

# Health Style: A Self-Assessment

(Adapted from *Healthstyle: A Self-Test*, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2006)

Directions:

Complete each of the following sections by circling the number under the answer that best describes your behavior. After completing each section, add the numbers you've circled to get your score for that section and write the score on the line provided at the end of the section.

	<b>Almost Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>
<b><i>Cigarette Smoking</i></b>			
<i>If you are currently a non-smoker, enter a score of <u>10</u> for this section and go to the next section on Alcohol &amp; Drugs.</i>			
1. I have stopped smoking cigarettes.	2	1	0
2. I smoke only low tar and nicotine cigarettes.	2	1	0
<i>Smoking Score _____</i>			

	<b>Almost Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>
<b><i>Alcohol and Drugs</i></b>			
1. I avoid drinking alcoholic beverages or I drink no more than 1 or 2 drinks a day.	4	1	0
2. I avoid using alcohol or other drugs (especially illegal drugs) as a way of handling stressful situations or problems.	2	1	0
3. I am careful not to drink alcohol when taking certain medicines (for example, medicine for sleeping, pain, colds, and allergies) or when pregnant.	2	1	0
4. I read and follow the label directions when using prescribed and over-the-counter drugs.	2	1	0
<i>Alcohol and Drugs Score _____</i>			

	<b>Almost Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>
<b><i>Eating Habits</i></b>			
1. I eat a variety of foods each day, such as fruits and vegetables; whole grain breads and cereals; lean meats; low-fat dairy products; dry peas; beans; nuts and seeds.	4	1	0
2. I intentionally limit my consumption of fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol (including fat on meats, eggs, butter, cream, shortenings, and organ meats such as liver).	2	1	0
3. I limit the amount of salt I eat by cooking with only small amounts, not adding salt at the table, and avoiding salty snacks.	2	1	0
4. I avoid eating too much sugar (especially frequent frequent snacks of sticky candy or soft drinks).	2	1	0

*Eating Habits* Score \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Almost Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>
<b><i>Exercise/Fitness Habits</i></b>			
1. I do vigorous exercises for 30 minutes a day at least 5 times a week (examples include jogging, swimming, brisk walking, bicycling).	4	2	0
2. I do exercises that enhance my muscle tone for 15-30 minutes at least 3 times a week (examples include using weight machines or free weights, yoga, and calisthenics).	3	1	0
3. I use part of my leisure time participating in individual, family, or team activities that increase my level of fitness (such as gardening, dancing, bowling, golf, baseball).	3	1	0

*Exercise/Fitness* Score \_\_\_\_\_

**Safety Habits**

	<b>Almost Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>
1. I wear a seat belt while riding in a car.	2	1	0
2. I avoid driving while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, or riding with someone else who is under the influence.	2	1	0
3. I obey traffic rules and the speed limit when driving.	2	1	0
4. I am careful when using potentially harmful products or substances (such as household cleaners, poisons, and electrical devices).	2	1	0
5. I get at least seven hours of sleep a night.	2	1	0

*Safety Score* \_\_\_\_\_

## Your Lifestyle Scores

After you have figured your scores for each of the six sections, circle the number in each column that matches your score for that section of the test.

<i>Smoking</i>	<i>Drinking/Drugs</i>	<i>Eating</i>	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Safety</i>
10	10	10	10	10
9	9	9	9	9
8	8	8	8	8
7	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	6
5	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2
1	1	1	1	1
0	0	0	0	0

## Interpreting Your Scores for Each Section

### **Scores of 9 and 10 = Excellent.**

Your answers show that you are aware of the importance of this area to your health, and you're putting your knowledge to work for you by practicing good health habits. You're also setting an example for the rest of your family and friends to follow.

### **Scores of 6 to 8 = Good**

Your health practices in this area are satisfactory, but there is room for improvement, particularly in areas where you answered "sometimes" or "almost never."

### **Scores of 3 to 5 = Risky**

You're putting your health at risk in this area. You should make some changes.

### **Scores of 0 to 2 = Seriously Risky**

Your answers show that you may be taking serious risks with your health in this area. You need to make major changes and make them as soon as possible.

## Interpreting Your Scores for Each Section

Identify the area in which your score was *lowest*: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Were you *aware* that you needed to improve your health habits in this area?
2. Do you think it is *important* to improve your health habits in this area (Why?)
3. Do you know exactly *what to do* to improve your health in this area?
4. What *information* could you use to help you make positive changes in this area?
5. *Who* (if anyone) do you think may be in a position to help you make these changes?
6. Do you think you will *actually make changes* to improve your health in your lowest-scoring area? If yes, *when* do you plan to start?

## Health Journal: Possible Entries

- \* Positive behaviors I currently engage in to promote *healthy eating* are . . .
- \* Positive behaviors I currently engage in to promote *healthy sleeping* are . . .
- \* Positive behaviors I currently engage in to promote *healthy exercising* are . . . .
- \* Other positive behaviors I could engage in *without much effort* include . . .
- \* Other positive behaviors I could engage in that would take a *lot of effort* include . . . .
- \* *Negative* behaviors I currently engage in that are *not* healthy include . . . .
- \* *Negative* behaviors I could eliminate *without much effort* include . . .
- \* *Negative* behaviors that would take a *lot of effort* of effort for me to eliminate include . . .
- \* *Safe* behaviors that I engage in that help me avoid injuries or accidents are . . .
- \* *Unsafe* behaviors that I engage in that increase my risk of injury or accident are . . .
- \* I engage in these risky behaviors *because* . . .
- \* Risky behaviors that I can *avoid* with *little effort* include . . .
- \* Risky behaviors that would be very *hard* for me to give up include . . .
- \* Exercises that I do *at least 3 times per week* are . . .
- \* Exercises I do for *20 minutes or longer* at a time are . . .
- \* Exercise that I get during my *daily routines* (e.g., by walking from place to place or climbing stairs) are . . .

## Health *Event-Planning* Exercises

### **Healthy-Habit Marketing Campaign**

Steps:

1. Form 3 or 4-member teams and ask them to devise a *television or newspaper advertisement* that is designed to either: (a) *increase* college students' motivation for engaging in a *healthy* habit or (b) *decrease* their motivation for engaging in an *unhealthy* habit.
2. After the teams have completed their task, ask them:
  - \* Why they chose that particular habit?
  - \* What aspects or characteristics of their advertisement (form or content) do they think will motivate students to change?
  - \* Through what medium should their advertisement be delivered for maximum effect or impact?

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The above exercises were excerpted from the Instructor's Manual for *Thriving in College & Beyond: Research-Based Strategies for Academic Success and Personal Development* (Cuseo, Fecas, & Thompson, 2007)(Kendall/Hunt Publishing).