

# Physical Wellness

The physical dimension of wellness encourages cardiovascular flexibility and strength and also encourages regular, physical activity. Physical development encourages knowledge about food and nutrition and discourages the use of tobacco, drugs and excessive alcohol consumption. Physical Wellness encourages consumption and activities which contribute to high level wellness, including medical self-care and appropriate use of the medical system.

As you travel the physical wellness path, you'll strive to spend more time each week building endurance, flexibility and physical strength. Sometimes the path may become narrow and treacherous-you'll become more aware of the hazards around you and you'll begin to take safety precautions so you may travel your path successfully. The physical dimension of wellness entails taking responsibility and care for minor illnesses and also knowing when professional medical attention is needed.

By traveling the wellness path, physically, you'll be able to monitor your own vital signs and understand your body's warning signs. You'll understand and appreciate the relationship between sound nutrition and how your body performs. The physical dimension of wellness provides almost immediate beneficial results-both physical and psychological. The physical benefits of looking good and feeling terrific most often lead to the psychological benefits of enhanced self-esteem, self control determination and a sense of direction.

- As you travel the wellness path, you'll begin to believe that - physically.
- It's better to consume foods and beverages that enhance good health rather than those which impair it.
- It's better to be physically fit than out of shape.

## Steps For Improving Physical Wellness / Physical Fitness

Physical wellness is the ability to apply your knowledge, motivation, commitment, behavior, self management, attitude, and skills toward achieving your personal fitness and health goals. A wise person once said, "Those who think they have no time for exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness." Physical wellness can be maintained by applying the knowledge and skills of sound nutrition, exercise, and safety to everyday life.

- Exercise three time a week, 20-30 minutes per session
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator, and walk whenever possible
- Get consistent and adequate sleep
- Use seat belts and helmets, and encourage others to do so
- Learn to recognize early signs of illness
- Listen to your body
- Practice safe sex
- Eat breakfast - it's the most important meal of the day
- Eat a variety of healthy foods

- Stop smoking and protect yourself against second-hand smoke
- Control your meal portions and try to eat smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day
- Use sugar, salt, fat, and alcohol in moderation

## Physical Wellness Assessment

The physical dimension of wellness involves encouraging regular activities that produce endurance, flexibility and strength. Read each statement carefully and respond honestly by using the following scoring:

**Almost always = 2 points**  
**points**

**Sometimes/occasionally = 1 point**

**Very seldom = 0**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I exercise aerobically (vigorous, continuous) for 20 to 30 minutes at least three times per week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains every day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I avoid tobacco products.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I wear a seat belt while riding in and driving a car.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I deliberately minimize my intake of cholesterol, dietary fats, and oils.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I avoid drinking alcoholic beverages or I consume no more than one drink per day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I get an adequate amount of sleep.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I have adequate coping mechanisms for dealing with stress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I maintain a regular schedule of immunizations, physicals, dental checkups and self-exams.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I maintain a reasonable weight, avoiding extremes of overweight and underweight.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Total for Physical Wellness Dimension

Score: **15 to 20 Points** - Excellent strength in this dimension.

Score: **9 to 14 Points** - There is room for improvement. Look again at the items in which you scored 1 or 0. What changes can you make to improve your score?

Score: **0 to 8 Points** - This dimension needs a lot of work. Look again at this dimension and challenge yourself to begin making small steps toward growth here. Remember: The goal is balanced wellness.