

Daily Steps to Health

Don't Smoke.

If you do smoke, talk to your doctor about quitting. Your doctor or nurse can help you. And, you can also help yourself. For tips on how to quit, go to www.smokefree.gov. Or call the Alabama Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free counseling, support material and four weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy patches. For more quit-smoking resources, go to www.healthfinder.gov/, and search for "smoking."

Be Physically Active.

Walking briskly, mowing the lawn, dancing, swimming, and bicycling are just a few examples of moderate physical activity. If you are not already physically active, start small and work up to 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity most days of the week.

Eat a Healthy Diet.

Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products; include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and eat foods low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

Stay at a Healthy Weight.

Balance calories from foods and beverages with calories you burn off by your activities. To prevent gradual weight gain over time, make small decreases in food and beverage calories and increase physical activity.

Drink Alcohol Only in Moderation.

If you drink alcohol, have no more than two drinks a day. (A standard drink is one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.)

Should You Take Medicines To Prevent Disease?

Aspirin: Ask your doctor about taking aspirin to prevent heart disease if you are:

- Older than 45.
- Younger than 45 and:
 - Have high blood pressure.
 - Have high cholesterol.
 - Have diabetes.
 - Smoke.

Immunizations: Stay up-to-date with your immunizations.

- Have a flu shot every year starting at age 50. If you are younger than 50, ask your doctor whether or not you need a flu shot.
- Have a pneumonia shot once after you turn 65. If you are younger, ask your doctor whether you need a pneumonia shot.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provide more information on immunizations at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/adult-schedule.htm>.

More Information

For more information on staying healthy, order the following free publications from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Call the AHRQ Publications Clearinghouse at 1-800-358-9295, or send an e-mail to ahrqpubs@ahrq.hhs.gov.

- *The Pocket Guide to Good Health for Adults.* Pub. No. APPIP 03-0001, May 2003. Also available in Spanish: Pub. No. APPIP 03-0010, August 2003.
- *The Pocket Guide to Staying Healthy at 50+.* Pub. No. AHRQ 04-P001, Nov. 2003. Also available in Spanish: Pub. No. 04-IP001-B, March 2004.
- Another good place to find health information is www.healthfinder.gov.