

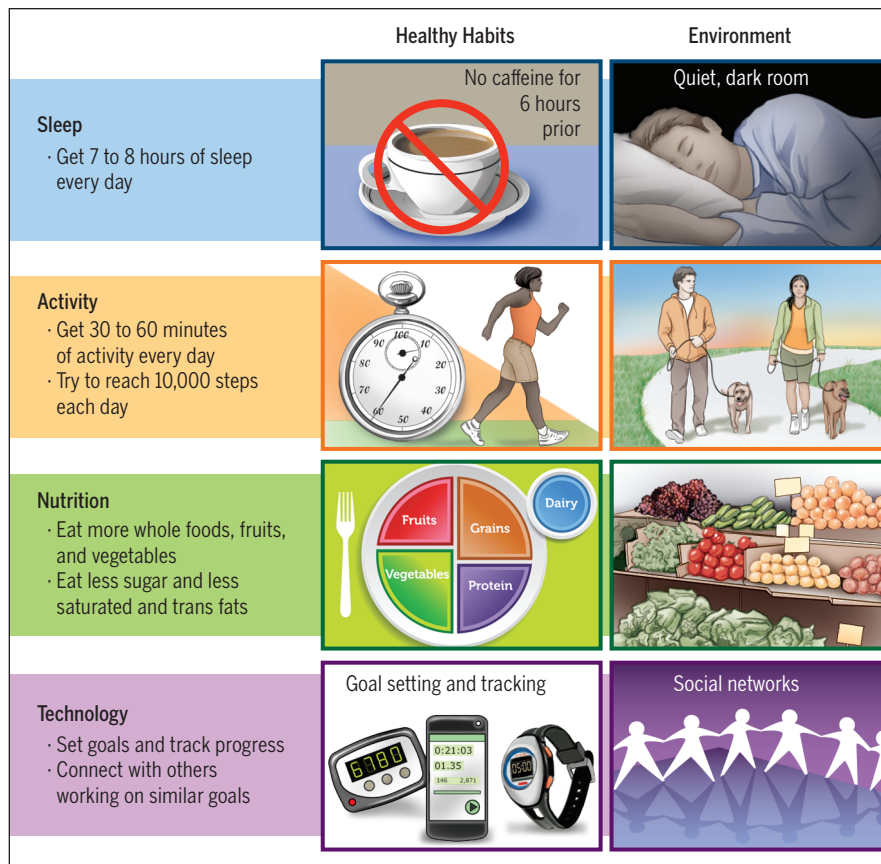
Health and Wellness

Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

J Orthop Sports Phys Ther 2014;44(5):388. doi:10.2519/jospt.2014.0504

Our lifestyle choices play a key role in keeping us from getting hurt or sick. Limited sleep, inactivity, and poor nutrition can increase the risk of injury and disease. Also, increasing our sleep, activity, and the quality of what we eat and drink can speed recovery from a disease or illness. Less than 70% of adults get enough sleep. Poor sleep—less than 7 to 8 hours each night—is related to depression, work-related injuries, and weight gain. In addition, less than 45% of adults get the recom-

mended 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity daily. Inactivity is tied to chronic disease, weight gain, and poor sleep. Finally, only 30% of Americans are at a healthy weight. Poor nutrition—too much sugar and fat and not enough fruits and vegetables—is linked to disease, depression, and inadequate sleep. Recently, a panel of 36 experts from academia, government, and the military gathered to discuss how to make the healthy choice the easy choice. A summary of this meeting was published in the May 2014 issue of *JOSPT*.



HEALTH GRID. Getting the proper information, developing healthy habits, creating a healthy environment, and using social networks can help you meet your health and wellness goals. Technology, such as fitness trackers, apps, and online tools, can motivate you and track your progress toward achieving your objectives.

This *JOSPT Perspectives for Patients* is based on an article by Teyhen et al, titled "Key Enablers to Facilitate Healthy Behavior Change: Workshop Summary," *J Orthop Sports Phys Ther* 2014;44(5):378-387 doi:10.2519/jospt.2014.0301

NEW INSIGHTS

Computers, television, time spent sitting, processed food, and our busy lifestyles have led many people to make unhealthy choices. The experts discovered that about 45% of daily life consists of habits that can be changed. There are many practical ways to help people make healthier choices. For example, eating in front of the TV can lead to overeating. Eating at the dinner table instead of eating while watching TV can help minimize overeating. Similarly, ensuring that your bedroom is dark and quiet can improve sleep, and people eat more fruits and vegetables if they are readily available. Family, friends, and social networks can also help meet lifestyle goals. Connecting either online or in person with others trying to achieve similar objectives helps all involved.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

With the goal of making the healthy choice your easy choice, here are some simple steps to health:

1. Remember that small changes in sleep, activity, and nutrition can make a big difference in your health.
2. Challenge yourself weekly to gain a new healthy habit and break an old unhealthy habit.
3. Create an environment around you that supports your weekly challenges.
4. Set and track your goals.
5. Ask for support from friends and family.
6. Use technology (fitness trackers, apps, and online tools) to motivate and support your efforts.

Ask your physical therapist about more ways to make the healthy choice easier for you.

For this and more topics, visit *JOSPT Perspectives for Patients* online at www.jospt.org.

This Perspectives article was written by a team of *JOSPT's* editorial board and staff, with Deydre S. Teyhen, PT, PhD, Editor, and Jeanne Robertson, Illustrator.



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