

# GET HEALTHIER

## LEADER INSTRUCTIONS:

*Leader instructions for you are in orange, do not read them out loud. Read to your group everything else on this card starting with #1, then #2, and so on. Give your group enough time to talk about the information on this card as you read through it. Encourage everyone to participate by asking questions like: What does everyone else think? Does anyone have any other ideas?*

This leader card has information, shown in green, that is missing on the member cards.

READ AND FILL IN THIS GET HEALTHIER CARD. THEN COMPLETE THIS WEEK'S TAKE-HOME ACTIVITY. IF PROVIDED BY YOUR COMPANY, TELL THE MEMBERS THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE AN INCENTIVE FOR COMPLETING THE TAKE-HOME ACTIVITY.

### 1. HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss before giving them the answers in green. Have at least half of your group talk.*

- The 3 leading causes of death in the U.S. in 2017 were heart disease, cancer and accidents.\* These diseases are all preventable
- You should eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day – this could lower your risk of a stroke by 30%
- True or false: having a healthier life can lower current and future health care costs (this can mean billions of dollars for the U.S. True)
- Eating healthy, exercising, not smoking, and drinking alcohol in moderation can add up to 14 years onto your life

#### DISCUSS

*Have at least half of your group talk.*

- Did any of this surprise you?

### 2. HOW CAN HEALTHY HABITS BENEFIT YOU?

Allow enough time for your group to discuss before giving them the ideas in green. Have at least half of your group talk.

- Longer life
- More energy
- Lower risk of disease
- Less muscle and joint pains
- Happier family
- More confidence
- Look even better

*YOU have the biggest role in improving your health and YOU are the one that benefits the most when your health improves.*

### 3. BELOW ARE SOME BASIC HEALTHY HABITS:

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet
- Drink few sugary drinks
- Exercise regularly
- Sleep 7-8 hours a night

### 4. DISCUSS

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss. All members of the group should participate – direct questions to anyone who hasn't participated by mid-way through the card discussion.*

- What healthy habits do you practice already?
- Which habits can you improve on?

### 5. GROUP ACTIVITY:

What is 'healthy' and 'not healthy' about Alex's lifestyle?

Alex is a landscaper who is very active every day. Still, he gets sick a lot more often than his coworkers and struggles with high blood pressure. Alex walks about 2 miles to work every day from his home. He enjoys his job where he spends time outside, but sometimes the work environment can be stressful. On stressful days, he often takes a smoke break. On a regular day, Alex snacks on an apple. He frequently buys lunch at the nearby burger restaurant. He usually buys a cheeseburger, large fries and a large soda. Walking home, he usually stops at the market and buys a pastry. For dinner, he often orders either a pizza or Chinese take out since he doesn't like to cook. He eats dinner while watching TV for 4 hours in order to relax. He makes sure to stop eating by 7:00 pm each night so he can get 8 hours of good quality sleep.



\*CDC source: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/leading-causes-of-death.htm>  
 Medical News Today: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/282929.php#chronic-lower-respiratory-disease>

## 6. WHAT IS HEALTHY AND NOT HEALTHY ABOUT ALEX'S LIFESTYLE?

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss and write down before you give them the answers in green. Have at least half of your group talk.*

**Healthier:** He walks to work; he is active at work; eats an apple for a snack; stops eating at 7pm; sleeps 8 hours a night.

**Less healthy:** Eats foods with a lot of calories and fat; eats while watching TV; watches a lot of TV; he smokes

## 7. HOW CAN ALEX CHANGE SOME OF HIS UNHEALTHY HABITS?

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss and write down before giving them some ideas in green. Have at least half of your group talk.*

Some ideas are:

- Quit smoking and find healthier ways to relieve stress (talking to a friend; going on a walk). Smoking causes lung cancer, emphysema and heart disease. Smoking is also associated with a higher risk of blindness, Alzheimer's and more
- Pack his own lunch, perhaps the night before
- If eating out: choose smaller portion sizes; choose healthier options (such as veggie pizza with a salad)
- Select healthier snacks (veggies, fruit)
- Not eat while watching TV
- Reduce his TV time (go walking after dinner; listen to music)

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*Small health changes can make big differences in the quality of your life.*

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## 8. SETTING CLEAR HEALTH GOALS CAN HELP YOU MAKE BETTER CHOICES

Goals can improve and maintain your overall health no matter where you are with your health. When setting goals:

*Read through, allowing your group time to fill in the blanks (green).*

- **Be as specific as possible:** When exactly will you fit in a walk into your day? Waking up 30 minutes earlier on work days? Walking your dog after work?
- **Measure your goal:** How far will you walk? How long will you walk for? Thirty minutes? To the park and back? Two miles?

- **Be realistic:** Set goals that you know you are capable of doing. You might not yet be able to walk 5 miles, but maybe you can walk 2 miles.
- **Set deadlines:** Set both short and long-term deadlines to keep you motivated. How much will you walk this week? One mile? How much do you want to be walking in 6 months? Five miles?
- **Adjust your goal:** If you are easily reaching your goals, challenge yourself with a harder goal. If you are having trouble reaching your goal, set easier goals for yourself. Is 1 mile too much to walk? Try walking half a mile. Is 1 mile too little? Try walking 1.5 miles.

### DISCUSS

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss. Have at least half of your group talk.*

- When you set goals for yourself, do you do these things already?
- What is the most helpful to you when setting goals?

### GROUP ACTIVITY

As a group, pick three health goals you all have in common. For each goal, go through the previous steps together.

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss. All members of the group should participate. Direct questions to anyone who hasn't participated by mid-way through the card discussion.*

### 9. TAKE-HOME ACTIVITY

- Set one or two reachable health goals for yourself. For example, getting 7 hours of sleep every night, getting 30 minutes of exercise at least 4 times a week, limiting unhealthy foods to the weekend, etc. We will revisit this at the end of this program.
- In addition, you have either been given a step counter to measure your steps or you will use your smart phone to record your steps throughout the day at work and at home.
- Finally, ask two people (1 in this program, 1 not in this program) to be your support system for this health program. Each week, you will share and discuss with them your health goals, weekly take-home activities and anything else that might come up. Write your responses on this week's Take-Home Activity Tracking Sheet.

# SLEEP

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## 1. REFLECTION

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss (about 5 minutes). Have at least half of your group talk.*

How did last week's activity go? What goals did you set for yourself? What healthy, and what less healthy routines do you have? What are you willing to change or improve? Were you able to find a support system to help you reach your health goals? How was it using the pedometer? Share your experiences with your group.

## 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Good quality sleep is necessary for your overall health and quality of life. It greatly affects how you look, feel and perform every day. In fact, getting about 7-8 hours of good quality sleep each night could be just as **important** as eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly. By making sure you get enough sleep each night, you can maintain good: muscle **growth**, memory, hunger **control**, emotional **balance**, energy, and much more! Getting enough good quality sleep could be the **easiest** thing you can do to improve your overall health.

## 3. LACK OF SLEEP

The quality of your sleep (deep and uninterrupted vs light and interrupted) and the quantity (total hours) can be greatly affected by many things, including: health problems, medications, **sugar**, caffeine, nicotine, **alcohol**, problems at work, deadlines, schedule changes, family responsibilities, drinking too much water before going to bed, aging and more.

## 4. SIDE EFFECTS OF LACK OF SLEEP

When you do not get enough good quality sleep, you feel tired the next morning and it is hard for you to get up. Even if you are unaware of it, not getting enough sleep on a regular basis can negatively affect your overall health in the following ways:

- **Metabolism:** you will feel hungrier during the day and your body will store **fat** more easily. This could cause you to gain weight even if you have not changed anything else in your diet or exercise routine. It could also make it much harder to lose weight.
- **Energy:** you will feel tired and have **less** energy. This will reduce your quality of life, making ordinary things less enjoyable. It also makes you more likely be involved in a car accident.
- **Memory:** you will think slower and not as **clearly**. This will make you **less** productive during the day, making easy everyday tasks harder and more time consuming.
- **Emotions:** you will increase your risk of depression and **stress**. You will also be **less** motivated to do the things you need to do.
- **Immune system:** you will weaken your immune system. This will increase your risk of many **diseases** including heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, and much more. You are also more likely to **get** sick and **stay** sick longer.

**Make it easier for yourself and sleep some more!**

## 5. GROUP ACTIVITY

*Ask your group one question at a time. Allow enough time for your group to discuss. Have at least half of your group talk*

- Which of the items above do you most feel when you are sleep deprived?
- Why don't you get enough sleep at times?
- Are there things you could do (such as prepare your lunch the night before) to increase your sleep quantity and quality?
- When you are tired, how does this affect your daily routine?

## 6. HAVE A SLEEP ROUTINE

You cannot always control the things that affect your sleep (for example stress), but you can help your body relax. By having a nightly sleep routine, you can get your body ready to go to sleep.

### Here are some tips:

- Have a regular sleep schedule. Your body will get used to it and it will be **easier** to fall and stay asleep.
- Make your room quiet, cool and comfortable.
- Make sure that there is as **little** light and noise in your room as possible.
- Your bed should only be used for sleeping and relaxation. Avoid watching TV or using other electronics in bed so that your body knows that it is time to **rest**.
- Avoid large meals, alcohol and caffeine right before bedtime. They can reduce the **quality** of your sleep. Think about how you feel the morning after a night of drinking or a night of tossing and turning.
- Exercise regularly. A little exercise at least 3 hours before bedtime can help relax you so that you **get** a deeper, less **interrupted** sleep.

### DISCUSS

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss. Have at least half of your group talk.*

- What are some other ways you could set a bedtime routine to help you get a better night's rest?

## 7. GROUP ACTIVITY

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss. Have at least half of your group talk.*

As a group, come up with a sleep routine that each of you could use to get a better night's rest.

### Some ideas are:

- **Shut off all electronic devices (including your TV, computer, etc.)**
- **Stop exercising 1 hour before going to bed to calm your mind down**
- **Dim the lights in your home an hour before to allow your body to relax and fall asleep**
- **Avoid napping after 3pm and limit naps to 20-30 minutes to ensure it does not affect your sleep that night**
- **Avoid thinking about stressors in your life, tell yourself you will have time to think about them tomorrow**
- **Take some melatonin if you can't fall asleep**
- **Go to bed and wake up at similar times every day (Even on the weekends!) to allow your body's internal clock to set up a wake and sleep rhythm.**

## 8. IF YOU WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND CANNOT FALL BACK ASLEEP WITHIN 20 MINUTES,

try to relax by doing one or more of the following exercises:

- Get up and do something calming like reading, light stretching or listening to music. Keep the lights dim and avoid electronic screens of any kind (**TV, tablet, phone**).
- Keep a pen and notepad near your bed so you can write down your **thoughts**. This can help your mind relax.
- Do a quiet, meditative activity in bed such as visualizing yourself in a **relaxed** state.

### DISCUSS

*Allow enough time for your group to discuss. Encourage everyone to participate.*

- Are there other things you do to help yourself fall back asleep?

## 9. TAKE-HOME ACTIVITY

- This week your goal is to get 4 nights of 7-8 hours of good quality sleep. Select 2 sleeping habits to help you get a good night's sleep. Remember: The time you go to sleep is not when you get into bed, but the approximate time that you actually fall asleep.
- Count your steps for 4 days this week and record your step average.
- Share and discuss with your support system this week's take-home activities and anything that comes up (goals reached, questions, concerns).
- Write your responses on this week's Take-Home Activity Tracking Sheet.
- Continue practicing the activities from the previous week.

