

# HOW CAN I STAY FIT AND HEALTHY?

## Links to the National Curriculum:

PSHE/PDMU/Health and Wellbeing, Science and Physical Education.

Links can also be made to the *Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework 2008*.

## Resources

- Copies of the **Keep healthy** activity sheet.
- Materials to make posters or leaflets

## Objectives

- To know how a healthy lifestyle contributes to personal wellbeing.
- To understand the importance of a balanced diet and exercise for health and well being.
- That health can be affected by diet, drugs and disease.

## Introduction

Hold a whole class or small group discussion about the sorts of activities that could have long-term effects on health – both good and bad. List their suggestions under two headings such as 'Has a good affect on health' and 'Has a bad affect on health'. Try to encourage answers that cover diet, activity and lifestyle habits.

## Main activity

Explain that nobody knows exactly why some people get cancer and others do not. But we do know that living a healthy lifestyle helps reduce your chances of getting cancer and other serious illnesses later in life.

Hand out the **Keep healthy** activity sheet. Go through the six areas and ask pupils to add any examples from their own lifestyles, or people they know. Remind them that getting into bad habits at a young age can mean health problems in the future.

Ask pupils to suggest which of the six areas of advice they think young people know least about or are least likely to follow. Ask pupils to plan and create a mini health campaign around this area or areas to inform young people of the importance of keeping healthy. This could be linked to their learning about cancer. The campaign could include adverts, posters, leaflets or events to help educate and raise awareness.

For further advice to help you teach about cancer, and to order your free *Cancertalk* teaching pack, visit [macmillan.org.uk/schools](http://macmillan.org.uk/schools)

# KEEP HEALTHY

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It's important to try and make healthy lifestyle choices. Taking good care of yourself and making healthy decisions now means you can lessen your chances of getting cancer and other serious illnesses later in life. Here are six things you can do to help keep healthy.

## Eat a healthy diet

Eating a healthy diet can reduce your risk of developing cancer as well as other serious illnesses like heart disease and diabetes. Try to eat a variety of foods from each of the food groups in the right proportions. Aim for five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. Go easy on fatty and processed foods which often contain lots of salt, sugar and saturated fats. So it's out with the burger and chips and in with the fruit and veg.

## Be active

Aim for at least an hour of exercise a day. Exercise can help you to feel and look good. It strengthens muscles, including the heart, and helps you maintain a healthy weight. If you don't like playing sport, you could try walking, dancing and cycling to add some extra activity to your day.

## Be safe in the sun

It's nice being outside in the sun, and sunshine helps the body make vitamin D which keeps bones and teeth healthy. But sunburn damages your skin and can increase your risk of developing skin cancer. Use sunscreen with a factor of 15 or higher. Stay in the shade during the hottest part of the day and wear a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses. If you want to look tanned, use tanning lotions. Did you know that sun beds can do more damage to your skin than natural sunlight?

## Don't smoke

Don't smoke. Smoking causes bad breath, wrinkles, yellow teeth and smelly hair, and can lead to a number of illnesses. Tobacco smoke contains at least 80 different cancer-causing chemicals which go into your body when you smoke. Smoking is the biggest cause of cancer in the world.

## Don't drink alcohol to get drunk

Excessive alcohol drinking is hard on your immune system. Research has shown that alcohol can also cause cancer. Of course, drinking alcohol doesn't necessarily mean you will develop cancer. But generally, doctors have found that cancer is more common in people who drink alcohol than people who don't.

## Be body aware

Your body changes a lot as you become an adult. It's important to be aware of your body and what's normal for you so you can spot anything unusual quickly. If you're worried about anything, speak to your parents or doctor about it as soon as possible. It's very unlikely to be anything serious, but it's important to get it checked out.