Healthy Habits

We all have unique habits – things that are automatic for us and that we repeat often. Some habits have a positive impact on our wellbeing (healthy habits), and some don't (unhealthy habits). So, what are some healthy habits, and how you can incorporate these into your day to day life?

Examples of healthy habits to improve your wellbeing

Physical Wellbeing	Mental Wellbeing
Eat a healthy diet made up of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein. Try to limit processed foods, sugary drinks, and unhealthy fats.	**Practice mindfulness** to wind down and help you relax. This can be as simple as taking a few minutes to take some deep breaths.
Drink lots of water. Most adults need between 8-10 cups of water per day.	**Connect with others.** Social connection is important for mental health. Spend time with loved ones, join a club or group, or volunteer in your community.
Exercise regularly. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise most days of the week.	**Set boundaries** and practice work-life balance.
Get enough sleep. Avoid screens before bed and try to get 7-8 hours of sleep each night.	**Take time for yourself** and do things you enjoy. This might include taking a bath, spending time in nature, going to a dance class, crafting or reading.
Limit intake of caffeine and alcohol.	**Help others** to boost your mood and sense of purpose. You could donate blood, volunteer for a local charity or help a friend in need.

So, you've decided on the habit(s) you'd like to incorporate into your lifestyle, but how do you go from making healthy choices once or twice to creating a habit that becomes automatic?

Habits can take over two months to become second nature, so you need to work hard to stick to your goals.

4 tips to help create healthy habits

1 **Start small**

Don't try to change too many things at once. Start with one or two healthy habits and focus on those for a few weeks. Once they become routine, you can increase or add more.

2 **Make it easy**

Find ways to make healthy habits easy to do. For example, if you want to eat more fruits and vegetables, keep them on hand in your kitchen. If you want to exercise more, find a physical activity that you enjoy and that fits into your schedule.

3 **Find a support system**

Having people to support you can make it easier to stick to your healthy habits by keeping you accountable. Talk to your friends and family about your goals. You can also join a support group or online forum for people who are trying to make healthy changes.

4 **Reward yourself**

When you reach a goal, reward yourself with something you enjoy. This will help you stay motivated and on track.

Looking for more resources?

Register for **Wellbeing Gateway.** Your personalised mental health and wellbeing companion.