



GOOD NEWS ABOUT HEALTH

ENJOYING GOOD HEALTH

TRY JESUS COURSE BOOK 22

THE BIBLE PRESENTS A HOLISTIC VIEW OF HUMAN BEINGS.
THAT IS, WE'RE A UNIT – PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL.
WHAT AFFECTS ONE ASPECT AFFECTS ALL.

HEALTH IN THE WEST

22 – ENJOYING GOOD HEALTH

Health is something that many people don't appreciate until they lose it. The USA is typical of most Western countries. In one year 936,923 people died from heart and blood-vessel diseases and 553,091 from cancer. That's 4,082 people dying every day for that year. These two groups of diseases accounted for 62% of all deaths.

To see this in perspective, motor vehicle accidents accounted for 43,354 deaths for the same period, which is 119 a day, or 1.8% of all deaths. Deaths from cancer and heart and blood-vessel diseases are 34 times as frequent as death from traffic accidents, and 86 times as frequent as death from AIDS (17,318 deaths for the year).

Cancer and heart and blood- vessel diseases are the West's biggest killers. Yet they are largely preventable.

"Unhealthy lifestyle is the primary contributor to the six leading causes of death in the US - heart disease, cancer, stroke, respiratory diseases, accidents and diabetes - which collectively account for over 70% of all deaths."
(www.healthpromotionadvocates.org)

Apart from inherited factors, other risk factors are: smoking, high fat, sugar and salt diet, high blood pressure, obesity, physical inactivity, alcohol, stress, a refined diet lacking in fibre and nutrients.

When it comes to mental health, almost 3 in 10 suffer from a mental disorder, such as anxiety disorder, depression, alcohol and drug abuse and dependence. (<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/home.html>)

Most people wait until they lose their health before they are concerned about it. The Bible presents a holistic view of human beings. That is, we're a unit - physical, mental, social and spiritual. What affects one aspect affects all. Just think about when you've had a toothache or have been worried.

The Bible and Good Health

1. What did Jesus say was one of the reasons He came here? John 10:10 (page 759 in NIV Bible: International Bible Society, 00195)

I have come that they may have _____, and have it to the _____.

2. As well as spiritual wellbeing, what does John pray that his readers may enjoy? 3 John 2 (page 865)

Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy _____ and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

3. How beneficial does king Solomon say cheerfulness is? Proverbs 17:22 (page 461)

A cheerful heart is good _____, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

The Reason to Care for Our Health

4. Why does Paul say we should honour God with our bodies? 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 (page 809)

Do you not know that your body is a _____ of the Holy Spirit? ... You are not your own; you were bought at a _____. Therefore _____ God with your body.

The price that was paid for us was the life of Jesus who died to save us. The fact that God freely forgives and accepts us is the greatest motivation to care for our health. God desires us to have the best health, and with good health we can better share the love of God with others.

5. What should guide us in lifestyle matters? 1 Corinthians 10:31 (page 812)

So whether you _____ or _____ or _____ you do, do it all for the glory of God.

6. While we all suffer the limiting effects of sin, what else limits our possession of health? Hosea 4:6 (page 638)

My people are destroyed from lack of _____.

Ignorance, or neglect, of natural laws of health brings unnecessary sickness. Most early deaths in Western society could be prevented if people followed health principles.

GENESIS CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO outline the ideal environment for a healthy lifestyle. Fresh air, pure water, sunshine, a diet of fruit, nuts and grains, exercise in cultivating the soil, habitual self-control in all habits, regular rest and communion with God as represented by Sabbath fellowship and eating from the tree of life - these are the principles of health and happiness.

Wonder drugs, such as penicillin, have saved millions of lives in our recent past. But the main diseases today are not helped by penicillin. They are heart and blood-vessel diseases, high blood pressure, cancer, arthritis, osteoporosis and diabetes. These are lifestyle diseases. Who has a wonder drug that can cure them? Dr Bortz, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, has said:

There is no drug in current or prospective use that holds as much promise for sustained health as a lifetime program of physical exercise.

The Benefits of Daily Physical Activity

The benefits from daily physical exercise are many. Following is a list from the American Heart Association:

- *Reduces the risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation throughout the body.*
- *Keeps weight under control.*
- *Improves blood cholesterol levels.*
- *Prevents and manages high blood pressure.*
- *Prevents bone loss (osteoporosis).*
- *Boosts energy level.*
- *Helps manage stress.*
- *Releases tension.*
- *Improves self-image.*
- *Improves the ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well.*
- *Counters anxiety and depression and increases enthusiasm and optimism.*
- *Increases muscle strength, giving greater capacity for other physical activities.*
- *Provides a way to share an activity with family and friends.*
- *Establishes good heart-healthy habits in children.*
- *Helps delay or prevent chronic illnesses and diseases associated with ageing, and maintains quality of life and independence longer.*

Types of Exercise

There are four basic types of exercise: incidental, endurance, stretching, and strength exercises.

INCIDENTAL ACTIVITY

Latest research indicates that sedentary persons can gain measurable health benefits by just being more active in their normal daily schedule. Go for walks during work breaks. Get into gardening. Take stairs instead of escalators and elevators. Park further from the supermarket and walk through the car park. Walk instead of driving where possible.

ENDURANCE EXERCISE

Endurance is an essential part of fitness. It is often described as aerobic fitness or heart-lung conditioning.

Aerobic means with oxygen, and aerobic exercise is any sustained activity, over a period of time, that requires the heart and lungs to work a little harder.

The FIT Formula

F = frequency: 3-6 times a week

I = intensity: moderate, vigorous activity to increase heart rate

T = time: sustained for 30 minutes

Choose aerobic activities you enjoy

Walking or hiking, jogging, cycling, swimming, rowing, walking on a treadmill, stair climbing, gym aerobics.

STRETCHING AND FLEXIBILITY

Stretching prevents muscle soreness and decreases the risk of injury. By maintaining flexibility you improve posture and reduce the risk of joint problems. Stretch only to a position where mild tension is felt. Hold each stretch for 20-30 seconds. Don't bounce. After a short rest, repeat the stretch. Always do stretching before and after vigorous exercise.

STRENGTH EXERCISE

Weight-bearing and resistance exercises, two to three times weekly, keep your muscles ready for action. They build muscle strength and improve body shape. They reduce the loss of muscle tone. Weight-bearing exercises increase calcium in bones, preventing osteoporosis and some kinds of arthritis.

“...increasing participation in regular moderate physical activity among the more than 88 million inactive Americans over the age of 15 might reduce annual medical costs by as much as... \$76.6 billion.” (Pratt M, Macera C A; Gujing

W, Physician and Sports Medicine)



A Healthy Diet

7. What was the original diet given by God to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? Genesis 1:29, 30 (page 1)

Then God said, “I give you every _____ on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has _____ in it. They will be yours for food.”

After the Flood, God allowed the use of certain flesh foods. But this was never His original plan, nor is it best for health. (See Genesis 7:2, 3, 8; Leviticus 11:1-23; Deuteronomy 14:3-19, pages 5, 77, 136.) Karen Collins, American Institute for Cancer Research registered dietitian, says research shows that a plant-based diet is the key to warding off cancer.

One dietitian said we eat too much and exercise too little. The US the per capita consumption of SUGARS is 59 kg (130 pounds, an average of 35 teaspoons (ts) per day for every person). That's 647 calories (Cal), (2717 kilojoules [kJ]) per day from “empty calories” (foods that provide energy while providing few or no nutrients). Manufactured foods account for over three-quarters of sugar consumption. A can of soft drink, for example, can contain up to 9 ts of sugar (405 Cal, or 1701kJ).



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In the same year consumption of OILS and FATS was 29.5 kg (65 pounds) per capita. That's an average of 16 ts (80 grams) of fat per day for every person (728 Cal or 3056kJ). The **Healthy Diet Pyramid** converts dietary advice into practical language, dividing foods into three segments: **Eat Most, Eat Moderately, and Eat Least.**

A British study found that children who ate a healthy diet of fruits, veggies and grains at age 3 had a higher IQ at 8.5 years than those who ate meals high in fats, sugars and processed foods. Improving the diet after age 3 improves health but not IQ. (Kate Northstone. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 7 Feb 2011)

Benefits of Water - 6-8 Glasses a Day

The body is composed of about 70% water. It uses about 20 glasses of water per day. Some of this comes from our food, some from metabolism, but this does not quite meet the needs of our body. For good health we need six to eight glasses of water a day. (More if the weather is hot and/or we're exercising vigorously.)

Avoiding Harmful Things

8. What does Paul say we should avoid? 2 Corinthians 7:1 (page 819)

Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us _____ ourselves from _____ that _____ and _____, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

9. What does Solomon say concerning those who use alcoholic drinks? Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35 (pages 462, 465)

Wine is a _____ and beer a _____; whoever is led astray by them is not _____.
Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless _____?
Who has _____ eyes? Those who linger over wine.

One Health Minister said, "We have... ignored the incredible costs in human life and to the taxpayer of the two major killers – tobacco and alcohol, which are responsible for 98 per cent of drug-related deaths."

There is no safe level of drinking alcohol. Cancer risk increases from the first drink. (Cancer Council, 2011)

Drug misuse delivers enormous social, economic and health costs to societies. In the USA 435,000 die from **tobacco**-related causes, 85,000 from **alcohol**-related causes and 17,000 from **illicit drugs**.

Drug abuse costs the USA nearly \$485 billion a year – \$185 billion for alcohol, \$138 billion for tobacco, \$161 billion for illicit drugs. (Mokdad A H, etal. *JAMA*). “Excluded from the costs are the intangible social consequences of drug misuse, such as family breakdown or the pain and suffering caused by misusers to themselves and others.” (*The National Drug Strategy: Mapping the Future*)



Marijuana, used regularly in the US by more than 16 million, is the most widely used addictive substance after tobacco and alcohol. Australian researchers, reviewing 83 studies, found that pot smokers who developed psychotic disorders did so nearly 3 years earlier than for nonusers. For other illegal drugs it's 2 years earlier. “It is increasingly clear that marijuana is a cause of schizophrenia and that schizophrenia caused by cannabis starts earlier than schizophrenia with other causes.” (Mathew Large. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 8 Feb, 2011). A German study found that marijuana use can double the risk of developing psychotic symptoms. (*British Medical Journal*, 1 March, 2011)

10. What commandment stresses the importance of physical life? Exodus 20:13 (page 54)

You shall not _____.

Shortening of our lives by disregarding the laws of health, whether by drugs or any other means, is a violation of the sixth commandment. God wants us to enjoy good health.

Trust in God

11. What example did Daniel and his three friends give of their trust in God regarding diet? Daniel 1:5, 8-16 (page 625)

The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. But Daniel _____ not to _____ with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.... “Please _____ your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but _____ to eat and _____ to drink.” . . . At the end of the ten days they looked _____ and _____ than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

Some of the food from the king's table would have been offered to idols. Also unclean animals were used. Daniel demonstrated the courage of his convictions.

12. What does God promise for those who trust Him? Psalm 103:2-4 (page 428)

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who _____ all your _____ and _____ all your _____, who _____ your _____ from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion.

It's been said there's a God-shaped hole in every one of us and only God can fill it. We were made for fellowship with God and only in that relationship can we be at peace. While God promises to heal us, for many that healing won't take place until Jesus comes again.

God and Health

A *Time* magazine

report by Claudia Wallis on the relationship between faith and health reports the following: "Anywhere from 60% to 90% of visits to doctors are in the mind-body, stress-related realm," asserts Dr Herbert Benson, president of the Mind/Body Medical Institute of Boston's Deaconess Hospital and Harvard Medical School.

A study at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Centre found that one of the best predictors of survival among 232 heart-surgery patients was the degree to which the patients said they drew comfort and strength from religious faith. Those who did not, had more than three times the death rate of those who did.

A survey of 30 years of research on blood pressure showed that churchgoers have lower blood pressure than non-churchgoers – even when adjusted to account for smoking and other risk factors, according to Dr David Larson, researcher formerly at the US National Institute of Health.

Other studies have shown that men and women who attend church regularly have half the risk of dying from coronary-artery disease as those who rarely go to church. Again, smoking and socioeconomic factors were taken into account. A National Institute on Aging study of 4000 elderly living at home in North Carolina found that those who attend religious services are less depressed and physically healthier than those who don't attend or who worship at home. Numerous studies have found lower rates of depression and anxiety-related illness among the religiously committed. Non-churchgoers have been found to have a suicide rate four times higher than church regulars.

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28, page 689). Faith in God is beneficial to our health. It's not just so that we can live longer, but that we might more effectively share the good news about Jesus.

I'd like more information about living a healthy lifestyle.

I would like to honour Jesus and be more effective by following a healthier lifestyle.



What benefits are there for you in living a healthier lifestyle?

In order to live a healthier lifestyle, what changes might you need to make?

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Published by: The Seventh Day Adventist Church, South Pacific Division Design

and Layout: DEC Creatives, Bonnells Bay, New South Wales, Australia Cover

Image: shutterstock.com