

Conventional 10 Tips for Better Health

1. Don't smoke. If you can, stop. If you can't, cut down.
2. Stay on a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.
3. Make sure you stay physically active and exercise at least 3 times a week.
4. Manage stress by, for example, talking things through and taking time to slow down, or planning relaxing get-aways.
5. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
6. Cover up in the sun, and protect children from sunburn.
7. Make sure you practice safer sex.
8. Don't forget regular check ups with your family doctor and get screenings for cancer.
9. Be safe on the roads: Follow the highway code and wear your seatbelt.
10. Learn the first-aid ABC: airways, breathing, circulation.

What Your Doctor Didn't Tell You

1. Don't be poor. If you can, stop. If you can't, try not to be poor for long.
2. Live near good supermarkets and affordable fresh produce stores.
3. Live in a safe leafy neighborhood with parks and green space nearby.
4. Work in a rewarding and respected job with good compensation, benefits and control over your work.
5. If you work, don't lose your job or get laid off.
6. Take family vacations and all the benefits you are entitled to.
7. Make sure you have wealthy parents.
8. Don't live in damp, low-quality housing, next to a busy road or near a polluting factory.
9. Be sure to own a car if you have to rely on neglected public transportation.
10. Learn how to fill in the complex housing benefit application forms before you become homeless and destitute.

There is more to good health than lifestyle choices, genes and access to health care. Research shows that the social circumstances in which we are born, live and work—our jobs, schools, built space, transportation, even the quality of civic life—get under the skin, influencing our behaviors, access to resources, chronic stress levels and ultimately increasing or decreasing our chances for health.

Adapted from Dave Gordon, University of Bristol, and Dennis Raphael, York University

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