

Objectives

Upon completion of *Session 2: Remaining Healthy*, you should be able to make positive changes in your lifestyle by:

- Developing and following an exercise program
- Recording and modifying food intake
- Reducing stress
- Developing a maintenance health schedule

Benefits

We'll provide you with information about:

- How to recognize normal and abnormal changes in health
- How to minimize health problems in the future
- How to become motivated to make life-changing alterations

If you follow these suggestions, you'll get valuable results. It's exciting to see the beneficial effects of a healthy lifestyle, and it will be easy to continue once you begin to look and feel better.

Take Charge

It's all up to you! Your ability to take charge of your lifestyle and physical well-being will play a major role in how successful and dynamic your later years will be. People of any age can benefit from the preventive health care and regular fitness activity introduced in this program.

At any age, positive habits are an investment you make in your future.



Even when you're a young adult, it's important to take stock of physical health. This session will help you to create a comfortable balance between activity and rest, and to identify the benefits of adopting better nutrition. You can start laying your foundation now for a sounder body and higher energy level in later life.

Good physical and emotional health depends on your willingness to take care of yourself. Your body is your "home" while you are on this earth. Just as you wouldn't leave routine maintenance unattended in your actual house, certain behaviors and checkups also will keep the physical body from

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faltering. We sometimes show concern about health only to the extent that we feel “well enough,” while we ignore the effects of day-to-day habits that contribute to eventual problems. When illness strikes, it’s hard to overlook.

Time marches on regardless of our intention to remain fit. No matter how healthy you have always been, you are going to grow older.

Aging is not a disease, but a natural process. Bodily changes as we mature are predictable and normal. Knowing what to expect allows us to prepare for those changes. We can enjoy life to the fullest—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually when we are prepared. *Session 2*

introduces common concerns about healthy living and offers specific tools to motivate and safeguard your health.



Good Health Checklist:

See where you're falling short by spending a moment with the good health checklist below:

I make sure that I:

- Make time for myself
- See my doctor for a yearly physical
- Inform my primary physician of all of the medications I am taking and their effects
- Make sure my sight and hearing need no new corrections
- Visit my dentist twice yearly and follow the advice given
- Stay in touch with my feelings
- Get six to eight hours of sleep every night
- Eat well-balanced, low-fat foods
- Exercise regularly in a way that enhances my life
- Seek help when I'm unable to cope
- Know the early warning signs of high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease
- Take good care of my skin and hair
- Am not dependent on alcohol or drugs
- Am in supportive, reciprocal relationships
- Have a healthy sex life

If you are able to check off most of the above, you're already taking good care of yourself. If you did not check at least half of the above, you have more changes to make to ensure better health.

Studies show those who monitor heart, bone, and respiratory changes, as well as body fat, can remain fit and feel vital all of their lives.

Aging and Physical Changes

No one thinks much about aging while in their twenties or thirties. Certain differences do become obvious as we grow older; outer changes, such as less elasticity of skin, are obvious. But important inner changes also occur, and they begin happening while we're still fairly youthful. Early signs of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, or other chronic conditions can be influenced for the better if you know what to do.

Know what health changes or trends to look for. If you notice extreme symptoms, see your doctor immediately.

- Learn your family health profile; some problems may be inherited and you can act preventively
- Look for changes in blood pressure. It increases with fatty deposits that clog arteries
- Lung capacity may diminish with decreased oxygen supplies, as chest walls stiffen with time. Avoiding smoking will help keep your lungs in good shape
- Bone and muscle tissue diminish three to five percent each decade—but regular exercise helps to maintain healthy conditions
- Body fat increases as we mature unless nutrition, lower fat intake, and regular movement are addressed. Keeping the same proportions of fat-to-lean body mass can mean actually weighing less as we grow older

Did You Know?

Americans eat too much fat in their diets. Experts recommend you get less than 30 percent of total calories from fat. Limit daily fat intake to 40 grams if you eat 1,200 calories per day, for example. Read labels to find out how many grams of fat a food item contains per serving.

Prevalence of Medical Problems for Mature Persons

As we become more aware of the cause and effect of diet, exercise, and emotional stress on our bodies as a culture, we will be able to take control of our lifestyles in a healthier fashion. With this knowledge, disease and medical problems will become less prominent as the population matures.

The connection between our minds, emotions, and physical bodies cannot be ignored. People who reach maturity and are moving through their senior years may experience specific medical problems according to the National Center of Health Statistics, including:

- Arthritis
- Alzheimer's disease
- Osteoporosis
- Heart conditions
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Cancer

Chronic conditions such as these significantly limit the daily activity for 39 percent of individuals over 65. Although these people make up approximately 13 percent of the population, they use 36 percent of health care costs. Research and activities are being conducted in the medical field to prevent these chronic conditions.

What Can I Do About the Risk?

You can adopt a wellness lifestyle today. This session, *Remaining Healthy*, will show you the steps to take to ensure a healthy tomorrow.

Our Bodies Need Attention

Eyes, ears, and teeth can be kept in good condition through regular appointments with optometrists, audiologists, and dentists. People of different ages experience different problems; most problems can be improved with proper maintenance and treatment.

Paying attention to what's going on in your body is positive. Have a complete yearly physical; make time for asking questions, and consider new medications, alternative treatments, or wellness routines.

Eyes

It's important to protect eyes from injury or strain. For example, vision can be strained by sitting too close to a computer screen, or by not wearing the correct prescription lenses.

More serious problems such as cataracts, glaucoma, or macular degeneration can develop over time.

Cataracts make the eye's surface look cloudy, and while corrective glasses can help, eventual surgery to remove the cataracts may be needed.

Glaucoma causes loss of vision due to pressure inside the eye. Screening is recommended every two to three years over the age of 40, as blindness can result without treatment. Medication is available for this problem.

Macular degeneration is caused by deterioration of the central portion of the retina, which is the inside back layer of the eye. This little-understood disease affects more than 10 million Americans, producing blindness of central vision. Causes are not yet conclusively understood.

See your eye professional yearly to check for any of the above problems, as well as to update prescription lenses, which tend to change frequently.

Ears

About 10 percent of the population has hearing impairments. Aging can bring presbycusis, or high frequency hearing loss. People suffering from presbycusis tend to lose touch with information in the environment because they cannot hear what is happening. Tinnitus is a ringing in the ears. Often it is so severe that it incapacitates a person's ability to hear. Balance also can be affected by inner ear conditions.

Hearing loss can have psychological ramifications. If you can't understand what others are saying, or if you have to monitor your voice levels so you aren't talking too softly or too loudly, you're under continual strain. It's no wonder the hearing impaired tend to lose interest in social life. Withdrawal from others affects your ability to be happy, which is necessary for a healthy lifestyle.

People of any age can be screened for hearing loss. A reputable doctor or specialist can decide on the best treatment. There are supportive listening devices, surgical remedies,

or rehabilitation treatments to consider. Hearing aids should be designed specifically for your own condition. Buying through catalogues or over-the-counter is not a good solution!

Teeth

Dental care is more pain-free and comprehensive than ever before. Visit your dentist regularly, and avoid diseases like pyorrhea (inflamed, bleeding gums) by careful daily flossing and brushing, and cleaning by your dental hygienist every six months to remove plaque.

Plaque buildup, overlapping teeth, badly fitted dentures, jaw misalignment, and other irritating conditions can cause permanent mouth damage. Treatment is available. Gum care is especially important, as lost teeth often occur due to poor gum conditions. See your dentist every six months or at the first sign of trouble.

Recognize the early symptoms of gum disease:

- Swollen, red gums that easily bleed
- Teeth that are exposed below the gum line
- Permanent teeth that are “moving” by separating from each other or crowding together
- Loose teeth

Dentures, bridges, caps, orthodontic treatment, and tooth whitening are all current choices to deal with practical and cosmetic tooth problems. But, the best medicine is your daily brushing and flossing routine.



Preventive Health Care Practices

Obsessing on negatives is never healthy, but paying attention and committing to regular checkups to stay in touch with what’s going on in your body is positive. Have a complete yearly physical. Ask questions and consider alternative medicines or wellness routines to update your maintenance program. Allow for reasonable testing to uncover potential problems before they become acute. Medical intervention can often successfully eliminate serious outcomes.

Always consult a physician before undertaking any exercise program. Amazing things happen to the body during vigorous exercise, and you should be certain yours is up to the challenge. Know your limitations.

There are basic questions you can ask your health care provider to ensure peak performance and well-being.

- Ask about and understand the benefits of any prescribed medications, as well as side effects and drug interactions
- Ask about normal aging. Learning what to expect will demystify changes
- Ask about the warning signs of major illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, hypertension, arthritis, prostate disease, liver problems, or depression. Knowing your potential for developing one of these illnesses can be useful when you make lifestyle changes for better health

Exercise

Exercise is one of the most important components of a healthy lifestyle.

Physical movement should continue naturally throughout life. As a child, you probably loved playing, running, and swinging from the treetops. The secret to staying flexible and in control of physical well-being is to keep moving and stretching, no matter what age you are. You can stretch

your body through a gentle yoga practice, for instance, to avoid becoming rigid or inflexible. You can take walks down a shady lane...you may find the same joy you once knew as a youngster along the way.

Benefits of Exercise

Exercise will help you stay in shape and feel good. You'll be able to keep weight down, as well as improve internal processes like digestion, circulation, lung capacity, and oxygenation of your blood. High and constant levels of elevated blood pressure can be relieved. Your body will become toned and more attractive. You'll have more energy.

Balance, flexibility, and robust energy levels can separate the mature body from the young. You don't have to lose your youthful agility, because your age is only a number! Even a small amount of exercise will improve overall well-being.

There are many choices for your exercise program, and it's not too late to start at your current level. If you have limited range of motion, or if you are in a wheelchair, there's still a regular program of movement that can be geared toward your needs.

How Long Should I Exercise?

Ten minutes of activity three times a day is a good start. Begin by taking a walk twice a day if you are not used to exercising. Start simple, and allow a certain amount of time to adjust to your new program. A daily effort makes the best habit. For example, walk 20 to 30 minutes per day the first week, breaking it up into two or three “jaunts.”

Consistency is the most important goal. **Build up to at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise at least three to four times a week.** Don't be frustrated if your initial stamina is low. You will build strength as you go.

Motivation to Exercise

Most experts agree that picking a time of day and sticking to it is ideal. Some people prefer to exercise on a schedule, but you also have to do what works for you. Morning or evening...the choice is yours...but choose one, and stick with it. **Decide what fits your lifestyle, try things out, and settle on something that works.**

If you are the type of person who is easily bored, adjust your schedule to allow for different activities, rather than doing one thing repetitively. Swim Mondays...walk a mile on Wednesdays...and attend yoga or line dancing class on Fridays!

If you can get an exercise buddy to join you—so much the better. It's harder to wiggle out of a commitment if someone is waiting to join you. Shortly, you'll feel and see the benefits of your efforts. Increased energy will follow once you're used to the activity. To avoid injury, don't overdo it. Your positive attitude will grow as you continue with your plan.

Always precede exercise sessions with a five-minute warm-up that begins with a slow, steady, rhythmic stretching activity. This will help you avoid injury.

Choose an Activity

Experiment! Try:

- Walking
- Running
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Cross-country skiing
- Aerobic exercise
- Kick boxing
- Tennis
- Golf
- Team sports
- Yoga

Comfort as You Exercise

Invest in a good pair of athletic shoes if you are going to take up walking, aerobic exercise, or running. Regular “tennis” shoes are not supportive enough, and your feet are important. Select competent teachers if you decide to learn something you’ve never tried. You’ll be able to integrate your exercise program into your lifestyle, one step at a time, with good instruction.

Avoid injury by listening to your body as you move. If something hurts, pull back and don’t push yourself past the limit of discomfort. You can gain flexibility and strength in time without pushing yourself into pain. Pain is a sign that you’re

going over your limits. A certain amount of discomfort at the start isn’t unusual, however, and is usually due to muscle soreness.

Maybe you were once a gymnast in high school, or a member of the track team, but over the years have lost your momentum for physical fitness. Perhaps you are entering retirement years, and some activities have naturally been set aside. This doesn’t mean you can’t refill your time with other, equally meaningful pastimes appropriate to the situation and season of your life.

Successful change and enjoyment can go hand-in-hand. Exercise at any age has the same goal: fitness and well-being. You aren’t in competition with anyone, but you are working on a process of building strength and stamina. Start where you are.

Use It or Lose It!

Muscles atrophy without use. Studies show that those who exercise regularly (at least 30 minutes every 76 hours) are more fit, have improved flexibility, sleep better, are more likely to control weight, and are able to relieve aches and pains (such as backache) more easily.

Keep your body hydrated by drinking plenty of water before and after exercising.

Nutrition

Learning New Tricks

Adopting new nutritional habits can be fun; you simply have to decide to start. Old habits die hard, and we may need motivation to start a new dietary program. But how do we switch from previous dining behaviors in the most sensible way? Remember to:

- **Be patient with yourself while you learn to cook or select foods in a new way**
- **Set up your kitchen to reflect your intentions. For example, leave salt substitute and herbs visible for seasoning, instead of salt, butter, or sugar**
- **Don't shop when you're hungry. You'll pick up more junk food if you do**
- **It helps to make one change at a time. By adopting only one new "rule" each week, you won't immediately overwhelm yourself and give up**

Eliminate excess sugar and salt the first week, for example. The second week, you might decide to carefully read labels for fat content and monitor the fat grams you are taking in. The third week, you could add more glasses of pure water to your regimen. By going slowly, you can get used to new habits without feeling deprived.

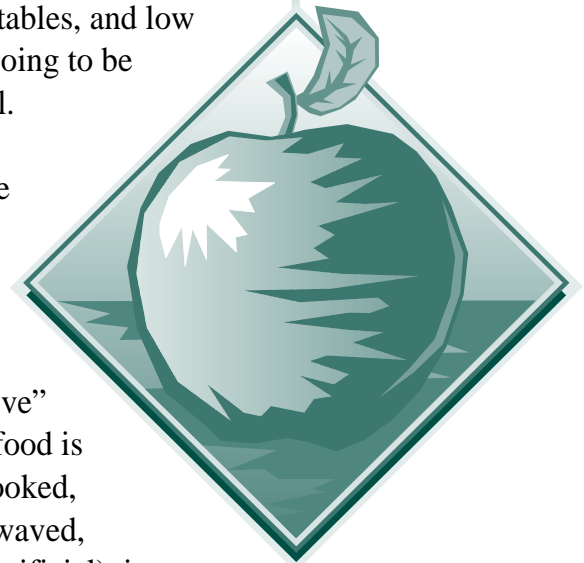
Nutritional Needs

A balanced diet is the cornerstone to a healthy life. Without nutritious meals, the body is in a state of starvation and deprivation. The trick is to learn what to eat, how much to eat, and when to eat it. You wouldn't try to drive your car without the proper fuel. Why do it to your body?

Eating right plays a central role in maintaining energy levels, avoiding "mood swings," and preventing disease. The choices you make can lower risks for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, osteoporosis, and some cancers. There are many nutritious foods, although it's obvious that a variety of foods, plenty of grains and fresh vegetables, and low fat intake are going to be most beneficial.

Eliminate some poor food choice habits and replace them with whole, "live" foods. If your food is "dead" (overcooked, canned, microwaved, preserved, or artificial), it may not offer much of the life force you need to become healthier.

High levels of saturated fat and cholesterol are linked to risk for heart disease. Simply by eating low fat, you're increasing your chances of a healthy life tremendously.



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How Are You Doing Now?

- I eat at least three to five servings of fresh vegetables daily.**
- I eat more grains, pasta, and rice than fried foods.**
- I eat fresh fruit daily.**
- I avoid saturated fats by reading labels carefully.**
- Sugary desserts are no longer a daily habit.**

If you checked all of the above, you've already begun to eat in a healthy fashion.

Record Your Progress

When you begin eating with better nutrition in mind, it's helpful to write down everything you put into your mouth over a period of days or weeks. You'll probably be surprised how many times you eat unconsciously out of stress or boredom! Keeping a log will help you observe what's really being consumed. The mind has a way of denying these things when we're trying to break old, destructive habits.

Don't, however, weigh yourself more than once a week. Relying on feeling good or bad by looking at a number on a scale is a very destructive thing. Your body will lose inches, and the lean muscle you are building weighs more than the fat you're eliminating. Therefore, you can't just go by weight alone. Save the scale for the doctor's office visit, and trust that your new lifestyle will bring you the better body you're working toward.

Basic Suggestions to Follow:

If you follow these four suggestions, you will be off to a great start!

- **Avoid daily sugary desserts, excessive salt, sugar, alcohol, caffeine, saturated oils, and fatty meats**
- **Add more fiber in the form of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grain cereals or rice**
- **Use moderate amounts of dairy products, and choose lower fat products from these groups**
- **Drink six to eight glasses of water per day**

Sexuality

What's Normal?

We are human “animals” in physical bodies with feelings, emotions, and desires. People are sexual beings, and age should be no barrier to healthy, satisfying relationships. Whether you're 20 or 80, you are normal if you're interested in connection and intimacy. Sexuality does not stop at any particular age.

Some people are satisfied with infrequent sex, while others have a greater interest. Mental and emotional attitudes toward sex are also important factors.

We Aren't Just Physical

If you are in a loving, respectful relationship, your chances for enjoying sexuality are good. Difficulties in the basic relationship can impact sexual feelings. Because we aren't just physical beings, but have minds and emotions as well, problems on those basic levels can disrupt contentment with sex at the

psychological level. For instance, if you are angry at your spouse about something, it may temporarily impact your interest in intimate contact.

People react to many stresses and concerns by withdrawal from intimacy. Frank discussion can put things back on track. **Don't assume that a sexual problem is permanent.** And don't presume the first time you are impotent or frigid, that there is strictly a physical cause. Check with your physician to rule out any physical problems. A therapist or counselor may be helpful in sorting out psychological issues that may be affecting your sexuality.

We Can Grow Older Gracefully and Remain Sexually Alive

Young people aren't the only ones who enjoy their bodies. Older adults are equally interested in each other, but misinformation about age and sexuality can make maturing women and men believe that a “It's all downhill from here,” turning point has been reached. Comparing human beings to “fine wine, aged to perfection,” is a positive way to approach anxiety about the seasons of life and sexuality.

One area of concern may be menopause. Yet, most women go through this passage of life without any real difficulty. Attitude is everything. And some couples find more freedom in sexual relations when the risk of pregnancy has been removed. These natural cycles of life can be greeted with grace and dignity. Couples who are mature have built upon a lifetime of strengths and have learned to enjoy all phases of being human.

What Leads to Depression?

No one feels happy all of the time. Problems occur and can build to a point where we feel downhearted and hopeless. It's normal to encounter brief periods of depression, but when we spend weeks or months feeling depressed, we need to check out the causes.

If you've suffered a loss such as the death of a loved one, the loss of a pet, or a relationship breakup, you have reason to feel depressed.

Crying and sadness are appropriate reactions. These are basically normal, "situational" depressions, which will pass with time.

Holidays create unhappy reactions for some. Life changes, such as births, moving, retirement, financial problems, or other major shifts can

be disturbing also. Abuse of alcohol, drugs, and some medications can cause melancholy by depressing the central nervous system.

Certain people are sensitive to the lack of natural, unfiltered sunlight between late fall and spring. This kind of depression is called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

If you can't move past your depression within a reasonable period of time, you may be experiencing a clinical depression, which your doctor can treat with medication.

Fact:

- **Depression is the most common of mental disorders, affecting 340 million people today**
- **No one is immune; depression occurs in all social classes, countries, and cultural settings**
- **About half of all cases of depression go unrecognized and untreated**
- **Depression is one of the most treatable of all psychological illnesses**

It's better to express feelings of depression than to withdraw or to bottle up emotional pain. Sometimes sharing thoughts with someone else will offer natural respite from feeling low.

Thoughts of suicide or death should be taken seriously. Children can be depressed, as well as adults. Pay attention when someone you love seems to be sad or hopeless.

Symptoms of Depression Vary

Symptoms can be deceptive. You may be depressed if you are:

- Tired all the time
- Sleeping too much or not at all
- Overeating or not eating
- Crying a lot
- Withdrawn from contact with others
- Unable to become interested in activities you used to enjoy
- Having frequent headaches
- Experiencing sexual problems
- Worrying or suffering pessimism
- Anxious

This entrapping emotional disease can make us lose perspective and build a wall around ourselves. It is important to take charge when overcome with feelings of futility or hopelessness. Consult an expert who can diagnose your condition and offer treatment suggestions. There is help available.

Things You Can Do to Overcome Mild Depression

- Get daily physical activity
- Be with positive people who lift your spirits
- Vacation someplace you enjoy
- Relax
- Listen to beautiful music
- Take a warm, soothing bath
- Avoid drugs or alcohol, which can contribute to depression
- Get extra sleep

Stress

What Do I Need This Stress for Anyway?

We're born with a fight-or-flight impulse to ensure we stay alive in the face of danger. But rarely are we confronted with life-or-death moments in modern life. Instead, we deal with various levels of prolonged stress through trying to do too much, be too much, or have too much. That inborn impulse can wreak havoc on the nervous system if we stay in a tense state for too long.

Youth is not exempt from stressful lifestyles, nor are older folks. Adults have histories. If you've had a traumatic time in the past, situations in the present can bring up old problems. How much stress are you experiencing today?

Stress-O-Meter Checklist

I frequently:

- Have flashbacks of painful events
- Feel startled easily
- Experience emotional “numbness”
- Have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Withdraw from friends or family at the slightest annoyance
- Have periods where I'm unable to cope
- Feel so disturbed I have recurrent thoughts of death or suicide
- Have anxiety spells
- Feel extremely confused or distracted

If you have checked off several of the above statements, then you might want to look into the various treatment options available through your mental health provider. Sometimes talking to a counselor can help. Allowing yourself to suffer prolonged stress symptoms is unnecessary and may lead to physical problems.

Stress causes physical symptoms:

- Sustained tension
- Tight muscles
- Increased blood pressure and heart rate
- Shallow breathing
- Muscle aches

Prolonged stress can lead to serious health problems; therefore stress control is an important skill to develop. There's no avoiding that most people's lives are fast-paced. “Industrious” can quickly turn into “overworked.” It's up to us to notice and to balance stress levels with relaxation and play.

What You Can Do When Overworked

- Rest
- Eat well
- Avoid harmful or addictive substances
- Exercise
- Relax
- Think positively
- Delegate work
- Have a therapeutic massage
- Cancel unnecessary events that increase stress

Many daily multivitamin and mineral pills contain the current, full recommended dietary allowances established by the National Academy of Sciences. Healthy, nutritious food is the best vitamin source.

Vitamins

Common myths about vitamins are that they will:

- Improve appearance
- Increase sexual potency
- Prevent or cure diseases

Experts still disagree about vitamins. There is little scientific evidence to prove we need megadoses of extra vitamins, unless a deficiency has been diagnosed. You may be wasting your money or causing an imbalance in your system with improper use of vitamins.

One exception to the “megavitamins are unnecessary” suggestion concerns women over thirty-five. Everyone loses bone density after this age, but women are four times more likely to develop osteoporosis, a condition where bones grow weak, brittle, and may fracture easily. Lack of calcium makes this condition worse. Taking extra calcium in the form of a daily supplement is recommended by authorities. Take at least 1,000 milligrams per day, or eat plenty of calcium-rich foods.

Medicine

Fifty percent of prescribed medication is not taken properly. Ask the prescribing physician about expected results, side effects, dosage, time of day, and number of pills. Ask about drug interactions including whether it’s safe to drink alcohol or to drive a car.

Generic equivalents may cost less than the drug your doctor orders, but also may be less effective. Keep medicine in a safe place, and throw out old vials.

**Ask
the
Expert**

If you’ve ever had an allergic reaction to any medication, tell your doctor, and tell your pharmacist. Make sure it’s clearly labeled on all medical files. If you take more than one medication, use the same pharmacy, as the pharmacist then can spot possible harmful interactions. Be on the safe side. Ask!

Drugs

We live in a society where instant gratification is considered a good thing. The idea of instant pain relief, or a quick fix for physical or emotional problems, entices many people to turn to drugs for alleviation. Some medications can be overused, and we can grow dependent on them.

Most often abused are analgesics like Darvon, barbiturates, tranquilizers, and other sedatives. Some over-the-counter remedies mimic these in effect, and also can become habit forming. It's never a good idea to rely on an outside substance without asking yourself if it's in your long-term, best interests.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse occurs when any substance—prescription or otherwise—is being used to mask feelings or alter reality beyond what the drug was originally intended for. Abuse occurs when a person becomes addicted to the substance itself, often with an inability to stop using it without help. This can be a slow, insidious process, brought on by reliance on a chemical “high” or “low.” It may start as an attempt to fill a void in your life, but it can end with the substance itself being worse than the original problem.

Withdrawal symptoms are unpleasant, and you should seek help before trying to get off a drug to which you've become addicted.

Alcohol

Alcohol is a drug. It impairs coordination, depresses the central nervous system, and loosens inhibitions. Many people can enjoy social drinking, and find that alcohol relaxes them. Used in moderation, alcohol does little harm. However, some others have the genetic or environmental capacity to develop an addiction to drinking, which develops eventually into the full-blown disease of alcoholism. At this point, medical or psychiatric treatment may be necessary to get off the substance to which they've become physically, mentally, and emotionally addicted.

A person of any age can become chemically dependent. Sometimes retired people begin to slide into addictive drinking due to an unusual sense of having too much time on their hands. Excessive use of alcohol can poison the body, aggravate physical conditions, and lead to deterioration and death.

If your doctor prescribes a sedative, for instance, ask how long you are supposed to take this drug. Prolonged use can result in an addiction.

Without treatment, this disease is progressive.

Our society is much more aware of the abuse of substances than ever before, and treatment centers exist to help people who need it.

Your UAW-DaimlerChrysler Employee Assistance Program offers confidential help.

Call the toll-free number for information:

**1-800-346-7651
for Bargaining Unit employees**

**1-800-447-0166
for Non-Bargaining Unit employees**

Denial is part of the addictive syndrome. Often, the addicted individual doesn't "see" that he or she has a serious problem.

Breaking through this denial and getting help isn't always easy.

Sometimes family or friends can be instrumental in

reaching through the defenses the addicted person has put

up. Seek help if you, or people you love, are having issues with drinking. Recovery can be a joyful thing.

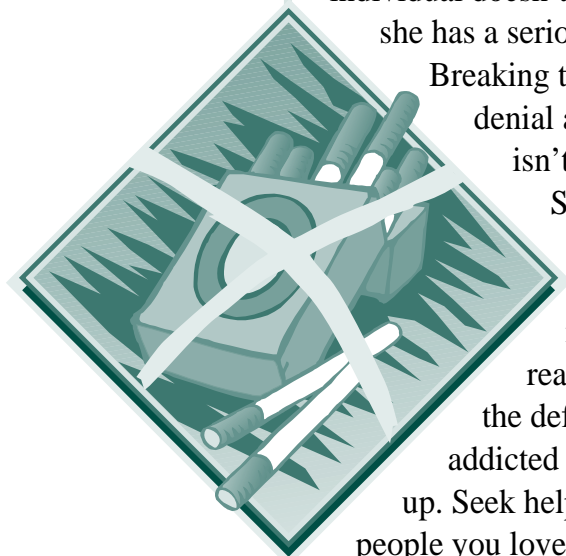
Smoking

If you're a smoker, you already know you should stop smoking. You may have tried, in fact, with partial or little success. We know that smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease, and emphysema, but we still may resist stopping. Again, recognizing that an addiction is in full swing is the only way to address the problem.

New remedies, such as skin patches and chewing gums, are on the market to help ease withdrawal symptoms, but the intention to quit has to come from the smoker. There are also special clinics designed to help people quit the nicotine habit. *Think of how much better you'll smell!* Think of all the extra money you'll have to spend on something healthy for yourself!

Seeking Professional Help

You have good health care coverage. You may even recognize that you have some kind of physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual problem.



What keeps people from asking for help?

- Pride
- Fear
- Stubbornness
- Disbelief that there is a solution
- Inability to trust others

Breaking through that kind of resistance isn't easy, but people do it all the time on their way to a healthier lifestyle.

You can get a referral to the right physician, therapist, chiropractor, dentist, treatment center...the list goes on and on...by simply reaching out and asking. Generally, your health care plan will cover:

- Hospital, surgical, medical care
- Prescription drugs
- Hearing aids and exams
- Vision care, including glasses or contact lenses
- Dental care
- Some alternative approaches (ask)
- Addiction and recovery treatment plans

Find the right place and practitioner, and schedule regular visits to reach ultimate wellness. Decide not to suffer anymore.

Safety

Personal safety is a common sense matter. The majority of accidents happen in the home.

Safeguard your home by performing periodic checks on:

- **Electrical:** Replace burnt out bulbs, check for frayed wires, unplug small appliances when not in use.
- **Smoke alarms:** Install, check, and replace batteries frequently.
- **Chemicals and dangerous cleaners:** Keep in original containers and out of children's reach.
- **Scissors, knives, sharp tools:** Store in separate place from other utensils.
- **Carpets:** Anchor with nonskid mats.
- **Draperies and towels:** Keep a safe distance from flammable sources.
- **Fire:** Preplan escape routes.
- **Clutter:** Keep shoes, books, toys, tools, and other clutter from hallways, doorways, or stairs.
- **Bathroom safety:** Use a nonskid bath mat in the tub. Clean up spills.

Make time just for you, and keep your body, skin, hair, teeth, fingernails, and wardrobe clean and in good condition. It doesn't take much time when you have a regular routine. Keeping up appearance gives a boost to self-esteem, and makes us feel more comfortable with ourselves and others.

Looking and Feeling Your Best

That extra little bit of time for daily, personal care often goes to meet the needs of others, rather than ourselves. Care for yourself as much as you care for your loved ones.

Hair, Skin, and Grooming Tips

- Keep skin clean with either soap and water or a nonallergenic cleanser, if you have sensitive skin. A toner and moisturizing lotion can provide extra protection from dryness and pollution in the air, which damages the skin, especially on our hands and faces
- Sun damage ages skin and can cause skin cancer. Use a good sunscreen when outdoors
- Protect hair from dryness by using a quality shampoo and conditioner. See a professional stylist. Good haircuts are easy to maintain. Don't dye or perm too often, as this damages the hair
- Use makeup and clothing that enhance your appearance, and be willing to change looks and styles to keep up with new trends. What you were wearing a decade ago may not help you look your best today. If you aren't good at fashion, ask someone who is for an opinion
- Go for comfort first: Tight waistbands or shoes are enough to ruin anyone's day

The better you feel, the better you look, and vice versa. Express yourself through your appearance.

Who's in Control Here?

Remember, you are in control. No one else can “make” you unhappy or angry without your participation. This is your life, so take full responsibility for the personal power that is yours.

Good physical and emotional health depends on you. Seek a professional opinion if you hit a rough spot. Talk over problems with trusted friends or family. We aren't alone on the planet.

Remember, if you...

- **Make regular appointments with health care providers for sensible maintenance of body, eyes, ears, teeth and mental health**
- **Eat nutritiously and sensibly**
- **Exercise for fun and flexibility**
- **Get enough rest and relaxation**
- **Avoid drugs, alcohol, and overmedicating**
- **Invest time in positive relationships and find comfortable intimacy**
- **Avoid prolonged stress**
- **Apply common sense to practical matters**
- **Keep your environment hazard-free**
- **Take time for personal grooming and self-care**

...then you are, and will remain, in control of your successful tomorrow.

(Our next subject, *Session 3: Interpersonal Relationships and Leisure Time Activities*, will discuss our diverse needs for companionship and privacy, as well as balanced work and play.)