

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle

Sport and leisure

If you are doing exercise that is unfamiliar to you, and you have not exercised for a while, you need to be careful about possible injury. Take care when you are exercising or playing sport in particular types of weather, such as hot summers or cold winters.

Make sure you:

- Warm up (muscle stretches)
- Drink plenty of water
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear

Here are some quick tips about how to avoid injury or adverse effects while exercising:

- Stop and rest if you experience symptoms like shortness of breath, dizziness, pain in the chest
- Cramps or fainting
- If these symptoms occur regularly contact a doctor
- If you receive an injury during exercise or activity, assess whether you need medical attention

Time management

It is common knowledge that time management is an essential skill for successful study. It is a matter of choice how we use the time we have. We can either allow time to control our activities or we can make time work for us by establishing priorities and scheduling our work. Effective time management is about getting more done with your available time. Effective time management involves learning a number of skills, including:

- Goal setting: knowing what you are trying to achieve. This helps you to stay motivated and manage your time more effectively. To set goals, you need to decide on your long term, medium term and short term goals. The time frames will vary for each individual.
- Prioritising and getting the most done in the most efficient and effective way. Time is limited and valuable, so it must be allocated wisely.
- Planning your time: planning ahead and taking control of your time. Planning regularly allows you to achieve your goals, monitor your progress and prevent time wastage.
- Making the best use of your time. Time is a valuable resource that should be put to good use.
- Allocating a balance of time for study, exercise, socialising and sleep is essential to maintain a happy and healthy lifestyle.





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The importance of good sleeping patterns

Good quality sleep isn't necessarily a long sleep – it's having what doctors call 'deep sleep' and 'dream sleep'. Most 'deep sleep' occurs during the first five hours after falling asleep. Even if you sleep for only four or five hours, you can still get about the same amount of 'deep sleep' as someone who sleeps for eight to ten hours.

Illness, pain or depression can disrupt sleep. Our ability to get good quality sleep can be disrupted by physical illness, infections, pain during the night and psychological stress.

This can lead to:

- Difficulty in getting to sleep
- Poor quality sleep
- Less sleep
- Frequently waking during the night
- Waking very early in the morning and being unable to get back to sleep.

Poor quality 'deep sleep' can lead to:

- Tiredness during the day
- Poor concentration
- Irritability
- Aches and pains in the muscles and bones
- An immune system that doesn't work well, leading to more frequent illness
- Periods of depression

Here are some things you can do to improve your sleep:

When you wake up in the morning

- Get out of bed as soon as you wake. Don't go back to sleep or try to make up for 'lost sleep'
- Try to get up at about the same time each day
- Go outside into the fresh air
- Do some physical activity, for example, go for a walk

During the day

- Do not nap; if you nap, you'll be less tired when you go to bed and you'll probably take longer to fall asleep
- If you're worrying about things during the night, set aside some time for problem-solving during the day
- Keep a sleep-wake diary
- Review your sleep-wake progress with your doctor, if necessary
- During the day, try to be physically active
- Avoid drinking caffeine after 4pm and try not to drink more than two cups of caffeine-type drinks each day such as coffee, strong tea, cola or energy drinks