



Healthy Directions /

# Healthy Tips



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## Welcome to the Healthy Directions book of Healthy Tips!

In this book, you'll find hints and tips for making healthy changes. It's full of great ideas for how to:

- get more physical activity
- eat more fruits and vegetables
- eat less red meat
- take a multivitamin
- say no to smoking


Plus, you'll find quick tips on how to make healthy changes today, this week, or this month. This makes it easy to start right away!

This book also has information about why it's easier to change more than one health habit at a time, and how your health habits are all connected. Plus, you'll find out how to pick a Healthy Directions Buddy. You'll also see why buddies are so important when you make health changes.

You can refer to this book during the Healthy Directions project, and even after it's over. Use it when you are making a plan. It will give you good ideas as you think about how to reach your goals. Use it as you track, and pick up tips that can help your progress. Good luck with your healthy changes!

# Physical Activity

Healthy Directions recommends that you walk 10,000 or more steps every day.



**Exercise is great for you** for so many reasons. It can help keep you fit. It is good for your mood. And it can help prevent cancer, heart disease, and more. Walking is a type of exercise that almost anyone can do. It's easy, fun, and free!

Healthy Directions recommends that you walk at least 10,000 steps every day. This may seem like a lot, but you can work toward this goal a little at a time.

## How can I reach 10,000 steps a day?

Challenge yourself to add steps each day! After using your Track My Week log to track your number of steps, think about ways to get more steps the next day. Could you walk to the store tomorrow instead of driving or taking the bus? Would your dog enjoy a longer walk than he usually gets?

See how many more steps you get the next day, and think of ways to add even more on the days that follow. Once you start adding steps and seeing results on your pedometer, you'll be motivated to walk even more!

Try to get an extra 2,000 to 3,000 steps a day over the next several weeks. You can create a plan to do this!

## Ideas for getting steps

- Go for a walk before work or at lunch.
- Don't drive. Take the bus or walk instead.
- Get off the T or bus one stop early.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Take your dog for a longer walk.
- Walk with your family after dinner, instead of watching TV.
- Walk on a treadmill at a gym or community athletic center.
- Walk with friends around a track at a community athletic center or school.
- Join a walking club—or start one!
- Check out the Healthy Directions Resources booklet for great ideas in your community.
- Ask your buddy to take a walk with you.



Walking to do your errands is a great way to get extra steps.

## What if I don't walk, but I do other kinds of exercise?

Healthy Directions recommends walking 10,000 steps a day. But if you have been doing other kinds of exercise, that's great, too! You will just need to figure out how that type of physical activity compares with steps.

First, decide if your physical activity was moderate or vigorous. Then figure out your steps, based on how long you exercised. (If you walked and did other kinds of physical activity, add these numbers to the number of steps on your pedometer before you track!)

Physical activity is **moderate** when:

- your heart beats faster than normal
- you can still hold a conversation, but it's harder to breathe
- you get a little bit sweaty

Some examples of moderate physical activity are playing basketball, riding a bike at a relaxed pace, or jogging.

- 1 minute of moderate physical activity = 100 steps
- 10 minutes of moderate physical activity = 1,000 steps
- 20 minutes of moderate physical activity = 2,000 steps
- 30 minutes of moderate physical activity = 3,000 steps
- 60 minutes of moderate physical activity = 6,000 steps

For example, if you rode a bike at a moderate level for 20

### Do it today!

Take the stairs instead of the elevator to get more steps.

### Do it this week!

Walk to do errands this weekend.

### Do it this month!

Join a walking club and go for regularly scheduled walks! See the **Healthy Directions Resources** booklet to find a club near you.



Biking at an easy pace can be a great way to get active.

minutes, it would be the same as 2,000 steps. If you rode for 25 minutes, it would be the same as 2,500 steps.

Physical activity is **vigorous** when:

- your heart beats fast
- you can't hold a conversation because you're breathing so hard
- you get very sweaty

Some examples of vigorous physical activity are running, swimming fast, or riding a bike fast.

- 1 minute of vigorous physical activity = 200 steps
- 10 minutes of vigorous physical activity = 2,000 steps
- 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity = 4,000 steps
- 30 minutes of vigorous physical activity = 6,000 steps
- 60 minutes of vigorous physical activity = 12,000 steps

For example, if you ran for 20 minutes, it would be the same as 4,000 steps.

## How can walking help me reach my other health goals?

If you're also trying to eat more **fruits and vegetables**:

- Sweet snacks may give you a short burst of energy, but then your blood sugar drops quickly. This can make you feel sleepy and keep you from exercising. Fruits and vegetables are much better. They fill you up but are light and give you energy.
- It's easy to take a piece of fruit with you! Pack an apple or banana before your next walk.
- Eating fruits and vegetables may help you feel healthier and more fit. This can make exercising easier and more fun.

If you're also trying to eat less **red meat**:

- Eating heavy foods like meat can make you feel tired and can keep you from exercising. If you eat less red meat, you may feel healthier and more fit. This can make exercising easier and more fun.

If you're also trying to take a **multivitamin** every day:

- Taking a multivitamin means you'll be getting all the vitamins and minerals your body needs. This will help give you energy to take long walks and be more active.

If you're also trying to **quit smoking**:

- Exercise is good for everyone, and especially for someone who is trying to quit smoking. It can help you manage stress and relax. It can also help take your mind off cigarettes when a craving hits.
- Quitting smoking can be an emotional experience for some people. Walking can help lift your mood. Try walking with a friend!
- Quitting smoking makes some people want to eat more. Exercising can help you control your weight.

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## How do I use my pedometer?

**Wear your pedometer every day.** Put it on in the morning and keep it on as long as you are awake.

**Clip the pedometer** to your belt or waistband, on the front of your body. Put it as close to your hipbone as you can. If you are right-handed, put the pedometer on your right hip. If you are left-handed, put it on your left hip.

**Clip the pedometer on straight up and down**, not sideways.

**Be sure to attach the safety strap** to your clothes. This will keep the pedometer from falling off! The clip on the pedometer is not very strong—do not force it onto your belt, or it may break.



**If you want to wear** the pedometer under your clothes, you can clip it to your underwear.

**Take the pedometer off at night**, and put it near your keys, shoes, hair brush, or whatever will remind you to put it on again the next day.

**Track your number of steps each day.** Open your pedometer carefully so you don't accidentally reset it to zero.

**Reset the orange button each day** once you have recorded your steps. Hold the button down for a few seconds to reset it.

## How do I take care of my pedometer?

**Pedometers and water don't mix!** Do not wear your pedometer in the shower, bath, or while swimming.

**You might hear** a rattling noise in the pedometer. This is normal.

**Do not shake the pedometer** when you wear it. Don't keep it in your pocket or purse.

# Fruits and Vegetables

Healthy Directions recommends that you eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

**Fruits and vegetables are full** of vitamins, minerals, and fiber. They also:

- fill you up, so you're not as hungry for less healthy foods
- may lower your chances of getting cancer, Type 2 diabetes, and heart disease
- can help you reach your other health goals

## How many fruits and vegetables should I eat?

Try to eat **5 servings of vegetables a day.**

One serving is:

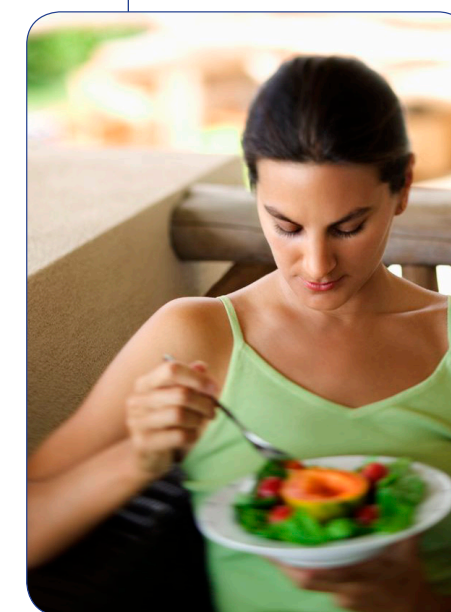
- ½ cup cooked vegetables
- 1 cup raw vegetables

Try to eat **2 to 4 servings of fruit a day.**

One serving is:

- 1 small whole fruit, like an apple or orange
- ¾ cup of berries
- ½ cup canned fruit (packed in water or fruit juice, not syrup)

If you already eat 5 servings a day, try to push that up to 7 or 9 a day. The more you can eat, the better!



Fruits have natural sugar in them, so be careful not to eat too many. But there is no limit on vegetables—you can have as many as you want!



Adding fruit to cereal is a great way to sweeten it without sugar!

## Tips and tricks for getting more fruits and vegetables

Here are some easy ways to add fruits and vegetables to your day:

- Add lettuce, tomato, peppers, or onion to your sandwich.
- Add some vegetables to your pasta sauce.
- Put fresh fruit on your cereal.
- Carry a small piece of fruit with you for an afternoon snack.
- Have fruit for dessert. Check out your Recipes for Health for ideas!
- Make a large green salad with lots of different kinds of vegetables. This can count for 2, 3, or 4 servings of vegetables! Then add extras like:
  - turkey
  - tuna
  - salmon
  - chicken
  - black beans
  - low-fat cheese
- For a quick and healthy snack, fill a small plastic bag with:
  - baby carrots
  - cucumber wedges
  - sliced peppers
  - celery
  - dried fruit

To get the best nutrients, buy fruits and vegetables in lots of different colors. Get fresh produce whenever you can. Frozen is also OK!

## How can eating fruits and vegetables help me reach my other health goals?

If you're also trying to **walk more and be more physically active:**

- Sweet snacks may give you a short burst of energy, but then your blood sugar drops quickly. This can make you feel sleepy and keep you from exercising. Fruits and vegetables are much better. They fill you up but are light and give you energy.
- It's easy to take a piece of fruit with you! Pack an apple or banana before your next walk.
- Eating fruits and vegetables can help you feel healthier. This may make exercising easier and more fun!

If you're also trying to eat less **red meat:**

- Eat a smaller portion of meat. Fill the rest of your plate with vegetables.
- Make meatless recipes. Learn how to use vegetables in new ways.
- Make a big salad and have this as a main dish, instead of meat. Add turkey, chicken, tuna, or egg for lean protein.

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### Do it today!

Skip a snack from the vending machine—bring a piece of fruit along instead.

### Do it this week!

The next time you go grocery shopping, buy a fruit or vegetable that you've never eaten before. If you have kids, let them come along and pick it out!

### Do it this month!

See how many ways you can work vegetables into dinner each night. Throw vegetables into a pasta dish, try a stir-fry with chicken and vegetables, or serve fresh, cut-up veggies. Look for a recipe in **Recipes for Health!**

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If you're also trying to take a **multivitamin** every day:

- Take your multivitamin each day with a glass of orange juice.

If you're also trying to **quit smoking**:

- Quitting smoking makes some people want to eat more. Cut up fruit and vegetables and keep them on hand for healthy, low-calorie snacks.
- Crunchy vegetables that take a long time to eat can keep your hands busy while you're quitting. Try celery or a carrot!
- Giving up cigarettes improves smokers' sense of smell and taste. Enjoy the new, exciting flavors of fresh fruit and vegetables!

# Red Meat

Healthy Directions recommends that you eat no more than 3 servings of red meat a week.

A **serving of red meat** is the size of a deck of cards or the palm of your hand. A small amount of red meat is OK, but too much is not good for your health. Red meat has more saturated fat than other kinds of protein. Saturated fat can increase your risk of heart disease and cancer. Some examples of red meat are:

- beef (steak, hamburgers, etc.)
- pork (pork chops, bacon, ham, sausage, etc.)
- hot dogs
- lamb
- veal

## Why should I eat less red meat?

- It helps you stay healthy—less red meat means you will lower your risk for cancer and heart disease.
- It adds variety to your diet. Trying new things means you won't get bored!
- It saves you money. Other kinds of lean protein cost less.

### Do it today!

Order chicken or turkey on your lunchtime sandwich instead of red meat.

### Do it this week!

Try a recipe that uses beans instead of meat. They don't cost much and are very healthy!

### Do it this month!

Invite some friends or family over for a red meat-free meal. A stir-fry with chicken and lots of different vegetables is a real crowd-pleaser! Or look at **Recipes for Health** for other ideas.



## What should I eat instead?



Try lean protein—it fills you up without all the saturated fat. Lean protein includes:

- chicken
- turkey
- fish
- eggs
- beans
- tofu

One serving of lean protein is 3 ounces of:

- cooked fish
- chicken or turkey (without skin)
- lean beef

For delicious recipes that feature lean protein, visit your Recipes for Health booklet.

## How can eating less red meat help me reach my other health goals?

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If you're also trying to **walk more and be more physically active**:

- Eating heavy foods like meat can make you feel tired and can keep you from exercising. Other sources of lean protein are much better. They fill you up but are lighter and give you energy.

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If you're also trying to eat more **fruits and vegetables**:

- Eat a smaller portion of meat and fill the rest of your plate with vegetables.
- Make meatless recipes and learn how to use vegetables in new ways.
- Make a big green salad. Then add turkey, chicken, or tuna, and have this as a main dish.

# Multivitamins

Healthy Directions recommends that you take a multivitamin each day.

**Multivitamins help** keep you healthy. They:

- fill in gaps in your diet, so you get all the nutrients you need
- contain folate, which is good for your health

## Can't I get all the vitamins I need from food?

It can be hard to eat a balanced diet every day. A daily balanced diet includes:

- 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables
- 6 to 11 servings of whole grains
- 2 to 3 servings of low-fat dairy foods
- 2 servings of lean protein (lean protein includes lean meat, chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, beans, and tofu)



Pill boxes can help you remember to take your multivitamin.

Taking a multivitamin helps you get the vitamins and minerals your body needs, in the right amounts. Most people have days where they don't eat as well as they would like to. A multivitamin will help. But remember that a multivitamin is not a substitute for a healthy diet.

## Which kind of multivitamin should I buy?

Start by taking the multivitamins from Healthy Directions! You have a 3-month supply. When you run out and go to buy some, remember that multivitamins don't need to cost a lot. You can buy the store brand, and it will work just as well as the name brand multivitamins.

There are a few things to look for when you buy multivitamins. The label should say that the multivitamins:

- have at least 400 micrograms of folate (also called folic acid)
- have no more than 100% of the recommended daily allowance (or RDA) of the nutrients included
- are USP-approved

If you don't like to swallow pills, you can also buy chewable or liquid multivitamins.

### Do it today!

Put your multivitamin bottle in a place where you know you'll see it every day.

### Do it this week!

Think about other places to keep multivitamins, in case you forget to take one at home. Then put some vitamins there.

### Do it this month!

Look back at your tracking for multivitamins and see how well you've done!

## When should I take my multivitamin?

Take your multivitamin every day, whenever you like. Make it a habit by taking it at the same time each day. For example, you can take it every morning at breakfast.

Keep extra multivitamins in a pillbox in your bag or in your desk at work, in case you forget to take one at home.

If you forget to take your multivitamin for a day or two, it's not a big deal. Just take one when you remember. You should only take one a day, even if you've forgotten for a few days.

## How can taking multivitamins help me reach my other health goals?

If you're also trying to eat more **fruits and vegetables**:

- Take your multivitamin with a glass of 100% fruit juice every morning. This is a good way to remember to take it each day.

If you're also trying to **walk more and be more physically active**:

- Taking a multivitamin means you'll be getting all the vitamins and minerals your body needs. This will help give you energy to take longer walks, get more steps, and be more active.



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# Smoking

Healthy Directions recommends that you do not smoke.



**Whether you are ready to quit** or just starting to think about it, Healthy Directions can help. Get started by reading the choices below. Which describes you?

**I'm not quite ready to quit, but I'm thinking about it.**

Great! Please turn to page 20 for more information to help with your decision.

**I'm ready to quit!**

Congratulations! Please turn to page 23 for more information about quitting.

**I don't smoke.**

That's great! Please turn to page 29.

## Quitworks

Learn more about quitting at [trytostop.org](http://trytostop.org), the web site of Quitworks. Quitworks is recommended by Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates. Your doctor can refer you, or you can sign up on your own by visiting the site.

*I'm not quite ready to quit, but I'm thinking about it.*

It's super that you're thinking about quitting. But no one can tell you if and when it's the right time to quit. You're the only one who can make that decision! In the meantime, Healthy Directions can help you think about what part smoking plays in your health goals.

**What's good about smoking—and what's bad**

If you're like most smokers, you may have conflicting thoughts about smoking. You know it's bad for you. At the same time, you probably enjoy a lot of things about it. It helps to make a list of these thoughts. It lets you see the pros and cons in black and white. It may help you decide if it's the right time to quit.

We've started a list of the most common pros and cons of smoking. You can add your own pros and cons to this list.

Pros (what I like about smoking)	Cons (what I don't like about smoking)
– Helps me calm down when I'm stressed	– Costs a lot of money
– It's something to do on break at work	– Bad for my heart, lungs, and circulation
– I like to smoke when I'm out	– Makes my clothes, hair, and car smell

**Reasons to think more about quitting**

If you like to smoke, it might be hard to picture the day-to-day benefits of quitting—things that you'll see right away. Even though you might not be ready to quit, take a look at this list and add your own reasons.

Quitting smoking can mean:

- I'll cough less and breathe easier.
- My car/house/apartment won't smell smoky.
- I'll save lots of money.
- My teeth won't be as yellow and my breath will be fresher.
- I won't have to worry about where and when I can smoke when I go out.



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## How can quitting smoking help me reach my other health goals?

If you're also trying to **walk more and become more physically active**:

- Exercise is good for everyone, and especially for someone who is trying to quit smoking. It can help you manage stress and relax. It can also help take your mind off cigarettes when a craving hits.
- Quitting smoking can be an emotional experience for some people. Walking can help lift your mood. Try walking with a friend!
- Quitting smoking makes some people want to eat more. Exercising can help you control your weight.
- People who exercise while they quit smoking are more likely to be successful in quitting.
- You can't smoke when you're doing activities like biking, swimming, or playing basketball/soccer/softball!

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If you're also trying to eat more **fruits and vegetables**:

- Quitting smoking makes some people want to eat more. Cut up fruit and vegetables and keep them on hand for healthy, low-calorie snacks.
- Crunchy vegetables that take a long time to eat can keep your hands busy while you're quitting. Try celery or a carrot!
- Giving up cigarettes improves smokers' sense of smell and taste. Enjoy the new, exciting flavors of fresh fruit and vegetables!

**If you decide you're ready to quit, keep reading!**

### Do it today!

Buy a pack of gum and keep it on hand for when you have a craving.

### Do it this week!

Ask a friend to go on a smoke-free walk with you when you would normally take a smoke break.

### Do it this month!

People connect smoking with different activities or events. Do something new that you've always wanted to try but couldn't because you smoked. This could turn into a new, smoke-free hobby!

## *I'm ready to quit.*

Congratulations! Just by deciding to quit, you've already overcome one of the biggest challenges that smokers face. Now that you're ready to kick butts, Healthy Directions can help you take the next steps.

### Medications that can help

One of the reasons that it's so hard to quit smoking is that nicotine is very addictive. Quit-smoking medications help, either by slowly lowering the amount of nicotine in your body, or by working with chemicals in your brain to make quitting easier. Quit-smoking medications are covered by MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, Medicare, and most private insurers (Blue Cross Blue Shield, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Fallon Community Health Plan, and many others). Visit **[www.trytostop.org](http://www.trytostop.org)** to learn more about coverage, or call your insurance company.

The three most common quit-smoking medications are:

- the patch (NRT)
- Zyban
- Chantix

### The patch

This releases nicotine into the body through your skin. It lets you slowly lower the amount of nicotine until you are nicotine-free. This kind of medicine is also called nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). Most smokers stay on the patch for 6 to 10 weeks. The patch doubles the chances that you'll quit smoking for good. You can buy the patch without a prescription.

**Trytostop.org** is run by Quitworks, the quit-smoking program recommended by Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates. Quitworks can help you decide how to quit, when to quit, whether quit-smoking medication is right for you, and more.



**Zyban**

This is a medication that lessens withdrawal symptoms. It does not have nicotine. It works on chemicals in the brain to help make quitting easier. You can only take Zyban if you have a doctor's prescription. Most smokers take Zyban for as long as their doctor prescribes it, which is usually no more than 3 months. Zyban doubles the chances that you'll quit smoking for good. Some people can't take it, so talk to your doctor.

**Chantix**

This is a medication that lessens withdrawal symptoms and makes smoking much less enjoyable. It works by blocking the signals in the brain that making smoking feel good. You can only take Chantix if you have a doctor's prescription. Most people take Chantix for 3 months. Some people can't take it, so talk to your doctor.

**Do it today!**

Make an appointment with your doctor to talk about quitting and possible medications.

**Do it this week!**

Set a quit date a few weeks out and start cutting back on cigarettes every day.

**Do it this month!**

Calculate how much money you have saved by not buying tobacco and treat yourself to something special!

**Your worries about quitting smoking**

Some people who are getting ready to quit smoking worry about what's going to happen when a craving hits. Others get anxious about how they are going to deal with other smokers. As you get ready to quit, remember that you can handle it! The trick is to know how to manage these problems before they come up.

On this page, list your worries about quitting smoking—any that you can think of—on the left-hand side of this list. Then write some solutions on the right-hand side. We've filled in the first few for you as examples.

**My worries**

**What I can do about them**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| – I'll be fidgety and in a bad mood without cigarettes | – Find out about quit-smoking medications that make quitting easier |
| – I'll be tempted to smoke when my friends light up    | – Ask friends not to smoke  |

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**Kicking old habits**

A cigarette with your coffee. Going out for a smoke at work. Sound familiar? Most smokers light up when they do a certain activity just because they connect that activity with smoking. To help break the links between your smoking and your activities, think about what you do when you smoke. Then think about what could take the place of lighting that cigarette.

Visit [trytostop.org](http://trytostop.org) to learn more about kicking old habits.

**I always smoke when I go out with friends.**

*What I can do instead:* Go out with friends who don't smoke, or ask friends to help by not offering me cigarettes. Send friends to [Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org](http://Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org) so they can see how they can help me, or tell them how else they can help me quit.

**I always smoke in the car.**

*What I can do instead:* Chew gum while I drive. Turn up the radio and sing really loud!

**I always smoke after eating.**

*What I can do instead:* Get up from the table and keep busy. Call, email, or text a friend. Brush my teeth or use mouthwash. Wash dishes by hand, or go for a walk.

I always \_\_\_\_\_

What I can do instead: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I always \_\_\_\_\_

What I can do instead: \_\_\_\_\_

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I always \_\_\_\_\_

What I can do instead: \_\_\_\_\_

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I always \_\_\_\_\_

What I can do instead: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**How can quitting smoking help me reach my other health goals?**

If you're also trying to **walk more and become more active:**

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- Quitting smoking can be an emotional experience for some people. Walking can help lift your mood. Try walking with a friend!
- Quitting smoking makes some people want to eat more. Exercising can help you control your weight.
- People who exercise while they quit smoking are more likely to be successful in quitting.
- You can't smoke when you're doing activities like biking, swimming, or playing basketball/soccer/softball!

If you're also trying to eat more **fruits and vegetables:**

- Quitting smoking makes some people want to eat more. Cut up fruit and vegetables and keep them on hand for healthy, low-calorie snacks.
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# Help from Family and Friends

## How Buddies Can Help You Make Healthy Changes

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**Changing health habits** can be hard—but friends and family can help! Lots of studies show that it's easier to make healthy changes and keep them up when you get support from those around you. So make use of the buddy system! Healthy Directions recommends choosing a buddy to support you as you make health changes. A buddy can be a family member, friend, coworker, neighbor, or anyone you think can help. If you want, pick more than one buddy! Here are some tips for picking that person—and what to do once your buddy has agreed to help out.

### Think carefully about who can help you.

- Who has helped you with things in the past?
- Who can you count on to check in with you?
- Who can cheer you on?
- Is there someone who has already helped you make other types of changes?
- Is there someone you are close to who makes you feel good about yourself?

### Healthy Directions Buddy Resources

We have great ways for your buddies to start helping you right away:

- Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org, the site for buddies
- The Buddies Brochure, a quick-start guide for your support person

## Share your goals with your buddy.

- Explain to your buddy what specific changes you'd like to make. Instead of saying "I want to eat better," pick specific goals, like "I want to eat 2 servings of vegetables every night at dinner." This will help them understand how Healthy Directions works. Explain to them that you'll be making a plan to make these changes, and that you will track your health habits each day.
- Talk about why making changes is important to you. Are you eager to feel better, look better, have more energy, help prevent disease? Explain why it matters to you.

## Tell your buddy what you need.

- Give your buddy the Healthy Directions "Buddies for Health" brochure. It will show them how to help you.
- Ask as many buddies as you want to visit [Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org](http://Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org). This is where they will learn how to help by reading about what to ask, what to do, what not to do, and the best ways to help you day to day.
- Ask your buddy to encourage you and check in with you on a regular schedule. We recommend that they check in with you at least once a week, either by phone or in person.

## Work together to figure out exactly how your buddy can help.

- It's great to hear encouraging words from the person who's supporting you. It's even better to be able to count on them for specific kinds of help! For example:

### **If you're trying to get more physical activity...**

your buddy can walk with you after work. It's harder to skip it if someone is waiting for you!

### **If you're trying to eat less red meat...**

your buddy can help you pick out recipes that are meat-free. You can even cook them together! Visit the Recipes for Health for ideas.

### **If you're trying to quit smoking...**

your buddy can help you deal with cravings by talking with you and planning activities that are smoke-free.

### **If you're trying to take a daily multivitamin...**

your buddy can help you think of ways to remember to take it.

### **If you're trying to eat more fruits and vegetables...**

your buddy can steer you away from unhealthy snacks and help you choose snacks that feature fruits and vegetables.

Your buddy can find more examples on [Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org](http://Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org).

## Share what is not working with your buddy.

- Explain that if you hit a stumbling block, nagging won't help. Encouraging words will! Your buddy can learn more about what to say and do on [Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org](http://Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org).
- Your buddy should be a help, not a pain. Decide ahead of time on how often your buddy should check in with you—and ask them to stick to it. We recommend at least once a week, in person or over the phone.

Turn the page to take the Buddy Quiz!

## What works for you? Take the Buddy Quiz!

Everybody has their own style when it comes to asking for support. Take this quiz to find out what yours is!

Circle A, B, or C to choose the answer that best matches what you would do in these situations.

1. You want to become more active. You've been thinking about starting to walk every evening. You:
  - A. ask a family member or neighbor if he or she will watch your kids so you can walk
  - B. are afraid that people you know will laugh at you if you start to take regular walks
  - C. plan to start walking on your own soon
2. You really want to try cooking new recipes that have more vegetables and less red meat. You:
  - A. ask your family members to pick out a few recipes, then you all cook them together
  - B. worry that your family members won't try new foods
  - C. cook separate meals for yourself and give your family the same old thing
3. You just came from the doctor's office. Your blood pressure is a little bit high and your doctor wants you to try and eat better. You:
  - A. tell a friend or family member what the doctor said
  - B. worry that people will find out and bother you about it
  - C. decide to deal with it by yourself
4. You've made some healthy changes in your life. Still, you sometimes find it hard to stick with your health goals. You:
  - A. ask a friend, relative, co-worker, or neighbor to help you
  - B. think about giving up
  - C. just keep trying by yourself

## Scoring

Give yourself 3 points for each "A" answer.

Give yourself 2 points for each "B" answer.

Give yourself 1 point for each "C" answer.

Add up all your points, and see how you did!

### If you scored 11-12 points:

You feel good about getting support! You may have even seen firsthand that it's easier to make health changes when you have help. Now think about new ways you and your friends and family can help one another. Here are a few ideas:

- host a neighborhood block party with active games
- start a walking club at work
- ask friends and family to visit [Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org](https://Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org) for even more ideas

### If you scored 9-10 points:

Sometimes you like to get support, but other times it can be hard to ask for help. Maybe you only like to reach out to others in some situations. Although this is OK, remember that health habits are easier to change if you include family and friends. When you're feeling unsure about asking for help, try taking a few small steps. You can:

- invite a friend over for dinner to try a new, healthy recipe
- ask someone to take a break and walk with you
- ask a few people to visit [Buddies.TrackmyChanges.org](https://Buddies.TrackmyChanges.org), where they'll learn how they can help you make changes



**If you scored 7-8 points:**

Sometimes it's hard for you to ask for help from friends and family. Maybe you're worried about what they will think, or you don't know if they are ready to help. Here are a few ways to get others involved:

- explain to your friends and family how important your health goals are to you
- ask someone to walk with you after dinner—it's a great way to unwind
- take turns making healthy meals with friends
- ask friends and family to visit [Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org](https://Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org)

**If you scored 4-6 points:**

When you want to make a change, you do it alone. But remember that health habits are easier to change if you include your family and friends. Take a few small steps to get support from others. You can:

- invite a friend over for dinner to try a new, healthy recipe
- ask someone to take a break and walk with you
- ask a few people to visit [Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org](https://Buddies.TrackMyChanges.org), where they'll learn how they can help you make health changes—on your terms

**Notes**

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