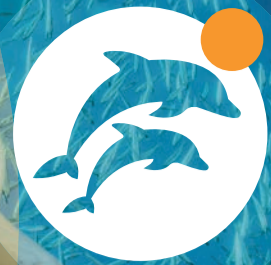


YOUR CARE POLMED

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Five bad habits to ditch right now



Poor lifestyle habits account for the majority of health-related deaths. Luckily, you can make lifestyle changes today to protect your health. In this article, we highlight five bad habits that have negative consequences to your overall health and provide solutions that can help you follow a healthier lifestyle.

Habit
1

Excessive drinking

South Africa has the fifth-highest alcohol consumption rate globally. Additionally, about 1 in 10 deaths in South Africa can be attributed to alcohol abuse in some way.

Excessive drinking refers to binge drinking, heavy drinking and drinking while pregnant. It can affect the way your brain works, damage your liver and increase the risks for heart disease as well as neck, liver, colon and breast cancer.



Solution:

Swap out alcohol for sparkling water, herbal teas and alcohol-free beers and spirits. If you choose to drink, instead opt for low-alcohol and light-wine alternatives.

Stick to the recommended guidelines. Women should drink no more than one glass (serving) of alcohol a day, and men no more than two. Remember to abstain from alcohol while pregnant.



Habit
2

Bottling up your emotions

Bottling up your emotions can weaken your immune system, making you more vulnerable to illnesses. It can also increase your risk of depression, heart disease, and stroke.



Solution:

If you are battling with your mental health, it's essential to reach out to your doctor, a trusted friend, family member, or support groups. It can be hard to reach out when you need help, but you can't treat it if you don't talk about it.



Habit
3

Unhealthy eating habits

Stress eating, binge eating, and eating fast foods and processed foods high in added sugar and salt is harmful to your health. These eating habits will increase your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.



Solution:

Eat a balanced diet high in healthy proteins, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Fast foods and processed foods should be avoided, as these offer little nutritional value and are high in salt and added sugar. Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water per day.



Habit
4

Screen addiction

Screen addiction can have negative consequences on your health. These include the increased risk for obsessive-compulsive disorder, sleep disorders, a poor diet and lack of exercise that could lead to cardiovascular disease, blood clots and depression. It can also damage the brain of teenagers in the same way that drugs and alcohol do.



Solution:

Monitor your screen time. You could use an app that tells you how much time you're spending on your phone. Also, create no-phone areas such as at the dinner table or bedroom.



Habit
5

Sedentary living

As relaxing as it may be, spending all your free time curled up on the couch, or in bed, for long periods can cause more harm than good. Being inactive increases your risk for depression, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.



Solution:

Get off the couch and exercise. Take at least 30 minutes out of your day to be active, and find different ways to be on your feet.

These could include:

- setting reminders on your phone to stand up and move every 30 minutes when working
- taking a walk in the garden or indoors during breaks or TV commercials
- chores at home, such as gardening and cleaning.

Remember: Lifestyle habits can be helpful or harmful to your health. It's not too late to stop your worst habits and start living a longer and healthier life.



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