



# TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

Take these steps to stay healthy in between health care provider visits:



## Follow up

- ▶ Keep a list of instructions that your health care provider gave you during your last visit
- ▶ Make sure you follow the instructions completely



## Keep a list for your health provider

- ▶ in between visits and bring it to your next visit. Include:
  - ▶ Concerns that you may be experiencing
  - ▶ Symptoms: How often they occur, when you experience them, what makes you feel better or worse
  - ▶ Medications that you take, including prescription medications; over-the-counter medications, such as pain relievers; and health maintenance medications, such as multivitamins and dietary supplements
  - ▶ Questions that you think of between visits



## Get your blood pressure checked<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ Reduces your risk of heart disease, stroke, and kidney failure
- ▶ High blood pressure has no signs or symptoms
- ▶ Frequency: Every time you visit your health professional, or at a minimum, every two years for adults<sup>2</sup>



## Get your cholesterol checked<sup>3</sup>

- ▶ High cholesterol can cause a heart attack or stroke
- ▶ High cholesterol has no signs or symptoms
- ▶ Frequency: Generally every five years; some may need to check more or less frequently based on your health professional's recommendation

...continued on reverse



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### Get consistent physical activity and do it without sustaining injury

- ▶ Engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Engage in muscle strengthening that involves all major muscle groups at least two days per week<sup>4</sup>



### Monitor and manage your weight

- ▶ Eat a variety of nutrient dense foods, engage in regular physical activity, and maintain a positive mindset
- ▶ Weight management can help you avoid developing heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and some types of cancer<sup>5</sup>



### Eat healthy

- ▶ Limit high fat foods and eat the recommended number of servings from the five food groups (fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein)
- ▶ The benefits of eating fruits and vegetables include disease prevention, weight loss, and workout recovery<sup>6</sup>



### Live tobacco free

- ▶ Tobacco use is dangerous to your health and seriously impacts readiness
- ▶ If you use tobacco, take steps to quit
- ▶ Avoid alternative tobacco products too – they can cause some of the same negative health effects as smoking cigarettes



### Decrease alcohol consumption

- ▶ Alcohol use can hinder judgment and lead to harmful risk-taking behavior
- ▶ Excessive alcohol use includes heavy drinking, binge drinking (five or more drinks in one sitting for men or four or more drinks in one sitting for women), underage drinking, and drinking while pregnant<sup>7</sup>



### Practice safe sexual health

- ▶ Establish and be faithful in a long-term, mutually-monogamous relationship
- ▶ Talk with your doctor about the most effective contraception options for your lifestyle and needs
- ▶ Use your chosen birth control correctly
- ▶ Use condoms correctly and every time



### Take care of your psychological and emotional well-being

- ▶ Behaviors that can improve your psychological and emotional well-being include sleep, relaxation, anger management, and stress management
- ▶ Building resilience can help maintain and strengthen your readiness



### Healthy living supports your physical, mental, and social well-being

- ▶ Increases fitness and performance
- ▶ Increases readiness
- ▶ Increases resilience
- ▶ Saves money
- ▶ Improves quality of life

<sup>1</sup> Get Your Blood Pressure Checked. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/doctor-visits/screening-tests/get-your-blood-pressure-checked#the-basics\\_1](http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/doctor-visits/screening-tests/get-your-blood-pressure-checked#the-basics_1). Updated August 2015. Accessed August 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Blood Pressure Screening. TRICARE. <http://www.tricare.mil/CoveredServices/IsItCovered/BloodPressureScreening.aspx>. Updated February 2015. Accessed August 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Get Your Cholesterol Checked. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/doctor-visits/screening-tests/get-your-cholesterol-checked#the-basics\\_1](http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/doctor-visits/screening-tests/get-your-cholesterol-checked#the-basics_1). Updated August 2015. Accessed August 2015.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/pdf/paguide.pdf>. Published October 2008. Accessed August 2015.

<sup>5</sup> The Health Effects of Overweight and Obesity. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/effects/index.html>. Updated June 2015. Accessed August 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Why is it important to eat fruit? United States Department of Agriculture. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/fruits-why.html>. Accessed August 2015.

<sup>7</sup> What is Excessive Alcohol Use? Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/pdfs/excessive\\_alcohol\\_use.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/pdfs/excessive_alcohol_use.pdf). Updated March 2014. Accessed August 2015.