




Be healthy

stay healthy



To be healthy is more than just not being ill. To be healthy means to feel well in body and mind and also socially. We can do a lot for our health through our everyday actions. Some important areas in which women can further and maintain their own health and that of their children are detailed below:

Plenty of exercise



In order to stay healthy, our body needs regular exercise.

Walking, cycling, climbing stairs and doing sports are important not only for children, but also for us adults. Every day we should activate our breathing and our pulse for at least half an hour.

Children have a great need for movement and exercise and they love it. The less we inhibit them the better. It is great if they learn that exercising belongs to everyday life.

How do I like to exercise?

How often do I walk per day? Do I climb the stairs or do I often take the elevator?

Do I do any sports?

Where do my children have the possibility to move about and run around?

How often do I do without the car for a better health?

Do we sometimes go outside on the weekends to a place where the children can run around?

Feeling content and balanced



Contentedness and balance are inner forces which help us cope with the difficulties in our lives.

Our contentedness and balance are influenced by outer circumstances. But we are mainly responsible for them ourselves. If we expect other people to make us feel content, we make ourselves dependent on others.

How do I feel when I am content?

What gives me a feeling of satisfaction?

What can I do whenever I feel unhappy, out of balance or restless?

What helps me regain my balance?

Eating healthily



Eating healthily is more than just feeling full. A balanced diet helps our bodies to remain healthy.

It is very important that we eat fruit and vegetables daily and drink unsweetened drinks. Too many greasy meals and sweetened drinks harm our bodies.

Not only what we eat is important. Eating healthily also includes a good atmosphere at the family table.

Children must also learn to eat healthily. For this they need the support and the example of their parents.

How do I enjoy a meal?

How often do we eat fruit and vegetables at home? Do we drink enough water and unsweetened tea?

What could my children eat for breakfast in order to concentrate better at school?

How often does the family eat together?

Do we switch off the TV and the cell phones during meals so that we can talk without interruption?

To be content with one's looks



A person's beauty and self confidence depend more on one's personality than on appearance.

If someone is content with one's looks, other people will perceive this person as beautiful, too.

What do I like about my looks?

What does beauty mean to me?

Do I sometimes smile at myself, when I look into a mirror?

How well do I look after my body?

Am I influenced by my environment and by fashion?

Being part of a family



The sense of belonging to a family can give us a feeling of security and safety. Never mind whether a small or a large family is concerned: each member of the family has his or her own personality. A good family life depends on mutual sympathy, understanding and reciprocal esteem. People I like and with whom I spend a lot of time can become like family to me.

What is important to me in my family?

Can we listen to, understand and esteem each other?

How often do we do something together?

What would I like to change in my family so that we can be more comfortable with each other?

Having friends



We do need people outside the family whom we like to meet, whom we trust, with whom we can laugh and who will comfort us when we are worried.

Positive encounters with other people do not always depend on words. Communication is also possible with a smile or a friendly gesture.

Are there people outside my family in whom I trust?

How could I get to know my neighbor better?

How can I find a friend?

What is important in a friendship?

What can I contribute to maintain a friendship?

Brushing one's teeth



Dental hygiene begins before the nursing's first tooth appears. Sugar in the bottle and constant suckling of the baby bottle harm the health of the child and make teeth rot quickly.

The teeth of very small children should be brushed at least once a day.

Children should learn that brushing one's teeth after a meal is part of the daily routine – not only for them, but also for teenagers and adults like us.

How do I get my children to brush their teeth after every meal?

Who can show me how to brush the teeth of a nursing?

How do I look after my teeth?

Do we drink water or sweetened drinks at home? Do we eat a lot of sweets?

What kind of snacks and drinks for children do not harm their teeth?

Caring for my back



Back aches are one of the most common physical problems in our society. Many of us sit far too much and do not exercise enough. The most important rule to prevent back aches: be active and exercise!

While working hard physically, it is important to heed a good posture: if we bend our knees and lift heavy loads with a straight back and close to our bodies, we take care of our backs. The same applies for shopping, doing housework and being with children.

When standing or sitting it helps to do a loosening up exercise every now and then. Back ache can also have its source in emotional strains.

How do I lift heavy things?

Do I change my position deliberately while sitting for a longer period of time or do I stand up for a short while?

Do I find possibilities to relieve the strain on my back during the day?

Do I know any loosening up exercises?

Do I wear comfortable shoes?

Sufficient money to live on



In our society money is often treated as an equivalent of happiness. We think if we could buy this and that we would be happy. How long does such a bought happiness last? What is really important in life? Money is not everything. We are all happy, however, if enough of it is around for everyday needs. If there is not enough money around to live on, communities and budget advisory offices can help. Even children and adolescents growing up in this society are encouraged to buy things. With our support and through our example they learn to prioritize and accept limits.

How do we in our family decide what we use our money for?

How can I support my children so that they learn to spend money carefully?

Do my children get their fixed pocket money weekly or monthly or do they come and beg for money repeatedly?

Do I, too, have a fixed amount that I can spend as I wish?

Dreams and wishful thinking



Dreams and wishful thinking sometimes help us flee from our daily lives. They are a realm that solely belongs to us. They can also be an incentive to change something in our lives.

However, if dreams and wishful thinking take up too much space in our lives they can prevent us from recognizing, nursing and strengthening the good things in our daily lives.

Sometimes we transfer the dreams we could not fulfil for ourselves onto our children, thereby hindering their development and their journey through life.

Do my dreams and wishful thinking help me get on in life?

Are my dreams and wishes so big that they seem beyond reach?

Is there anything in my daily life that will get me a little closer to my dreams? How can I realize that?

Do I give my children space for their own dreams in life or do I want them to realize my unlive d dreams?

Relaxing every now and then



Family, children, work, and maybe also worries and home-sickness: a lot of pressure and stress can accumulate. It is important to allow ourselves a break every now and then and do something for our very own relaxation.

It is not enough to wait and see until pressure and stress go away. We have to be active and do something for our relaxation and recuperation. The first step is taking some time for ourselves everyday - even if it is only a few minutes. For example take a walk, sing, dance, read, have a bath, breath deeply, lie down for a moment...

When do I take a break?

What do I do when I feel stressed?

Which forms of relaxation have I tried yet?

What helps me most to relax and recuperate?

Ensure safety and avoid accidents



We cannot safeguard against all dangers in life. And yet there are areas where we can do very much for the safety of our children and even for our own, too.

A quarter of all accidents in Switzerland occur in the household: climbing on rickety chairs, tripping over a vacuum cleaner's flexible hose and so on...

Another important area is traffic. From very early on children must learn to use pedestrian crossings, not to cross the road when the light is red and not to play ball on the sidewalk. Again and again we have to explain these rules to our children and keep repeating them – also through our example.

• In what areas could I pay more attention to my safety and that of my children?

• Do I sometimes climb on a rickety chair when cleaning the windows?

• Do I sometimes cross the street where there is no pedestrian crossing, although my children are with me?

• Do my children have a place where they can play away from traffic?

Live my sexuality the way it is okay for me



Sexuality is something very personal. Everybody experiences it differently and every person has different needs. Sex should not be a duty, but be pleasurable. Healthy sexuality lives from tender words, fleeting bodily contacts, time, attention and respect – attention and respect towards ourselves as well as towards our partner. Otherwise we risk passing over our own needs and wishes and we will not protect our physical and psychological health. In a relationship I am protected against HIV if my partner and I myself are faithful to each other or if we protect ourselves by using condoms.

Can I live my sexuality in a way that is okay with me?

Can I talk to my partner about my sexual fantasies?

How do I protect myself against sexually transmitted diseases?

Can I talk to my children about sexuality? And when they grow older also about contraception and HIV? If not, who could do that for me?

Detect diseases in time



Women should regularly see their gynecologist for a check-up. Depending on the insurance a regular check-up is paid by the insurance either once a year or every three years.

Such a check-up is a good occasion to get answers to questions concerning sexuality, contraception and sexually transmitted diseases.

The gynecologist also demonstrates how to check your breasts on your own. Women should regularly check their breasts for unusual changes.

Early recognition of a disease means it can be treated more easily.

Do I regularly go for a check-up to my gynecologist?

Do I know how to check my breasts to recognize unusual changes? If not, where can I get information?

Where and how do I get information in my own language, if I am not fluent in the local idiom?

Have satisfying work



Whether we work at home as a housewife and mother or have a professional job: the happiness we derive from what we do does not only depend on the job we do, but also on our attitude towards it. Do we do our job with fervor and self confidence? Are we bored? Or are we stressed and it is too much for us? Do we get appreciation for our work?

It is not a matter of course to have work and to have a satisfying job. Sometimes wishful thinking and reality are far apart. This is a difficulty, but fretting about it does not get us any further. It is much more worthwhile thinking about bettering one's chances in the job market. Maybe a language course in the local idiom or some kind of further education might help.

Do I like my job?

Whether in the household or in a job: is my work appreciated?

What can I do to like my present job better?

How can I increase my chances in the job market?

Refreshing sleep



The hours of sleep a person needs to feel rested in the morning differ from individual to individual. It is important that we take our individual needs seriously and adapt our day-and-night-rhythm accordingly for as much as we can.

Stress, noise and light can impede a refreshing sleep. Exciting and frightening movies can disturb sleep – especially in children.

Regular sleeping hours and little rituals when going to bed help adults and children to get a restful sleep.

Am I refreshed when I get up in the morning?

What can I change to get enough sleep?

What simple means do I know to fall asleep more easily or to sleep through the night?

Do my children go to bed early enough and do they get enough sleep to be able to concentrate in school?

Feel respected and prevent violence



There are different forms of violence: psychological, physical and sexual. Violence harms people – even if somebody is not directly affected by it, but has to see how another person is humiliated or hit.

Children watch very carefully how adults deal with conflicts. If parents debate and respect each other even during arguments, children see and learn that problems can be solved without violence.

Children whom adults take seriously and respect can learn to treat other people respectfully and do not have to settle quarrels with their fists. Humiliation, blows and threats are no educational methods.

In larger towns throughout Switzerland you can find houses which offer refuge to battered women, where women with their children can go when they are exposed to violence.

How do I react if someone treats me without respect or humiliates me?

What do I do if a friend of mine tells me that her husband beats her? Where can she get help?

What can I do if my child does not obey?

How do my children learn to treat other people with respect?

Treat yourself and your unborn child well



Even nowadays, when people discover the universe, a birth is a great miracle. A pregnant woman can do a lot to give her child a good start into life. By eating healthily, exercising sufficiently and saying no to alcohol and smoking, she takes good care of herself and of her child at the same time. Throughout the birthing process the woman has to be surrounded by people who support her and make her feel secure. It pays to plan this event early on.

Who can help me with my questions concerning pregnancy and birth?

What do I have to take care of during this period?

Do I have information on birthing classes in my area?

How can the guidance center for mothers and fathers help me?

Handling drugs and the media responsibly



We all know that illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco are bad for our health. Medication can make us dependent on it as do for example excessive use of television, computer games or the internet.

Whatever we consume: it is important to keep a responsible eye on the amount of what we consume – ourselves as well as our children.

It is an alarming signal if I try to hide my consumption from my family or other people.

How often do my children watch TV, play computer games or surf the internet? What about us adults?

How do I set up rules about these things with my children?

Do I find the right amount for the consumption of tobacco, alcohol or medication? Where do I find help if this is difficult for me?

Do I keep my children away from cigarette smoke?

Get the right kind of help for health problems



A lot of what our grandparents knew about healing illnesses is still valid nowadays. We do not have to see a doctor for a cold, but we should not postpone a visit for long, if we have more disturbing symptoms.

A family doctor knows us and our children and he knows when it is time to see a specialist.

The emergency center is the right place to go with acute symptoms, in very serious or life threatening situations.

There are experts for the problems of the psyche or difficulties with our children. To look for help in a difficult situation is a sign of courage and responsibility.

Do I know simple remedies for slight illnesses or light colds? (tea, compresses and so on)

Do I have a family doctor whom I trust?

When do I go to a drug store, the family doctor, the specialist or the emergency center with an illness?

Do I take my own illnesses as serious as those of the other family members?

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FemmesTISCHE - Women's Tables with expatriates

Exchange of views in the living room

6-8 women meet at a host's apartment to discuss - in their own language - questions which affect their lives. FemmesTISCHE are chaired by female presenters with various cultural backgrounds. FemmesTISCHE are attended free of charge. There are also discussion groups where women from different cultures meet and talk in the local idiom. A film usually introduces the topic in question.



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