

## HEALTHY BODIES SUPPORT HEALTHY MINDS

There is a strong link between our mental and physical health. Good mental health is more than just the absence of illness, it incorporates taking active steps every day to lead a healthy lifestyle.

### KEEPING 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. Exercise releases chemicals like endorphins and serotonin that can help with anxiety, depression and can improve your mood. You don't have to run a marathon or join a sports team, even just a short walk can make a difference.

If you need some support on getting started, go to <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/tips-for-getting-active>

### EATING WELL

When it comes to supporting good mental health, our diet can play a critical role. Beyond the physical health impacts, diets high in saturated fats and refined sugars affect how we feel emotionally. 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.

Find more information at <https://daa.asn.au/smart-eating-for-you/smart-eating-fast-facts>

### SLEEPING MORE

Getting a good night's sleep is critical for our physical and mental health. Over the last few decades our sleep quality and quantity has declined. Poor sleep leads to a range of health impacts including weight gain, depression, anxiety, and lethargy. Sleep helps to regulate the chemicals in our brain that transmit information. If we don't get enough sleep, we can start to feel depressed or anxious. Most adults need 7-8 hours a sleep a night.

Find tips to support good sleep habits at  
<https://www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au>

### **AVOIDING ALCOHOL AND SMOKING**

Alcohol, smoking and other drug use have detrimental impacts on physical health. Smoking and alcohol are often used when people are under stress, but these addictive substances can make symptoms worse in the long run. Whilst they can create an immediate sense of relaxation, the people who use them then experience withdrawal symptoms which can increase anxiety. Smoking is not recommended and Australian guidelines for alcohol use for healthy adults is no more than 2 standard drinks a day.

Find more information at <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/drugs-alcohol-and-mental-health>