

HEALTHY BODIES SUPPORT HEALTHY MINDS

Lifestyle choices can have a big impact on mental health. People with poorer physical health are at a greater risk for certain mental illnesses, whilst looking after your body can greatly improve your overall sense of wellbeing.

Eating and exercising regularly, getting enough sleep, and reducing exposure to alcohol, smoking and other drugs support good mental health. Reducing stress, undertaking relaxation activities, keeping connected to others and spending time in nature all provide physical and mental health benefits.

If you need support to start making changes speak to your GP or utilise online resources.

Small changes to your daily life can make a big difference to how you feel.



MHACA
Mental Health
Association of
Central Australia

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**WITH ANY BIG
HEALTH CHANGES IT IS
IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS
TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR.**



KEEP ACTIVE

Only one third of Australians are getting enough exercise. Australian guidelines recommend adults do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity most days of the week. However even just a walk around the block can improve your mood.



EAT WELL

We need to avoid processed food and incorporate a diet which includes drinking plenty of water and enjoying a wide variety of foods from the five food groups (vegetables, fruit, grains, meat/alternatives and dairy/alternatives) every day.



SLEEP MORE

Getting a good night's sleep is critical for our physical and mental health. Most adults need 7-8 hours sleep per night. Having a regular sleep routine, reducing caffeine intake and turning off screens 2 hours before bedtime all support good sleep habits.



AVOID ALCOHOL AND SMOKING

Alcohol, smoking and other drug use have detrimental impacts on physical health. Smoking is not recommended and Australian guidelines for alcohol use for healthy adults is no more than 2 standard drinks a day.



REDUCE STRESS

Try activities like deep breathing, mindfulness, meditation, walking the dog, reading a book, having a cup of tea, listening to music or reading a magazine or book. Shifting your focus can make a big difference to managing stress levels.



TAKE A TECHNOLOGY DETOX

Over exposure to screen time can be bad for our physical and mental health. Being able to unplug can make you feel more energised and connected to the world around you. Set a time limit each day to check social media, and balance time online with connecting with others and relaxing activities.



ENJOY NATURE

Studies show that spending time in nature can improve our self-esteem and mood, reduce stress levels and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. Nature is both restorative for people with mental health challenges and protective for general mental health.



BE SOCIALLY CONNECTED

Being connected to others is important for our physical and mental wellbeing. Social isolation is known to be a trigger for mental illness so work on developing healthy relationships with family friends, neighbours and co-workers. Consider volunteering or online social groups.



ASK FOR HELP

If you need support to start making changes speak to your GP or utilise online resources. If you feel overwhelmed or are in distress 24 hour support services are available:

Lifeline 13 11 14 – www.lifeline.org.au

Lifeline text service (evenings) **0477 13 11 14.**

Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636 – www.beyondblue.org.au