

## What you can learn from a health assessment

Thank you for completing the short health assessment. The following information and recommendations will help you protect and improve your personal health status. The good news is, taking care of yourself doesn't have to mean you have to stick to unrealistic plans. You can make simple changes that will fit around your life and get you back in balance.



### Healthy Habits Dial

#### GREEN

##### **Celebrate your strengths.**

Your well-being is made up of many positive aspects that you are already doing!

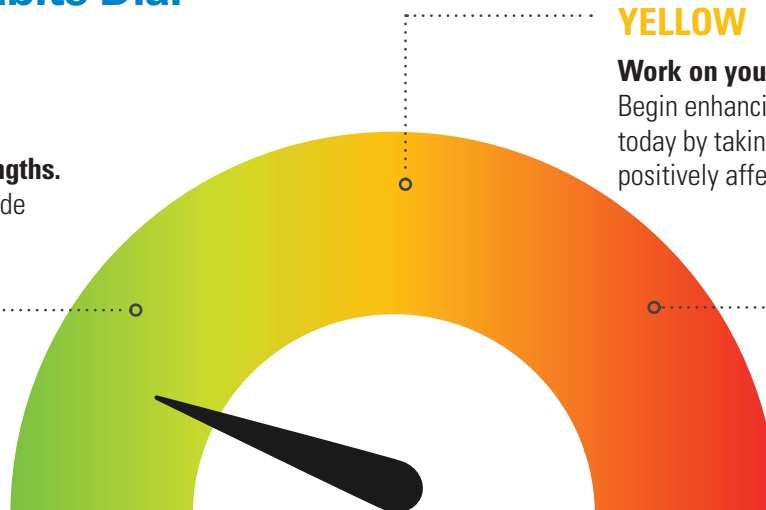
#### YELLOW

##### **Work on your challenges.**

Begin enhancing your well-being today by taking small steps to positively affect your health.

#### RED

**Take action.** Take some time soon to discuss your current health status with a health care provider.



You've provided information about your lifestyle – what you eat and drink, whether you smoke and how much exercise and sleep you get. These are all things that have a big impact on your health and they're also the reason you scored green, yellow or red.

This is just an indication of how you're doing against guidelines for certain behaviors based on your answers. It's not a medical diagnosis. To discuss it properly, you should speak to a health professional. It's recommended that you schedule a visit annually with your doctor to talk about your current health status.

# 5 Habits to Keep You Well



## Stay away from tobacco

Smoking remains the leading preventable cause of disease and death in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Quitting smoking is not easy, but it can be done. If you are interested in quitting, it is important to take the following steps.<sup>2</sup> First, set a quit date. Second, tell family, friends and co-workers of your plans. Third, anticipate and plan for the challenges you'll face while trying to quit. Fourth, remove cigarettes and other tobacco products from your home, car and work. And finally, talk to your health care provider about getting help to quit. Obviously, if you don't smoke now, don't start and be sure to avoid secondhand smoke.



## Be physically active

Being physically active is very important to good health.<sup>3</sup> In fact, incorporating physical activity into your daily schedule will help you to feel better and work better. To get the most health benefits from physical activity, you need at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity activity each week, like brisk walking or dancing. It's also recommended to do muscle-strengthening activities, like weightlifting or body weight exercises at least two days a week. Remember, even if you find it difficult to move around, doing some activity is better for you than doing none. Focus on what you can manage and aim to build up gradually; add small changes lead to big payoffs.



## Have good nutrition

Being overweight and obesity have become major health problems. To help manage your weight consider making adjustments to your diet.<sup>4</sup> Like the recommendations for being physically active, small changes can also lead to great improvements.

In fact, a weight loss of 5-10% can significantly reduce risk factors for certain diseases like heart disease and diabetes.<sup>5</sup> Fill half your plate fruits and vegetables, focus on whole fruits, make half your grains whole grains, watch your portion sizes and try to limit fast food.

## Zz Sleep well

Sleep is just as important to good health and wellness as a good diet and exercise.<sup>6</sup> It affects your waking hours, engagement with work and overall quality of life. Insufficient sleep has been linked to several chronic diseases and conditions. When you sleep, your body and brain work hard to repair cells and fight illness. The amount of sleep that you get each day is important and the quality of that sleep is essential. Prioritizing good sleep is good self-care.



## Keep stress levels low

Stress is a normal part of life, and how you respond to it can impact your health.<sup>7</sup> Some stress is positive like when you deliver a speech and it goes over well; it was a challenging stress, but also rewarding. However, stress can also be negative and something you try to fight off or avoid. If the negative threat experience becomes chronic, stress can hurt your physical and mental health. There are tools that can help manage a stress response that is creating pain or suffering. It's important to be physically active, eat healthy foods, enjoy friendships and do everything you can to maintain a positive outlook on life.

1 CDC National Health Report Highlights – [cdc.gov/healthreport/publications/compendium.pdf](https://cdc.gov/healthreport/publications/compendium.pdf), accessed Jan. 29, 2021. 2 Get Help Quitting Tobacco – [cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco.html](https://cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco.html), accessed Jan. 29, 2021. 3 Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Move Your Way – [health.gov/moveyourway](https://health.gov/moveyourway), accessed Jan. 29, 2021. 4 U.S. Department of Agriculture. My Plate – [myplate.gov](https://myplate.gov), accessed Jan. 29, 2021. 5 CDC Healthy Weight, Nutrition, and Physical Activity. Losing Weight – [cdc.gov/healthyweight/losing\\_weight/index.html](https://cdc.gov/healthyweight/losing_weight/index.html), accessed Jan. 29, 2021. 6 American Sleep Association. What is Sleep and Why is it Important? – [sleepassociation.org/about-sleep/what-is-sleep](https://sleepassociation.org/about-sleep/what-is-sleep), accessed Jan. 29, 2021. 7 American Psychological Association. Healthy Ways to Handle Life's Stressors – [apa.org/topics/stress/tips](https://apa.org/topics/stress/tips), accessed Jan. 29, 2021. The activities referenced are in no way sponsored or endorsed by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska and participation in any such activities is wholly voluntary and at your own risk. All information presented here is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment for specific medical conditions. You should seek prompt medical care for any specific health issues and consult your physician before starting a new fitness program. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. 60-100 (01-28-21)