



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

ARE YOU HEALTHY? A BASIC CHECKLIST

The value of good health is undeniable. Practising healthy habits can lower your risk of disease, keep your stress in check and can increase your energy.

The simple rules for optimal health, according to Healthline, are the ones you should be doing daily:

1. Eating a healthy diet – a combination of unprocessed, whole foods, and drinking sufficient water.
2. Getting enough sleep – six to seven hours per day of quality sleep is desirable.
3. Moving! Exercising and lifting weights allows your body, brain and hormones to perform properly.
4. Managing your stress, as excessive stress can wreak havoc on your health.
5. Avoiding or minimising damaging habits, like smoking, alcohol and drugs.

Annual screening can detect issues in the early stages

In addition to your daily habits, you should monitor your body condition with annual screenings. WebMD recommends the following health checks:

- Blood pressure: high blood pressure can be a sign of hypertension
- Cholesterol: high cholesterol could increase the risk of heart attack or stroke

- Blood sugar test: for diabetes
- Skin check, specifically moles, freckles or other marks on the skin
- Bone density (for those over 50)
- Mammogram for women (40 years and over)
- Prostate check for men (50 years and over)
- Cervical cancer screening
- Dental check-up
- Eye test

Of course, if you have any existing or chronic medical conditions, or a family history of disease, you may need to have some of these checks done more frequently – consult your doctor for advice.

Regular health checks are important, as they can identify emerging medical problems and encourage a change in lifestyle if necessary. Treatment of diseases may be more successful if detected in the early stages.

Don't forget your vaccinations!

The World Health Organization refers to immunisation as “a global health and development success story, saving millions of lives every year”. While most vaccines against disease are administered in childhood, there are some that require booster doses, with others, like the Influenza vaccine, that should be done annually. It's worth checking with your doctor that your vaccinations are up to date.