



My Health

QLWG
Essential Life Skills
Unit 8

QLWG Skills for Life

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QLWG Skills for Life Series

THEMATIC UNITS

Competency-based learning meets the needs of all learners. It is important to keep in mind, however, that all learners are different. In order to address the needs and interests of all learners, units have been divided by *Essential Life Skills* and *Individual Life Skills*.

Essential Life Skills are important for everyone, while *Individual Life Skills* address the needs and interests of different learners. Once learners have completed the “Essential” units, they may choose a unit that is applicable to their interests and lifestyle.

Essential Life Skills Units	Individual Life Skills Units
1. Orientation Unit 2. Around the Home 3. My Community 4. Being a Canadian Citizen 5. What’s for Dinner? 6. Managing My Money 7. Smart Shopping 8. My Health 9. All About Me 10. Communication Skills 11. Living in Quebec 12. Strategies for Reading 13. Strategies for Writing 14. Strategies for Grammar 15. Strategies for Numbers 1: Understanding Numbers 16. Strategies for Numbers 2: Adding & Subtracting 17. Strategies for Numbers 3: Multiplying, Dividing & Fractions	18. My Hobbies and Leisure Time 19. Employment Skills 20. On the Job 21. My Family 22. Entertainment (music and film) 23. Fitness and the Great Outdoors 24. Getting Around (travel and transportation) 25. Career Exploration 26. Getting My Driver’s Licence 27. Learning in Quebec 28. Living Green 29. Handling Legal Concerns 30. The Retirement Years

QLWG *Skills for Life Series*

My Health

Unit #8

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WELCOME LEARNER!

This workbook is meant to help you develop important life skills. As you work on different activities, try to see the purpose in what you are doing, stay motivated and enjoy!

Things to Look for:

Checkpoints

You will finish every unit of study with a Checkpoint (in blue). Once you have completed the Checkpoint questionnaire, you will send this document to your distance education tutor. Make sure you fill in the **date, your name, your phone number** and the **distance education tutor's name** on the cover of this document.

Word Stops

Word Stops will explain more difficult words. Look for words in bold print (example: **bold**). A **Word Stop** will follow to tell you what that word means.



Word Stops will appear in the workbook when there is a difficult word.

If you do not understand, follow these steps:

1. Look at titles and pictures. Do they tell you anything?
2. Try to find the general meaning.
3. Look for Word Stops.
4. Use a dictionary.
5. If you still do not understand, contact your distance education tutor.

Before you contact your distance education tutor:

1. Prepare your questions. What do you want to ask?
2. Give the page number and section title to your tutor so they know where you are.



“Act the part; walk and talk exactly as if you were already the person you want to be.”

~Brian Tracy

My Health

“A man too busy to take care of his health is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools.” ~**Spanish proverb**



Introduction:

Many think that good health is something you are born with. This is simply not true. Unless you were born with a serious health problem, you can have good health. Making the right choices for your health affects how well *and* how long you live. While there are some things that you cannot control, there are ways to keep yourself from getting sick. Knowing how to take care of your health will help you to prevent and deal with sickness – both now and in the future.

In this unit, you will:

- think about ways to protect your health.
- create a personal health record.
- read about exercise.
- consider how to sneak exercise into your day.
- practice making sense of health advice.
- research a health issue.
- prepare questions for the doctor.

My Health: What I Need to Know

There are many health factors that are within your control. Knowing how to make smart lifestyle choices is the number one way to improve your overall health.



What Can I Do to Protect My Health?

Your body is a machine. There are many different parts that keep the machine running. In order for the body to work well, it needs to get the right fuel. If the body is not looked after, it will break down. Periodic checkups will help you to take care of any problems before they become serious.

You can start to **monitor** your health by asking yourself the following questions:

1. Do I feel well?
2. Do I eat well?
3. Do I get enough exercise?
4. Do I get enough sleep?
5. Do I smoke?
6. Do I drink?



WORD STOP

1. **monitor** (mon-uh-tur): to check or to watch carefully.

ACTIVITY: Create a list of preventative measures (ways to protect your health) that you can adopt.

STEP 1:

Consider your lifestyle. What could you change to protect your health?

STEP 2:

Complete your preventative measure list (below).

PURPOSE:

If you do not think about what you can do to protect your health, it's very likely that you won't. Starting to think of ways to protect your health will help you to see how you can improve and maintain your health.

Preventative Measures for My Lifestyle

EXAMPLES:

- I can quit smoking.
- I can go to the doctor more often.
- I can regularly wash my hands .



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Protecting My Health

1. Find Out About Your Family's Health

There are certain diseases or health problems that run in the family. You should know about health problems that run in your family so that you can study the **symptoms**. If you know what may happen, you can act quickly if a symptom appears.



2. Get a Yearly Check Up

If you visit your doctor once a year, you increase the chances of detecting cancers, heart disease or other conditions. Such conditions are often **curable** in the early stages.



WORD STOP

1. **symptom** (simp-tum): a sign that something may be wrong.
2. **curable** (kyor-uh-bul): a sickness that can be treated.

Organ Donation

In Canada, thousands of peoples' lives depend on **organ donation**. Many people have organs that don't function properly. If such people get new organs, there's a good chance they will get their health back and live normal lives.

A person can choose to donate their organs to someone who needs them. Organ donation happens when a person dies and a "good" organ is removed and **transplanted** into a **recipient's** body. This is considered to be a "gift of life". The **donor** passes on what he or she no longer needs.

Most Demanded Organs for Transplants

1. **Lungs:** allow us to breathe
2. **Liver:** stores and cleans blood and helps to transfer nutrients to the body
3. **Pancreas:** transfers juices into the small intestine and hormones into the bloodstream
4. **Intestine:** carries waste from the stomach out of the body
5. **Kidneys:** filters liquid in the body
6. **Heart:** pumps blood through the body



WORD STOP

1. **organ** (or-gan): part of the body that makes it work (like the heart).
2. **donation** (doh-nay-shun): a gift given (usually for free).
3. **transplant** (tranz-plant): to move from one body to another body.
4. **donor** (doh-nur): a person who gives a gift.
5. **recipient** (ri-sip-ee-uhnt): a person who receives something.

What You Need To Know About Organ Donation:

Anyone can choose to donate an organ. Age and health do not matter. All people have good organs. Organ transplants can save or enhance another person's life. The decision to be a donor is a personal one. In Quebec, if you would like to be an organ donor, you need to:

1. Get a sticker for organ donation from your local hospital or CLSC. *A leaflet on organ donation and the sticker will be sent to you when it's time to get a new health insurance card.*
2. Sign and stick the sticker on the back of your health insurance card.
3. Make sure your family knows if you want to be an organ donor. That way, if death occurs, they may respect your wishes.
4. You do not have to sign an organ donation card; the sticker is enough.



REFLECTION:

The decision to be an organ donor is a personal one. In the left-hand column below, make a list of reasons people choose to be an organ donor. In the right-hand column, make a list of reasons people do *not* choose to donate their organs.

FOR organ donation	AGAINST organ donation

My Personal Health Record

What Is a Personal Health Record?

A personal health record is a written record of your health history. It includes your family's health history as well as personal medical details. Creating a personal health record is a great way to take charge of your health.

What Is In a Personal Health Record?



1. Basic information such as names and addresses of your doctor and dentist.
2. A short medical history (shots, illnesses, surgery, etc).
3. An assessment of your current health.
4. A list of any medications that you have taken regularly.
5. Any personal wishes such as organ donation.

"He who has health has hope;
and he who has hope has everything."

~Arabian Proverb

ACTIVITY:

Complete a Personal Health Record.

STEP 1:

Look over the form for your personal health record. Identify what you need to do.

STEP 2:

Contact family members to find out about any health problems that run in your family.

STEP 3:

Complete your personal health record by filling in all the details that are asked of you.

PURPOSE:

First of all, a personal health record will help you to see where you are with your health. Also, you will have all your medical details ready for when you go to the doctor.



MY PERSONAL HEALTH RECORD

Personal Details:

My Name:	
My Address:	
My Doctor:	
My Doctor's address and telephone number:	
My Dentist:	
My Dentist's address and telephone number:	

My Medical History:

Write a short medical history. Include dates of any shots, serious illnesses or surgeries. If you have ever been in the hospital, explain why.

My Current Health:

Describe your current health. How do you feel? Include any allergies, diseases, whether you smoke and/or any health problems that run in your family.

My Medication History:

Make a list of any medications that you are taking or have taken regularly.

My Personal Health Wishes:

Express any personal wishes such as organ donation or what you want done in the case of a serious illness or injury.

Why Exercise?

There's no way around it – exercise is good for you. Studies show that if you exercise, you will improve your health. Exercise makes you stronger and helps to protect you from getting sick.

It is easy to find excuses to not exercise. In truth, the hardest part is getting started. Once you start exercising, it will be much easier to keep it up.

Tips on Fitting Exercise Into Your Day:

1. Shut off the TV.
2. Get outside every day.
3. Walk 30 minutes every day for your health.
4. Get your kids to join you.
5. Do something you like: gardening, walking, hiking, biking, snowshoeing or rollerblading.
6. Invite other family members or friends to join you.



"True enjoyment comes from activity of the mind and exercise of the body; the two are united."

~Alexander von Humboldt

ACTIVITY:

Read the article “Getting Fit Bit by Bit” (on the next page).

STEP 1:

Prepare yourself for reading by listing tips that help you when you read (tips for reading). Think of other tips for reading that have been suggested before.

STEP 2:

Use your personal reading strategies to help you read the article.

MY TIPS FOR READING

List all the things you can do to help your reading.

EXAMPLE: *Highlight difficult words and go back to them.*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Getting Fit Bit by Bit

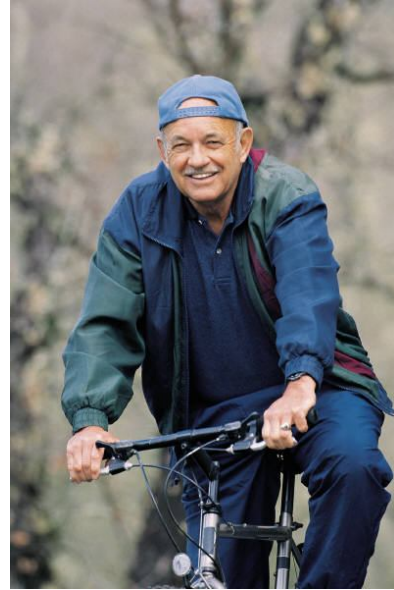
by Victoria Wolfe

According to studies conducted by Health Canada, nearly 50% of Canadians are overweight and nearly a full 15% are considered obese. This last figure has tripled in the past two decades.

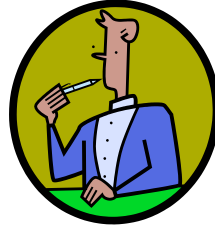
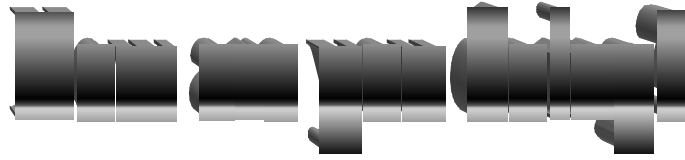
But what can the average Canadian do to fight the battle of the bulge? The answer is - a lot!

With today's increasingly busy lifestyle, the average Canadian may not think they can find the time to exercise regularly. Exercise does not have to be an all or nothing affair to be effective. Experts say that even doing little things during the course of your day, one to five minutes at a time, can really make a difference.

Here are some quick and simple ideas that even the busiest person can fit in between power lunches and picking up the kids.



1. Take the stairs! Whether you live or work in a building with stairs, skip the elevator and step your way to a healthier you. For a person who weighs 160 pounds, climbing stairs up stairs for four minutes will burn 50 calories. If that person continues taking the stairs five times a week for a year, he or she will burn 12,700 or about four pounds of fat! Canada's Stairway to Health, which can be found online, offers a fun and easy way to calculate how even little efforts can pay off in a really big way.
2. Doing something as simple as standing up straight can make a difference. By paying attention to your posture while you are standing in line at the post office, walking around in the grocery store, or just doing laundry can really help. Good posture can cause muscles to contract which burns calories and builds up muscle.
3. When preparing your daily meals, make opening those pesky soup cans an exercise opportunity. With a can curled in each hand, drop your arms to your side. Slowly raise your arms out so that they come up in a "T" position. Try doing about 10 to 15 repetitions at a time. Repeat if desired.
4. When going to the grocery store, park as far away as possible. After shopping and on your way back to your car, try doing arm curls with your grocery bags. Lower and repeat until you reach your car. You can continue doing curls when you carry the groceries back to your home as well.
5. Whether you're sitting or standing, doing invisible "butt squeezes" can squeeze the most out of your time. Tighten the muscles in your behind for two seconds and then release. Repeat this 10 to 15 times at least 3 times a day and you're well onto the way to a maximum gluteus maximus!



Complete the questionnaire to keep track of your learning.

1. Have you completed all reading and activities to this point? (*Circle your answer.*)

Yes

No

2. If you answered “No”, explain what you did not complete and why.

3. What was easy and why?

4. What was difficult and why?

5. General comments. (*Do you have any comments on the work that you have done?*)

Taking Care of My Teeth

Why Taking Care of Your Teeth Is Important:

Healthy teeth are important for your overall health. Taking care of your teeth means preventing **plaque**, which is really sticky and attracts **bacteria** and sugar. Bacteria break sugar down into acids that eat away at your teeth and cause **cavities**. Too much plaque also brings on the first stages of gum disease.



REFLECTION:

1. Describe how you take care of your teeth.

2. Could you make changes to the way you take care of your teeth? Explain.



WORD STOP

1. **plaque** (plack): a sticky film that attracts bacteria to your teeth.
2. **bacteria** (bak-teer-ee-uh): germs that can hurt your body.
3. **cavities** (kav-uh-tees): holes or cracks in your teeth. They can hurt!

How to Keep Teeth and Gums Healthy

Brush Your Teeth

Some people brush after every meal, but twice a day will do. You need to spend at least two minutes brushing your teeth; this is roughly the length of a song. Try listening to a song as you brush to make sure you brush long enough. Brush your tongue as well; it'll kill bacteria that cause bad breath.

Use Toothbrush and Toothpaste

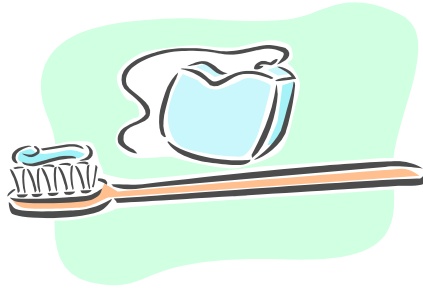
There are many brands and flavours of toothpaste. Make sure yours contains fluoride, which makes teeth stronger and stops cavities. Choose a toothbrush that has soft bristles to prevent damage to your gums.

Beware of Sugar!

Avoid eating too much sugar and drinking soft drinks. Bacteria love sugar. Sugar and bacteria together destroy your teeth.

Don't Forget to Floss!

Taking care of your teeth doesn't end with brushing. You need to floss to get rid of plaque and pieces of food between your teeth and under your gum line. For healthy teeth, you'll need to floss these spaces at least once a day.



Floss

Put the floss between two teeth. Gently bring the floss up to your gum line. Curve the floss around your tooth (like the letter "C"), and then slide it up and down the side each of your teeth. Repeat until all your teeth have been flossed.

Take Care of Dentures

Proper care can keep both your dentures and your mouth in good shape. Brush your dentures every day with a soft toothbrush to get rid of food and plaque. The same goes for your gums and tongue.

Visit the Dentist

You should go to the dentist every six months for a checkup and cleaning.



REFLECTION:

What changes will you make to maintain healthy teeth and gums?

Finding Health Information

Getting Good Advice and Information

In order to know which health care advice is good, you need to know how and where to find health information. When you visit a medical clinic with a health concern, you have the right to ask questions about symptoms, medicine and side effects. If you know a bit about a health issue, it will be much easier to get good advice.



REFLECTION:

1. When you have a problem, where do you go for advice?

2. How do you know if someone's opinion is good?

3. Where do you usually get health care advice?

ACTIVITY:

Research a health issue that interests you.

STEP 1:

Choose a health issue that interests you.



STEP 2:

Examine the following pages to see what you have to do.

STEP 3:

Fill in the form “Where to Find Health Information” to help you decide where you find information.

STEP 4:

Answer the questions on your health research form.

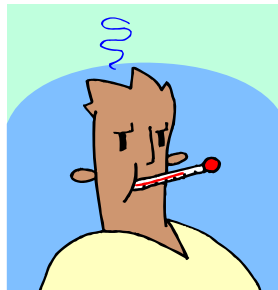
PURPOSE:

This activity will help you to learn more about a health issue that concerns you. Knowing how to find out about a health concern will enable you to decide when health advice is good.



Examples of Common Health Concerns:

1. Smoking
2. Substance abuse
3. Cancer (breast, lung, prostate, etc.)
4. Diabetes
5. Pregnancy
6. Nutrition
7. Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
8. Multiple sclerosis (MS)
9. Muscular dystrophy
10. Heart disease



REFLECTION:

1. What health concern(s) do you have?

2. What do you know about your health concern(s)?

Where to find information:



Health Canada

Health Canada is a great source for information. They will help you with your health concerns. You can call and ask for free information to be sent to you.

Your Local Medical Clinic

There are many ways to find out about health issues. Your local health clinic will have health information for you.

The Library

You can find a wealth of information at your local library. A librarian will be there to help you research your topic.

The Internet

If you go online, you can find many different sources by typing in the name of your topic in the search engine.

A Friend or Family Member

If you know someone who has dealt with the health issue, you may decide to ask them for information.

Health Canada Contact Information

You can contact Health Canada to find out about different health concerns or issues. If you wish to contact Health Canada, you can phone, write or email.



National Headquarters

Health Canada
 A.L. 0900C2
 Brooke Claxton Bldg.
 Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

Toll free: 1-866-225-0709
 Telephone: (613) 957-2991
 Fax: (613) 941-5366
 TTY: 1-800-267-1245*

* text telephone for the hearing impaired

Regional Office of Quebec

Health Canada
 Complex Guy-Favreau, Room 218
 East Tower
 200 René-Lévesque Blvd. West
 Montreal, QC H2Z 1X4

Toll free: 1-800-561-3350
 Tel: (514) 283-2306
 Fax: (514) 283-6739

WEBSITE: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index-eng.php

Where to Find Health Information

Explain what each source can do for you. When you are finished, decide which sources you will use to find your information.

The Source	Why use this source?
<p>Health Canada</p> <p>(Contact information provided on the previous page.)</p>	
<p>Your Local Medical Clinic</p>	
<p>The Library</p>	

The Internet	
A Family Member or Friend	
Other: _____ _____	

RESEARCH TIPS

When trying to find information:

1. Know what you need to find out.
2. Decide where you want to find information.
3. If you contact a person, have questions prepared.

When reading:

1. Use pictures and titles to inform your reading.
2. Look for familiar words.
3. Find the main points.

- 4. Circle new or difficult words. Then find out what they mean.
- 5. Keep track of new words in your learning log.



1. My personal health interest or concern:

2. This topic interests me because...

3. How I found information on this topic:

4. Explain the common symptoms.

(People with _____ often get/feel _____.)

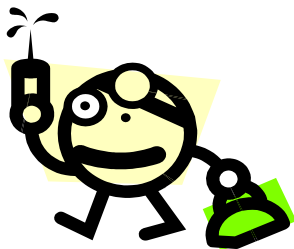
5. Explain how you can prevent it.

(You can prevent it by _____.)

6. The most important things to know about this health issue are...

7. What I found out about this health issue.

(Write a brief summary on what you learned.)



"A wise man should consider that health
is the greatest of human blessings"
~Hippocrates

At

the

Doctor's Office

In Canada, health care is provided by the government. Health care is for anyone who needs it. Everyone should see their doctor at least once a year for a checkup.

When you go to the doctor you should be prepared to answer and ask questions.



Making an Appointment

If you want to see the doctor, you have to call and make an appointment.

If you need to find a clinic, you can...

1. ask a friend or family member about their health clinic.
2. look in the Yellow Pages™ of the phone book (under clinic).
3. call directory assistance.

4. use the Internet.

When you call the clinic...

1. mention what the appointment is for (a checkup, sickness, etc.)
2. tell them when you can be there.
3. be prepared to give your name and telephone number.

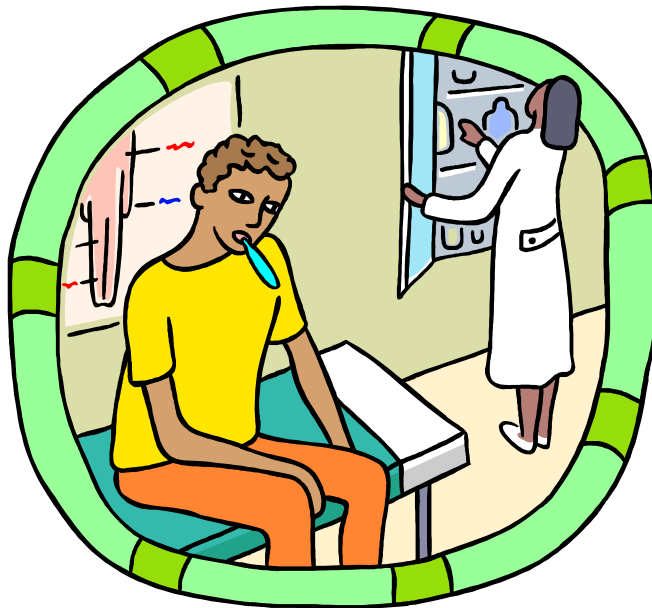
Doctor's Appointment

Curem Medical Clinic

9:00 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 8th

Don't forget to write down the date and the time of your appointment. Then put it in a place where you can see it.

When you get to the doctor's office, be prepared to fill out a form that asks for basic information about your medical history. Bring your personal medical record with you to help you fill in this form.



Questions the Doctor Might Ask

1. Do you smoke?
2. Do you have a family history of cancer?
3. Do you have any allergies?
4. Are you allergic to any medications, like penicillin?
5. Are you currently taking any medications?
6. How often do you get headaches?
7. Have you had high blood pressure in the past?

Just for Women:

1. Do you do a monthly breast self examination?
2. When was your last period?

ACTIVITY:

Prepare questions for your doctor on a personal health issue.

For example:

1. If you smoke, you may want to ask about medication for quitting.
2. If you are pregnant, you may want to ask about proper nutrition and exercise.
3. If you are a woman, you may want to ask about breast cancer prevention.
4. If you are a man, you may want to ask about prostate cancer prevention.
5. If you are overweight, you may want to ask about dieting and exercise.

STEP 1:

Think of a health issue or concern that you would like to ask your doctor about. Feel free to use the same health issue that you have already researched.

STEP 2:

Think about what you want to know.

STEP 3:

Make a list of questions that you can ask your doctor.

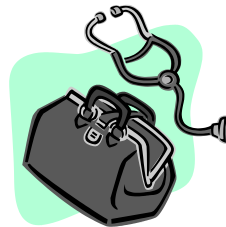
PURPOSE:

When you go to the doctor, it is important that you find out what you need to know. It is easy to forget what we wanted to ask. If you prepare a list of questions, you will know what to ask. Then you can get the answers that you know you want.



Tips for Writing Questions

1. Use question starters like, “what, when, why, who and how”.
2. End your question with a question mark (?).
3. Make sure that your question is clear to you.



What I want to know about:

My Questions (for my doctor):

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:

Question 4:

Question 5:

Medication Management

Medication (or medicine) is any substance used to treat disease or lessen pain, **anxiety** or discomfort.

Examples of common medications:

- ❖ Antacids (for stomach upsets)
- ❖ Antibiotics (for infections)
- ❖ Antihistamines (for colds and allergies)
- ❖ Disinfectant (for the skin)
- ❖ Birth control pill
- ❖ Laxatives
- ❖ Vitamins (for nutrition)



Many medications have unwanted **side effects**. When you take any medicine, you should find out about the side effects. This way, you will know if the good effects outweigh the bad.



WORD STOP

1. **anxiety** (ang-zy-uh-tee): concern, stress, or worry.
2. **side effect** (side ih-fekt): a second effect of a drug or medication.

ACTIVITY:

Find out about the side effects of a medication that you take (or have taken).

STEP 1:

Make a list of all the medications you take (or have taken).

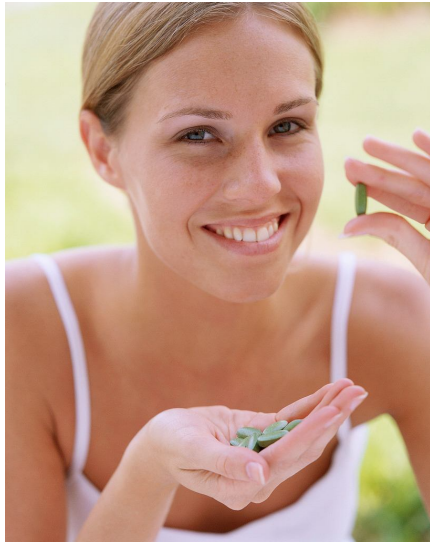
STEP 2:

Find out about the side effects of three types of medication that you take (or have taken).

NOTE: The best way to find this information is on the Web or at a drug store. A pharmacist will be able to tell you about the side effects of many medications.

STEP 3:

Complete the “My Medication” questionnaire on the next page.



My Medication

Part 1:

Make a list of medications that you are taking now (or have taken in the past).

- ❖ _____
- ❖ _____
- ❖ _____
- ❖ _____
- ❖ _____
- ❖ _____
- ❖ _____
- ❖ _____

Part 2:

Choose three medications from the above list and find out about their side effects.

Name of the Medication	Its Side Effects
1.	
2.	
3.	

You should always ask your doctor or **pharmacist** these questions when you take a new medication:

1. What is the name of the drug?
2. What is the **dose** schedule and how do I take it?
3. What are some possible side effects of this drug?
4. How long will I be on this drug?
5. How should I store this drug?
6. Should I take this on an empty stomach or with food?



WORD STOP

1. **dose** (dohs): measured amount of medication taken.
2. **pharmacist** (fahr-muh-sist): the person who gives drugs or medication at a drugstore (or pharmacy).

Me and My Health

Now that you have thought about ways to improve and protect your health, you are ready to observe how health affects your everyday life.

ACTIVITY:

Pay close attention to the world around you to find examples of how health affects your life.

STEP 1:

Reflect on what you know about health and well-being.

STEP 2:

Observe the world around you for several days and take note of how your health affects your life (or others' lives).

STEP 3:

Answer the questions on the following page. Provide solid examples of what you observe.

PURPOSE:

Learning is most valuable when you can apply it to your own life.

Where to find real-life examples:

1. Look at the people around you. Is their health important?
2. Watch TV to see what kind of messages popular programs share about healthy living.
3. Look at your family and consider how they are affected by health awareness.
4. Observe what you do to take care of your health. How do you feel?
5. Observe ways you or others improve and protect their health.

Me and My Health

REFLECTION

Provide solid examples of what you have observed in the past few days. How does your health affect your everyday life?



What I Know Now



Go back to the beginning of this unit and look at the list of things you knew before you started. Describe what you know now. What have you learned?

My Health

Learning Checklist

Check off each item on this list that you can do as “ACHIEVED”. If you feel that you have to improve on something, check “IN PROGRESS”. Review your Learning Checklist with your tutor.

COMPETENCIES What I can do.	IN PROGRESS	ACHIEVED
1. I can explain why health is important.		
2. I can explain why it is important to protect my health.		
3. I can create a list of preventative measures (ways to protect my health).		
4. I can think of ways to change my own lifestyle to protect my health.		
5. I can find out about health problems that run in my family.		
6. I can provide personal details (my name, address, phone number, etc.) when asked.		
7. I can describe my medical history.		
8. I can describe my current health.		
9. I can describe my medication history.		

COMPETENCIES What I can do.	IN PROGRESS	ACHIEVED
10. I can state my personal health wishes.		
11. I can find ways to fit exercise into my day.		
12. I can create a list of <i>my own</i> tips for reading.		
13. I can use different sources to find out about health.		
14. I can decide which health advice is best.		
15. I can find information on a health topic.		
16. I can find the symptoms of a specific health problem.		
17. I can find ways to prevent a specific health problem.		
18. I can write a summary on my research.		
19. I can find a medical clinic in my area.		
20. I can make an appointment.		
21. I can prepare questions for my doctor.		
22. I can write a proper question.		
23. I can find the side effects of my medication.		
24. I can connect what I learned to my life.		
25. I can look around me for examples of what I have learned.		
26. I can observe how my health affects my life.		
27. I can write about what I observe.		

The

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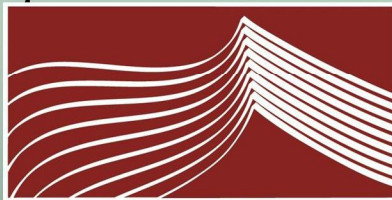
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