



DIRECTOR–GENERAL DEFENCE HEALTH SERVICE

HEALTH DIRECTIVE NO 246

Note: Director-General Defence Health Service Health Directives are of a permanent nature and remain in force until cancelled. They are reviewed every three years and repromulgated only where a significant change of content is necessary. Publications can be accessed on the Defence Intranet at <http://defweb.cbr.defence.gov.au/home/documents/adfdocs/healthindex.htm>

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AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE HEALTH PROMOTION GUIDELINES

References:

- A. Defence Instruction (General) (DI(G)) PERS 16–18—*Australian Defence Force policy for the Health Promotion Program*
- B. Health Directive (HD) 242—*Australian Defence Force Health Promotion Program*
- C. Health Policy Directive 206—*Obesity*
- D. HD 240—*Prevention and Management of Sexually Transmissible Disease in the Australian Defence Force* (to be issued)
- E. HD 210—*Policy on the Preventive, Clinical and Administrative Management of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus or Hepatitis C Virus Infection*
- F. HD 255—*Physical Fitness in the Australian Defence Force* (to be issued)
- G. Defence Instruction (Navy) PERS 31–9—*Management of alcohol and the prevention and management of alcohol abuse in the Royal Australian Navy*
- H. Defence Instruction (Army) PERS 66–1—*Alcohol Use and the Management of Alcohol Misuse in the Army*
- I. DI(G) PERS 15–1—*Misuse of Alcohol in the Defence Force*
- J. Defence Instruction (Air Force) PERS 4–14—*Use and Abuse of Alcohol in the RAAF*

Introduction

1. The release of the new DI(G) and HD on Health Promotion (references A and B) has seen the implementation of the tri-Service policy on Health Promotion. As a further development to this, health promotion guidelines have been compiled to assist units in further educating personnel regarding preventable risk factors. These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the Annual Health Assessment (AHA) and the Comprehensive Preventive Health Examination (CPHE). They are a guideline only. All staff are encouraged to conduct their own self education and to keep up-to-date with current research on Preventive Health topics.

2. These guidelines can be used by health personnel, patients and commanders to improve the long-term health of all personnel. All personnel are encouraged to further their own education in health topics.

Aim

3. The aim of this directive is to provide health personnel with a readily accessible guide to be used as an adjunct for the lifestyle counselling of members undergoing an AHA or CPHE.

Policy requirement

4. This directive is to be applied across all areas of the Australian Defence Force (ADF). It is to be used in conjunction with HD 242.

Administration

5. This policy establishes tri-Service guidelines for the lifestyle counselling of members regarding the risk factors after the completion of AHA or CPHE. The guidelines are designed to be used to target specific areas after having received formal lifestyle counselling. These guidelines are not to be used to replace formal counselling but are to be used as a take home guide for the member to review at a later stage. Encouragement should be given to personnel to come back with any questions regarding the guides or their specifically targeted condition. The guidelines are contained in [annexes A – I](#).

Conclusion

6. These guidelines are written in accordance with evidence-based best practice. Health professionals are encouraged to establish their own regional liaisons to improve the variety and source documentation, although units are to check the information for currency prior to distribution to ADF personnel. Information can be informally displayed. Units are encouraged to liaise with local Health Promotion organisations as a source of information. Useful web sites are included in [annexes A to J](#).



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Annexes:

- A. [Blood Pressure Guide](#)
- B. [Cholesterol Guide](#)
- C. [Drinking Guide](#)
- D. [Exercise Benefits](#)
- E. [Nutrition Guide—losing weight and staying in shape](#)
- F. [Quit Smoking Guide](#)
- G. [Sexual Health Guide](#)
- H. [Stress Guide](#)
- I. [Sun Safety Guide](#)
- J. [Useful Health Promotion web sites](#)

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BLOOD PRESSURE GUIDE

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the pressure of the blood in the arteries as the heart pumps it around the body.

How is blood pressure measured?

Blood pressure is measured by a sphygmomanometer.

Blood pressure is recorded as two numbers, eg 120/80.

The larger number indicates the pressure in the arteries as the heart squeezes out blood during each beat. It is called the systolic blood pressure.

The lower number indicates the pressure as the heart relaxes before the next beat. It is called the diastolic blood pressure.

It is best to measure blood pressure when you are relaxed and sitting or lying down. Consuming caffeine (cola drinks, coffee, tea or chocolate), smoking, stress and recent exercise can give you a high reading.

What is high blood pressure?

Normal blood pressure: less than 130/85 (ie: systolic less than 130 and diastolic less than 85). This is a guide only.

High normal: between 130/85 and 140/90.

High: more than 140/90. If the level is confirmed as more than 180/110 you have very high blood pressure. (Note: the word 'hypertension' is often used for high blood pressure.)

Why does blood pressure matter?

If the blood pressure remains high it can cause serious problems like a heart attack, a stroke, heart failure or kidney disease. The following increase the risks of serious problems associated with high blood pressure problems: smoking, high blood cholesterol and being overweight.

What can you do if you have high blood pressure?

Lifestyle is very important in helping to control high blood pressure and its associated risks. Your doctor will probably advise you to:

- be a non smoker
- reduce fat (especially saturated fat) intake
- reduce salt intake
- achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- undertake regular physical activity, at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on all or most days of the week
- limit alcohol intake to two drinks or less daily

Take any blood pressure medication exactly as prescribed. Don't stop or change it unless advised to do so by your doctor.

As a commander/manager:

Support physical fitness programs. Not only can they promote unity, but they also have a positive long term affect on the member's wellbeing.

Allow flexibility in work schedules so members have adequate time to pursue their fitness programs. It will pay off in improved productivity and morale.

Be a good role model for your peers and subordinates. Be active and fit yourself.

Encourage non-smoking in the workplace; remember smoking in the workplace is illegal under the occupational health and safety regulations.

References

Australian Family Physician, Journal of The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. October 2001, *Guidelines for preventive activities in general practice* (edition 5). The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

National Heart Foundation, 1999. *High blood pressure, The Facts*. The National Heart Foundation of Australia, Sydney

National Heart Foundation, 1999. *Your blood pressure, Here's the score*. The National Heart Foundation of Australia

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, November 2000. *Pharmacy Self Care Health Information: High Blood Pressure*. Pharmaceutical Society of Australia

Report of the US Preventive Services Task Force, 1996. *Guide to clinical preventive services*, edition 2. Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore

Web sites

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
(see <http://www.aihw.gov.au:8765/query.html?qt=blood+pressure&ws=0&st=1&rq=0&rf=0&qs=&qp=&qm=0&qc=internet&oq=&nh=10&lk=1>)

National Heart Foundation (see <http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/cgi-bin/htsearch/>)

National Heart Foundation (see http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/heart/hw_salt_consumer.html)

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (see <http://www.psa.org.au/>)

CHOLESTEROL GUIDE

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fatty substance made naturally by the body. Some cholesterol comes from food but the body can produce all it needs. High cholesterol increases your risk of heart disease. The daily allowance for cholesterol is 300 mg.

HIGH CHOLESTEROL IS ONE OF THE THREE MAIN RISKS FOR HEART DISEASE. THE OTHER TWO ARE CIGARETTE SMOKING AND HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.

What causes high blood cholesterol?

High cholesterol is mainly caused by eating food high in saturated fats and a lack of exercise. Saturated fats are found in meats and dairy products. Cholesterol is also found in shellfish such as octopus, oysters, crab and lobster.

Source	Food	Cholesterol (mg/serve)
Meat	Fried kidney	295
	Rump steak	216
	Hamburger	189
	Meat pie	93
	Sausage	73
	Grilled chicken leg	190
	Fried chicken breast	110
	Pork chop	170
	Roast lamb	118
Fish	King prawn	283
	Raw tuna	57
	Raw salmon	82
Dairy	Cup of low fat milk	16
Eggs	Egg omelette	458
	Scrambled eggs	336
	Boiled egg	215
	Egg yolk	213
	Egg white	0
Fruit	Avocado	0

Bad cholesterol

LDL Cholesterol (Low Density Lipoproteins) is called bad because it can clog blood vessels, which supply blood to the heart and other areas of the body. This can lead to reduced blood flow to the heart and to a heart attack, or reduced blood flow to the brain and to a stroke.

The Recommended Target Lipid Levels are:

Total Cholesterol < 4 mmol/l
LDL Levels < 2.5 mmol/l
HDL Levels > 1 mmol/l
Triglycerides < 2 mmol/l

(New Heart Foundation Lipid Targets, November 2001, The Medical Journal of Australia, 05 November 2001.)

Good cholesterol

HDL Cholesterol (High Density Lipoproteins) is called good cholesterol.

It can help to unclog the arteries and can be increased by increasing exercise. High HDL levels can be good as long as LDLs aren't high as well.

Triglycerides

Triglycerides are a type of fat, which occurs naturally in the blood.

They are formed from the digestion of fats in food.

Raised Triglycerides increases cardiovascular risk predominantly by reducing the level of HDL (Australian Family Physician, 2001).

What does the 'Ratio' mean?

When a ratio is discussed the information referred to is **HDL : LDL/HDL**.

A good ratio is 1:3.

How can you reduce the bad fats?

Eat less animal based food and more plant based food.

Ten dietary Commandments:

- Eat bread every day (multigrain).
- No day without fruit.
- No cream, no butter.
- Eat more fish and less meat.
- Use olive oil for cooking.
- No day without vegetables (variety).
- Snack on plain, unsalted nuts and fruit.
- Use more fresh herbs and garlic.
- Have a glass of wine with food several days a week (two days abstinence per week).
- Eat in a pleasant environment and enjoy your food.

A diet rich in unsaturated fat substituted for saturated fat is probably the ideal diet. (Australian Family Physician)

It also helps to:

- Limit eggs to two each week.
- Check food labels for fat and cholesterol.
- Take the skin off before you eat chicken or turkey.
- Use egg whites instead of whole eggs.
- Drink skim milk instead of whole milk.
- Use low fat yoghurt or cottage cheese instead of sour cream.
- Limit snack foods such as potato crisps, creamy biscuits, cakes, pastries and chocolates to once a week.

MAKE SURE YOU EXERCISE: 30 minutes or more, most days is ideal. Try brisk walking, swimming, cycling or an activity that you enjoy. Increasing duration of exercise beyond 30 minutes most days will produce additional benefits.

It will also help reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease if you also:

- limit alcohol intake
- limit salt intake
- stop smoking
- maintain a BMI < 25

NOT ALL FAT IS BAD

Mono-unsaturated fats don't tend to raise cholesterol. You can help lower cholesterol by replacing saturated fats with mono-unsaturated fats in low fat meals. Some oils and margarines, olives, avocado, nuts and seeds contain mostly mono-unsaturated fats. **ALL FATS ARE HIGH IN CALORIES.**

Polyunsaturated Fats are found in some oils and margarines, nuts, seeds and fish. These can help lower cholesterol if they replace saturated fats in low fat meals.

As a commander/manager:

- Discourage unhealthy, fattening fund raising sales and food vendors.
- Encourage healthy treats at birthday, farewell functions/afternoon teas: make it a challenge.
- Don't let work become an excuse for poor dietary habits: ie encourage lunch breaks that are long enough so workers aren't rushed.

Benefits:

- Healthy diets lead to healthier brains and bodies, therefore, hopefully a healthier production in the workplace and fewer absences due to illness.
- Promoting a healthy work environment shows that you care, which can improve morale.

References

Australian Dairy Corporation, 1998. *Food Facts: Facts about blood cholesterol and the food we eat.* Australian Dairy Corporation, Port Melbourne

Australian Family Physician, Journal of The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. October 2001, *Guidelines for preventive activities in general practice* (edition 5). The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Lang, J. *Mastering Life.* John Lang and Associates

National Heart Foundation, 1997. *The lowdown on high blood cholesterol.* The National Heart Foundation of Australia, Sydney

National Heart Foundation, November 2001. New Heart Foundation Lipid management guidelines. The National Heart Foundation, Sydney

Report of the US Preventive Services Task Force, 1996. *Guide to clinical preventive services*, edition 2. Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore

Sullivan, D. 2000, *Investigation of lipids: What do the results really mean?* Australian Family Physician March 2000, vol 29, No 3 pp 207-211. Journal of The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Melbourne

The Medical Journal of Australia, 05 November 2001 (vol 175, supplement), *Lipid Management Guidelines—2001.* Journal of the Australian Medical Association

Web sites

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (see <http://afp.racgp.org.au/>)

National Heart Foundation (see <http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/docs/hhd3.htm>)

National Heart Foundation (see http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/prof/08_lipid.html)

National Health and Medical Research Council (see <http://www.yahoo.com/>) search for nhmrc+cholesterol

Australian Department of Health and Ageing (see <http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/food/guide/>)

MD Consult (see <http://home.mdconsult.com/das/patient/body/0/1/5506.html>)

CNN (see <http://www.yahoo.com/>) search for cnn+health+cholesterol+exercise

Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane (see <http://www.uq.edu.au/~mddcarey/index.html>)

DRINKING GUIDE

If you are a man, regular heavy drinking can:

- Shrink your genitals.
- Make you lose body hair.
- Lower your sperm count.

Most **MEN** (70 kg) can only safely manage two standard drinks in the first hour and one drink every hour after that (some men can manage less). **Rethink your third drink.**

If you are a woman, regular heavy drinking can:

- Cause irregular periods and decrease fertility.
- Cause damage to an unborn child.

Most **WOMEN** can only safely manage one drink each hour (some women can manage less). **Rethink your second drink.**

Excessive drinking is more than four drinks a day for men and more than two standard drinks per day for women. Heavy drinking may damage all organs of the body, but it especially damages the liver, stomach, heart and brain. It will cause high blood pressure, gout and pancreatitis (inflamed pancreas).

Examples of a Standard Drink:

A



B



C



D



E



F



A 285 ml of full strength beer

B 1 glass fortified wine (60 ml)

C Approximately 1 nip of spirits (30 ml)

D 1 can (375 ml) of low alcohol beer

E Approximately 1 small glass of table wine (120 ml)

F Approximately 1 schooner of low alcohol beer (425 ml)

Golden rules to avoid hazardous drinking

- Do not drink daily
- Aim for less than 12 drinks per week for men and eight for women
- Have at least two non-drinking days per week
- Change to low-alcohol beer
- Avoid drinking on an empty stomach
- Avoid high-risk situations, such as constant parties
- Mix alcoholic with non-alcoholic drinks

HOW TO HAVE A GOOD NIGHT OUT AND SURVIVE THE MORNING AFTER

Eat something before you go out. You've heard it before, but lining your stomach helps you last the night. You will have more energy too. Good stomach liners include pasta, potatoes, milk and pizza (fattening but better than nothing if you are planning to drink).

Start later. Start drinking later and you'll last longer into the night.

Get home safely and make sure your friends do too. Sort this out at the beginning of the night (you may not be so clear headed later). Perhaps you need to keep your train/bus/cab money separate from your other money so you can afford to get home.

Ending up in a fight or on the street in the cold is not fun and is dangerous. Look after drunk friends because it may be you one day.

If someone passes out:

- Don't leave them alone.
- Make sure they have a clear airway.
- Place them in the recovery position.
- Call an ambulance and stay with them.
- Keep them warm.

Drink lots of water. The dreaded hangover is often related to being dehydrated. Make sure you continue to drink water during the night. Drink two glasses of water every time you have an alcoholic beverage. At least make every second drink a drink of water. Drink more water before you go to bed. If you don't like water use some cordial, soft drink or other fluids, but **do** keep your fluids up.

The next day:

- When you get up **drink more water** ... glasses and glasses of it. You'll be pleasantly surprised how much better this can make you feel.
- Aspirin or paracetamol can help your headache. Gatorade, Powerade or Gastrolyte may help you feel better as they replace glucose and electrolytes lost from the body due to dehydration.
- **Eat:** when you can face it, eat a healthy breakfast/brunch cereal, bananas and citrus fruit or egg on toast. Pack those vitamins back into your body that you have lost. Vitamin C helps the recovery process so citrus fruit is a great idea, or perhaps a vitamin pill.

Did you know? Alcohol can be very fattening! 600 ml of beer = 1 chocolate bar = 600 ml of full fat milk. They all have the same amount of calories/kilojoules.

After you drink alcohol your liver changes it into acetic acid (vinegar). It then passes out of the body in the form of urine.

It takes eight units of water to process one unit of alcohol. That is why alcohol dehydrates you.

Alcohol has been linked to cancers of the throat, mouth and liver. The risk is higher if you smoke as well.

Remember to limit your alcohol intake to the recommended limits.

See relevant Defence Instructions as per below.

As a commander/manager:

- See Defence Instruction (Navy) PERS 31-9—*Management of alcohol and the prevention and management of alcohol abuse in the Royal Australian Navy*, Defence Instruction (Army) PERS 66-1—*Alcohol Use and the Management of Alcohol Misuse in the Army*, and Defence Instruction (General) (DI(G)) PERS 15-1—*Misuse of Alcohol in the Defence Force*. Defence Instruction (Air Force) PERS 4-14—*Use and Abuse of Alcohol in the RAAF* is being reviewed and an upgraded DI(G) is being developed. Note that 'member's are not to commence duty whilst influenced by alcohol or by the effects of previous alcohol consumption'.
- Be alert. Those whom you may not suspect, may have a drinking problem. Most people with a drinking problem will deny it.
- Keep an eye out for accidents in the workplace.
- If alcohol effects work performance it needs to be reported to medical staff.

References

Australian Capital Territory Department of Urban Services, 1998. *What you need to know about the ACT's new drink-driving laws*. Australian Capital Territory Government

Report of the US Preventive Services Task Force, 1996. *Guide to clinical preventive services*, (edition 2) Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore

Defence Intranet (see <http://defweb.cbr.defence.gov.au/dpedpp/alcohol.htm>)

ACT Government (see <http://www.act.gov.au/>)

Health Education Board for Scotland (see <http://www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk/topics/alcohol/index.htm>)

EXERCISE BENEFITS

It is never too late to start exercising. Exercise increases longevity (length of life) and quality of life.

Lack of exercise is a major risk factor in heart and blood vessel (cardiovascular) disease. Cardiovascular disease is Australia's leading cause of death. Obesity is also a major risk factor in cardiovascular disease.

Exercise has many benefits. It can:

- Burn off calories/kilojoules (kj) and help you lose weight.
- Increase your metabolism (the amount of calories/kj you burn in a day).
- Improve and maintain muscle tone.
- Increase strength and endurance.
- Improve movement in muscles and joints.
- Improve circulation.
- Improve heart and lung function.
- Reduce your levels of stress.
- Increase your sense of self-control.
- Increase your ability to concentrate.
- Improve your appearance.
- Reduce your depression.
- Help you sleep better.
- Increase your High Density Lipoproteins (HDL: good cholesterol).
- Reduce the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and cardiovascular disease as well as osteoarthritis and osteoporosis.

Exercise: You need to take it regularly and make it a component of your normal lifestyle. In the Australian Defence Force you need to be able to pass the Physical Fitness Tests to maintain a minimum fitness level.

Helpful Hints:

- Find forms of exercise that you enjoy, that fit your lifestyle and are convenient and affordable. A variety of exercises will help to maintain your interest.
- Consider cycling, walking briskly, or exercising at home.
- Wear appropriate shoes for the chosen activity and update with new sports shoes frequently.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Do errands on foot.
- Go to a gym, spa or exercise class.
- Exercise during a cool period of the day.
- Find a friend to exercise with.
- Take the family on a walk each evening or walk the dog (they need exercise too).
- Drink lots of water. Increase your fluid intake when you are increasing your physical activity.
- Set realistic goals.

You need to find activities that are challenging, exciting and satisfying so you can attain and maintain physical fitness.

It is recommended that healthy individuals engage in a minimum of three to four 20-minute sessions a week. As a guide exercising at 'talking pace' (you work up a sweat but can still hold a conversation) is a good level and as you get fitter, the 'talking pace' increases.

Warming up and cooling down are important parts of exercise. You need to help the body make the transition from rest to activity and back again. It may also prevent injury and soreness. Warm up exercises should be conducted for 10–15 minutes at the beginning of a session. Cooling down should be done until your heart rate gets to 10–15 beats above your resting rate. Stretching is appropriate for cooling down but not for warming up as you may injure cold muscles.

Aerobic exercise can enhance cardiac function, increase HDL (good cholesterol), strengthen bones, and reduce the risk of high blood pressure, diabetes and some forms of cancer. It reduces body fat and improves your sense of well being. Jogging, cycling, brisk walking, aerobic classes and stair climbing are examples. Walking and swimming are good low impact (less chance of injury) physical activities. Running, use of stair climbers and stationary bikes are good for conditioning leg muscles and stationary bikes are easy to use safely.

Strength or resistance training builds muscle strength while burning fat. It helps to maintain bone density and improves digestion. Strength training is beneficial for everyone including people in their 90s. After age 30 everyone undergoes a slow process of muscle wastage and bone demineralisation (osteoporosis). Adding resistance training to an exercise program can reduce or even reverse this process. Personnel should check with their physician prior to commencing exercise programs.

Approach fitness leaders, military fitness trainers, physical fitness instructors or medical staff for professional fitness advice.

It is recommended you replace fluid loss (water) during and after exercise. Your urine should be running almost clear. If not, drink more water. **If you are thirsty you may already be dehydrating. You must remember to drink even when you are not thirsty. Water is the best choice for replenishing body fluids.**

Sedentary people who suddenly engage in intense exercise may place their body under considerable stress. This may lead to injury or in some cases severe injury and death. The most effective preventive tactic is to seek medical advice at the first sign of any symptoms such as irregular heart beat, undue shortness of breath, chest pain or weakness. Sedentary people should build up exercise intensity gradually.

As a commander/manager:

You are responsible for ensuring that your staff are maintaining their health and fitness for deployment.

Take action to promote good health and prevent ill health. This makes good business sense to all commanders/managers.

Provide the time and encouragement for regular physical activity. This will help to improve your workers well being and performance both physically and mentally.

Encourage individuals to take a lunch break and participate in physical activity, making sure they are given adequate time to exercise and shower. Provide time within work hours.

Allow certain times for physical activity such as a late start or early finish. Encourage members to be present. Be there yourself and ensure that activities are well coordinated within a well designed program.

References

Active Australia, 1998. *Getting Started*. Active Australia

Australian Family Physician, Journal of The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. October 2001, *Guidelines for preventive activities in general practice* (edition 5). The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Heart Foundation, 1999. *Be Active Every Day*. Australian National Heart Foundation, Sydney

Heart Foundation, 1998. *How to have a Healthy Heart*. Australian National Heart Foundation, Sydney

Lang, J. *Mastering Life*. John Lang and Associates

Report of the US Preventive Services Task Force, 1996. *Guide to clinical preventive services*, edition 2. Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore

Australian Sports Commission (see <http://www.ausport.gov.au/>)

National Heart Foundation (see <http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/>)

National Heart Foundation (see http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/prof/docs/promo_physi_act.htm)

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (see <http://www.racgp.org.au/>)

Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane (see <http://www.uq.edu.au/~mddcarey/index.html>)

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NUTRITION GUIDE—LOSING WEIGHT AND STAYING IN SHAPE

Think Health rather than weight.

Why is nutrition important?

In order to maintain a healthy body we must provide it with natural nutrients. As you are probably aware, these are found in fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals and dairy products.

Balance is important. Too much or too little of one food or nutrient can have adverse effects on health. Variety, balance and moderation are the keys. A healthy diet helps to obtain or maintain a healthy cholesterol and lipid level, reduces the risk of death from stroke and coronary artery disease, may lower blood pressure and may be protective against some cancers.

WHAT SHOULD YOU BE EATING?

- **Carbohydrates:** up to seven serves a day. One serve = one slice bread, 1/2 cup cereal, 1/2 cup cooked pasta/rice.
- **Fruit and vegetables: 'Eat Five a Day':** Aim to eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Use any kind of fruit and vegetables, including fresh, frozen, tinned and natural fruit juices. Eating plenty of these helps to decrease the risk of developing bowel, stomach, mouth and bladder cancer.
- **Dairy:** Two – three portions a day. Choose low/reduced fat. Farmers Best and Pura Light Start Milk taste very similar to full cream, but they are healthier. Children up to two years need full cream/fat varieties. Dairy products are important for Calcium (see Proximate Composition booklet) to prevent bone thinning disease (osteoporosis).
- **Meat, fish and alternatives:** chicken, fish, red meat, eggs, beans and lentils. These are some of the best sources of protein and iron in a healthy diet. You only need a small portion of these: a quarter of a plate each day. Three serves of fish per week are recommended.
- **Fats and sugars:** Minimal amounts. 'Spreadable fruit' is a good alternative to sugary jams and fattening spreads such as peanut butter.

Eat breakfast. Breakfast is vital. It has been proven to increase longevity (length of life). It starts the body's metabolism and gives the body energy to get through the day. It can improve weight loss due to its impact on metabolism. It should be healthy and high in carbohydrates and fibre.

Pack your lunch. This takes time and planning, however, it is the best thing for maintaining a healthy diet at work. You will be less tempted to buy fatty snacks and lunch if you have taken the time and effort to pack your own. Make sure you pack plenty of fruit and low fat snacks such as vita-wheats/crackers with vegemite. Treat yourself with a bite size chocolate bar or a small packet of crisps every now and then (not every day). You will save kilograms and money.

Have alcohol free days. Have as many alcohol free days as possible. Alcohol tends to be consumed with fatty snacks or meals (eg: steak sandwich and chips). It also tends to jump to the head of the metabolic queue and is burnt up in preference to fat. The recommended intake is two drinks a night with two days abstinence (or more) per week. No you can't 'save it up' and have more drinks on one night. Binge drinking has associated health problems.

INPUT VERSUS OUTPUT

If you are to maintain a healthy weight or to lose weight you must consider how much food is going in (Input of Energy) as opposed to how much activity (Output of Energy) you are performing in the day.

NO—ONE NEEDS FRIED FOOD. Grill, steam or wok it.

If you must fry, use a non-stick pan. Use water with a clove of crushed garlic.

If using oil, the non-stick pan will use less oil. Use extra virgin olive oil (the cheap brand is OK).

Saturated fats (found in red meat, butter, cheese, etc) are called bad fats. Perhaps a better term is 'Sometimes food' as you should only eat them sometimes. They make you put on weight, increase the risk of heart disease and raise your cholesterol.

Mono-unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats and fish oils are good fats, which help to keep the skin, hair and nails healthy. The best sources are deep-sea fish such as tuna, Atlantic Salmon and mackerel.

Increase your fibre intake

What is Fibre?

- Fibre is found in plants.
- Soluble fibre is found in vegetables, fruit, legumes, oats, seeds, cereals and supplements. It helps to reduce absorption of cholesterol from the gut and helps with weight control by making us feel full.
- Fibre adds bulk to your faeces (bowel motions) and makes them easier to pass.

Low fibre intake can lead to constipation and haemorrhoids (piles), bowel cancer, diverticular disease (inflammation of the bowel muscle), irritable bowel syndrome, high blood cholesterol levels and being overweight (Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, 2000).

TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING:

- Have a piece of fruit or natural fruit juice with every meal or for snacks.
- Eat at least two portions of vegetables or salads with main meals.
- Eat fish three times a week.
- Eat several serves of carbohydrates each day.
- Use low fat milk, cheese, yoghurts, spreads.
- Eat a handful of nuts each day.

HELPFUL TIPS:

- Drink at least two litres of water, at rest, per day (you need more when you exercise and in a hot climate).
- If you feel like something sweet, chew gum. Sugar free gum is good for your teeth and breath and most other food tastes pretty disgusting when you have a minty mouth.
- If you crave chocolate try a low fat chocolate drink (hot or cold).
- Keep crudité's (raw vegies) in the fridge and dip them in salsa for a TV snack.
- Reduce non-hungry eating. It tends to occur at times of stress, depression or boredom.

QUICK FIX: There is no quick fix. Diet and exercise are the only safe ways to lose weight. Diet should not be a term used to mean a length of time during which you will eat well. Diet should mean permanent healthy eating: a lifestyle behaviour. There have been some medications used for obese people but they have side effects (high blood pressure and heart valve lesions). Even if there was a good 'pill' it would not correct the underlying problem. Weight loss or maintenance of a healthy weight is a lifestyle issue. It needs to be a permanent way of life.

With the extra energy, vibrancy, self esteem and health benefits it is very much worth it.

The benefits of promoting healthy eating as a commander/manager:

- Reduced absence from sick leave.
- Improved performance, mentally and physically, from employees.

How can you encourage Healthy Eating as a commander/manager?

- Discourage the sale of lollies, chocolates and chips from vending machines and/or fund raisers.
- When having a morning tea at work encourage everyone to bring something tasty but low in fat. You'll be surprised what can be bought or made with a low fat content and at how tasty it can be.
- Encourage low fat milk in the brew room/mess.
- Don't let work become an excuse for poor dietary habits: ie: encourage lunch breaks that are long enough so workers aren't rushed.

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Australian Dairy Corporation (see <http://www.dairy.com.au/adcl/>)

National Health and Medical Research Council (see <http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/publications/index.htm>) search for 'nutrition'

Australian Department of Health and Ageing (see <http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/food/guide/>)

National Heart Foundation (see <http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/>). This is an excellent web site with Low Fat Cooking Tips.

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (see <http://www.racgp.org.au/>)

Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane (see <http://www.uq.edu.au/~mddcarey/index.html>)

Dr John Lang (email: thelang@bigpond.com)

QUIT SMOKING GUIDE

It doesn't take long to notice the benefits:

- You may feel a faint tingle as the **circulation returns to the tip of your fingers and toes**. Then, your **blood pressure returns to normal**. It has only been twenty minutes since your last cigarette and your body is already recovering.
- After only eight hours without a cigarette, **oxygen levels in the blood approach normal and the risk of heart attack declines**.
- Twenty-four hours since your last cigarette and **carbon monoxide leaves the body**. Your **lungs clear out the gunge** that has accumulated over the years. Two days without a cigarette and nicotine is no longer detectable in the body. **Your taste and smell improve**.
- Another day without a cigarette and **breathing will become** easier as tubes relax and **energy levels increase**.
- Between two and 12 weeks, **circulation improves** throughout your body and **physical activities become easier**. Depending on how long you've been a smoker, **coughing, shortness of breath and wheezing improve** and function is improved by 5–10%.

If you manage to **stay off the cigarettes for ten years, your risk of dying from lung cancer is half that of your friends who continue to smoke**. People who quit smoking by age 50, have half the risk of dying in the next 15 years compared to those who continue to smoke. (See <http://www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk/topics/topicitles.cfm?topic=smoking>, 22 August 2001.)

- As a non-smoker you are three times less likely to have a heart attack than a smoker.
- As a non-smoker you are less likely to have a stroke and ten times less likely to die of lung diseases.
- Children whose parents don't smoke get fewer coughs, colds, respiratory infections and less asthma than those whose parents do smoke.

Most people are successful giving up 'Cold Turkey', ie: just giving up without trying to cut back on smoking first. If you are having problems, however, Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is available. Medical personnel are also there to help you. Successful quitting may take several attempts—it's worth it, keep trying!

The book called *Allen Carr's Easy Way to Stop Smoking* may be helpful, as it uses a simple and effective approach to help people stop smoking. It is aimed at conditioning the mind to think in different ways using positive motivation strategies.

TOP TIPS TO HELP YOU QUIT:

- **Set a date and time and stick to it**—try to avoid a stressful day. Don't buy cigarettes that will carry you past your last day.
- **Throw your cigarettes away**—don't make it easy to start again. Throw out lighters, matches and ashtrays. Get rid of smells in the car and home.
- **Get support from family and friends**—ask friends and family for support. Ask them not to offer you cigarettes.
- **Spend time with people who don't smoke**—think of yourself as a non-smoker. Don't go places where there are a lot of smokers. Sit in non-smoking areas.
- **Ease the withdrawal symptoms**—you may have withdrawal symptoms such as lack of concentration and irritability. Remember these are only temporary and try to look at them as your body cleansing itself.
- **Take it one day at a time**—concentrate on getting through each day without a cigarette.

- **Break the link that creates the habit**—try to avoid situations that stimulate the habit. After dinner try going for a walk.
- **Keep yourself busy**—read, draw, do a puzzle, make things, knit, sew to keep your hands busy. Eat carrots or celery, chew gum to keep your mouth busy.
- **Take up new activities**—learn a craft, join an exercise group, join a study group, go out with friends, learn relaxation techniques.
- **Reward yourself**—save the money that you would have spent and treat yourself to a holiday, meal or new clothes.
- **Join a quit group**—it may be easier with the support of others.
- **Once stopped, stay stopped**—remind yourself of the health benefits. ‘Just one cigarette’ will be followed by another ...

As a commander/manager:

- Productivity may improve: if you can provide support and encouragement to quit, smokers may take less smoking breaks.
- Discourage smoking. Perhaps you could try to make it policy that smokers may only have breaks when other work members do: ie: morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea.
- Allocate the smoking area to a location which is not near the doors. Non-smokers will not have to passively smoke as they enter and exit the doors and smokers will have to walk further, which may discourage them.
- Encourage workers to take fresh air breaks, not cigarette breaks.

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Health Education Board for Scotland
(see <http://www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk/topics/topictitles.cfm?topic=smoking>)

Best Practice Information: Smoking Cessation (see www.joannabriggs.edu.au/)

SEXUAL HEALTH GUIDE

'Safe sex' is a term used in reference to protecting ourselves from Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD). Many sexual diseases may be dormant in your system and you may be a carrier without knowing it. Because of this your sexual partner may not know if they have an infection. It is therefore important that you protect yourself and your partner by practising safety.

How to have the safest sex:

- Abstain from sex, that is: don't have any sex.
- Maintain a mutually faithful monogamous (one partner) sexual relationship with a partner known to be uninfected.
- Regular use of latex condoms. If you are latex-sensitive, you should use latex-free (polyurethane or lambskin) condoms. These can be ordered on the net by going into a search engine (eg Yahoo) and searching for condoms. Then go into 'shopping' and search for latex-free condoms.
- Avoid sexual contact with casual partners and high-risk individuals (eg commercial sex workers, persons with numerous sex partners, intravenous drug users).
- Avoid high-risk sexual practices such as anal intercourse.
- Oral/genital contact can also transmit STDs such as herpes and gonorrhoea (devices are available to prevent the spread of diseases during oral sex).
- Seek health care as soon as possible after risky behaviour.

If you have sex with multiple partners, casual partners or other people who may be infected you need to use condoms at each encounter and to avoid anal intercourse.

How to use a condom correctly:

- Handle condoms carefully and avoid damage with fingernails or sharp objects.
- Use a new condom for each act of intercourse.
- Place condom on an erect penis before any intimate contact. Unroll it completely to the base.
- Leave a space at the tip of the condom and remove air in the tip by squeezing it.
- Ensure adequate lubrication is used. Make sure you use water based lubricants such as KY jelly, spermicidal foam or gel. Other oils or lotions may cause the condom to break.
- Hold the condom at the base firmly for withdrawal while the penis is still erect so that the condom stays in place.
- Using alcohol or drugs can lead to high-risk sexual behaviour so don't get so out of control that you don't know what you are doing.

You can have tests done for STDs. Just ask your Medical Officer (MO). It is a difficult subject for many people, however it is so important. Your doctor will appreciate that you want to look after yourself and your records will be kept confidential.

Other concerns:

Males:

- **Prostate Cancer.** Screening for prostate cancer (PSA blood test) is not recommended because of the lack of confidence that present treatments improve the prognosis (forecast) of lesions discovered at screening. Treatments available may be a high price to pay in the absence of proven benefit (eMJA Apr00). PSA tests are therefore discouraged as the results may cause unnecessary anxiety. The web site 'Fundamentals of Prostrate Cancer Detection and Treatment' is quite informing.

- **Testicular Cancer** is a very rare condition and has a high cure rate. No benefit has been found from self examination. Those with undescended or shrunken testes may benefit from self examination and screening (RACP *Guidelines on Preventive Health* November 1996).

Females:

- The risk of developing cervical, ovarian and endometrial cancer can be reduced by breast feeding, avoiding tobacco use and avoiding obesity. This is essentially promoting a healthy lifestyle: exercise, eat well to maintain a healthy weight and do not smoke.
- **Pap Smears.** Women aged between 18 and 70 who have ever been hetero-sexually active should have a cervical smear every two years. There is no reason to increase this frequency unless there are clinical or pathological reasons. If you have an abnormal Pap test result it is essential for you to have follow up in accordance with National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines.

If you wish to talk about contraceptives and pregnancy prevention please make an appointment with the MO. You may ask for a female doctor, but this does depend on availability of female doctors in your area.

If you have absolutely any concerns about your sexual health see your MO.

See a doctor if you experience any of the following:

- a. urethral discharge in males;
- b. vaginal discharge in females;
- c. genital ulceration in both sexes;
- d. genital warts; and
- e. rashes, difficulty urinating, pain in joints without swelling, rectal discharge, abdominal pain, scrotal pain, urinary retention, painful or difficult sexual intercourse.

Post Exposure Prophylaxis is available.

For Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Human Immunodeficiency Virus exposure there may be a 'window' period during which interventions may halt or modify viral infection. The main message is to seek medical attention as soon as possible following exposure (Health Directive (HD) 210—*Policy on the preventive, clinical and administrative management of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus or Hepatitis C Virus Infection* and HD 240—*Prevention and Management of Sexually Transmissible Disease in the Australian Defence Force*).

References

HD 210—*Policy on the preventive, clinical and administrative management of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus or Hepatitis C Virus Infection*

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Cervical Screening Program (see <http://www.csp.nsw.gov.au/>)

Family Planning Association (see <http://www.fpahealth.org.au/>)

Men's Health (see <http://www.menshealth.com/sex2/index.shtml>) Lots of useful tips

Fundamentals of Prostate Cancer Detection and Treatment (see <http://www.prostatepointers.org/www/home.htm>)

STRESS GUIDE

What is Stress?

Most of us experience stress in our everyday lives. Stress is a natural reaction to pressure. Some pressure can provide motivation and stimulation. When excessive pressure goes on for too long, however, it can lead to mental and physical ill health such as depression, nervous breakdown and heart disease.

No signs and symptoms of stress should be ignored. Some of these include:

- **Physical.** Headaches, insomnia (sleeping problems), indigestion, high blood pressure, dizziness, perspiration, dry mouth, constipation, diarrhoea, chest pain, nausea, fast heart beats (palpitations).
- **Behavioural.** Poor work performance, poor memory, accidents, dependence on tobacco, alcohol and drugs.
- **Emotional.** Irritability, anxiety, lack of concentration.

Even if you are only experiencing one of the above, or any other problems which you think may be stress related, seek help.

There are several places you can go to for help: medical, you can self refer to the psychologist (these professionals are trained in behavioural management) and the Padre/Priest. All consultations are kept confidential.

Over time if we continue to be anxious, our body's resistance to infection and disease can weaken, making us unwell, leading to further anxiety and depression. It is therefore extremely important to remain active, eat well and look after our body so that it can deal with the mental and emotional strains better.

Helpful tips:

- Remember to breathe. When frustrated take some deep slow breaths and have a drink of water. Go for a little walk and escape the computer/phone/situation for a few minutes. Think healthy and try to get that blood pressure down.
- Get good quality sleep. If you are having problems sleeping, see your doctor. Refer to your 'What Should I do?' booklet.
- Talk to others. Share your feelings with friends and loved ones or with others in a self-help group. If you find it hard to talk to others, take up a sport or hobby. This can help with relaxation and distraction.
- Exercise. Exercise is a great stress management tool. It will increase your stamina and assist you in coping with stressful situations as it increases blood flow to vital organs, such as the heart and brain, which are effected by stress. Fresh air is also healthy for you. It doesn't have to be strenuous. Take a walk, swim, take up yoga.
- If you can keep a problem at a manageable level you have succeeded. Don't expect the problem to go away quickly. Tackle one thing at a time. Be realistic about the expectations you place upon yourself. Learn to say 'no' to other people and set some time aside for YOU.
- Live for the moment: focus 100% on what you are doing at that very moment, whether it is having a coffee, cleaning the house or working.
- Be organised. Happy people tend to be organised, efficient and punctual.
- Learn to like yourself. Say positive sayings to yourself (affirmations). Don't wait for happiness as you'll overlook what you have today and there is always something to be happy about.
- Be happy in your dealings with others even when you don't want to be.

LOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE ADF MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY WEB SITE: <http://www.defence.gov.au/dpe/dhs/mentalhealth/index.htm>

Advantages of stress reduction for a commander/manager:

- Higher morale.
- Happier more stable workplace.
- Improved performance.
- Increased productivity.
- Less probability for accidents.
- Less sickness absences.

As a commander/manager, how you can help:

- Encourage personnel to verbalise problems. Have an open door policy or encourage them to talk to one another.
- Watch staff for signs or symptoms of stress and ensure that all supervisors do the same. Act on instinct and ask a member into your office to discuss how they are going with work and home. Even if they are stressed and don't want to tell you, at least they will appreciate that you care enough to ask. If they do discuss problems and indicate a need for help, then you may have saved them from developing worse problems and you may have prevented a workplace accident.
- Ensure that members are aware of who to seek support from: Chaplains, Psychologists, Medical staff. Consultations with these people are confidential. Members may self refer to a base psychologist, or may get a referral from medical staff.

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Health Works Corporate 2000 (see <http://www.healthworks.com.au/>)

depressioNet (see <http://www.depressionnet.com.au/links.html>). A one step guide for people, families or friends who suffer from depression or mental health issues

Health Education Board for Scotland (see <http://www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk/topics/>) ... see stress topics and anxiety

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (see <http://www.psa.org.au/>)

SUN SAFETY GUIDE

So you want a tan? Tanning in the sun is simply not worth the risk of developing Cancer (Melanoma, Squamous Cell Carcinoma, Basal Cell Carcinoma or Sunspots). Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world ... let's help reduce the statistics.

STAY OUT OF THE SUN during the dangerous times between 10:00 am to 2:00 pm (11:00 am to 3:00 pm daylight saving time), when UVA and UVB rays are the strongest.

This is the most important point. It is the only real way to prevent skin cancer caused from the sun's rays.

SLIP ON A SHIRT

SLOP ON SUNSCREEN AND

SLAP ON A HAT

SLIDE ON A PAIR OF SUNGLASSES. These are often forgotten. Sunglasses help to prevent Pterigiums (ter-rij-ium) which are sun damage to the eyes. They look like white growths on the eye and can grow over the cornea causing blurred vision. If you have a white looking growth in your eye see your doctor. Pterigiums can be removed.

PROTECT YOUR LIPS: USE LIP CREAM/BLISTEX with 30+ Sunscreen (free from your pharmacy/ medical centre). Sunburnt lips are painful, look ugly and are dangerous.

Suspect spots should be seen by a doctor:

- if you have any unusual skin patches, lumps, scaliness, spots, rashes or sores that don't heal within four weeks;
- if you have a mole or freckle that seems to have changed over a period of months; or
- if you have an unusual freckle or mole that is raised, tender of an unusual shape or colour, or if the skin around it is coloured or unusual.

Clouds don't block out UV rays.

If you are sunburnt. Refer to your 'What Should I do?' booklet.

Sunbeds/Solariums. Any use of sunbeds increases the risk of skin cancer. Moderate use of sunbeds, eg once a month is enough to double an individual's annual dose of UV radiation. Weekly use exposes people to six times the annual dose. You can protect yourself from the sun, but there is no safe way to use sunbeds (Health Education Board of Scotland).

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has found evidence that exposure to the sun during childhood and teenage years significantly increases the risk of skin cancer in later life so **PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN.**

IF YOU WANT A TAN GET IT OUT OF A BOTTLE

As a commander/manager:

- Encourage members to use sunscreen if they are working outdoors (it is an occupational health and safety (OHS) issue). It is provided free by medical, so have it readily available.
- Make it policy to wear hats and sunglasses wherever it is safe to do so (OHS).

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Health Education Board for Scotland

(see <http://www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk/topics/>) see 'cancer', then 'documents/publications'

National Health and Medical Research Council (see <http://www.yahoo.com/>) search for 'sun safety'

American College of Preventive Medicine (see <http://www.acpm.org/skinprot.htm>)

Australian Academy of Science (see <http://www.science.org.au/nova/008/008key.htm>)

USEFUL HEALTH PROMOTION WEB SITES

- Australian Cancer Society (see <http://www.cancer.org.au/>)
- Australian Centre for Health Promotion (see <http://www.achp.health.usyd.edu.au/>)
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (see <http://www.aihw.gov.au/>)
- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (see <http://www.health.gov.au/>)
- Internet Journal of Health Promotion (see <http://www.monash.edu.au/health/>)
- National Heart Foundation (see <http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/>)
- National Health and Medical Research Council (see <http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/>)
- New South Wales Department of Health (see <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/>)
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (see <http://www.psa.org.au/>)
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (see <http://www.racgp.org.au/>)
- VicHealth (see <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/>)
- World Health Organisation (see <http://www.who.int/>)
- Yahoo Search Engine (see <http://www.yahoo.com/>) search for relevant topics
 - If you want two topics that are related use the + sign eg: cancer+bowel.