www.westerncape.gov.za/wow](http://www.westerncape.gov.za/wow)  
Tel: 021 483 6651 | Fax: 021 483 9921



Western Cape  
Government  
FOR YOU

Health



# Eat Healthy and Manage a Healthy Weight!

EAT



Healthy eating is about the types of food we choose to eat and the methods we choose to cook and prepare our food. These choices have a direct impact on our weight. A healthy weight is a range of what you should weigh according to your age, body weight and height. Maintaining a healthy weight through healthy eating and physical activity is very important to stay healthy!

## Tips for Healthy Lifestyle Actions –START TODAY!

- Know your numbers! Find out what your healthy weight should be and go for a yearly health screen (check-up) to know your blood pressure, blood sugar and blood cholesterol.
- Use cooking methods that add little or no fat, e.g. roasting, grilling, baking, stir-frying, steaming and poaching.
- Cut fat off meat before cooking it.
- Eat more fruit and vegetables and home-cooked meals made with fresh foods. Eat fewer fried and take-away foods.
- Eat less salt. Taste your food before adding salt. Remove the salt pot from the table. Gradually use less salt when cooking/baking. Use alternatives to salt such as lemon juice, garlic, chillies, onion, ginger or herbs.
- Eat less food with added sugar. Gradually use less sugar in tea/coffee and cooking/baking. Do not add sugar to vegetables. Never add sugar to a baby's food/drink. Snack on fruit and vegetables instead of biscuits.
- Drink more clean tap water. Flavour water by adding natural ingredients e.g. slices of apple, lemon, orange, cucumber. Have water with meals. Do not drink sugar-sweetened cold drinks often (e.g. fizzy drinks, flavoured water, energy drinks, sweetened juice).
- Balance the amount of food you eat (energy in) with physical activity (energy out)!

# Keep Physically Active – Move More!

PLAY



Being physically active is about moving our bodies by using muscles and energy. Regular physical activity promotes and protects our physical and mental wellness, and helps to maintain a healthy weight. Regular physical activity helps when giving up smoking, helps managing stress, helps sleeping better at night, gives you more strength and energy, and it is fun and could be free! Everyone, including people living with chronic diseases, benefit from keeping physically active.

## Tips for Healthy Lifestyle Actions – START TODAY!

- Know your numbers! Go for a yearly health screen (check-up) to know what your healthy weight, blood sugar, blood cholesterol and blood pressure should be. Many people don't know they have high blood pressure as one cannot feel it.
- Do at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily or 150 minute per week, and have fun – you don't need the gym!
- Walk more, walk faster! Take the stairs instead of the lift! Walk up escalators! Get off the bus or taxi one stop early and walk the rest of the way!
- Replace a tea/coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a friend to join you.
- Dance and move to music! Do gardening! Clean the yard!
- Play safe physical games with your kids.
- Join a walking, running or exercise group to stay motivated!
- Sit less, stand more! Jump/stretch when an advert is shown on the TV! Stand up when your phone rings!
- Choose physical activities that you enjoy – have fun!