

How Healthy Is Your Lifestyle?

by Amy Scholten, M.P.H.

We all want to live a peaceful, happy and healthy life. We need to follow certain principles to let the body and mind function optimally. A few simple changes in lifestyle, attitude and eating habits can do wonders for our health and how we feel. The following assessment will give you an idea of how healthy your lifestyle is. Please keep in mind that this is a general assessment, not a diagnostic tool. For more information about how to develop good health habits, please see a qualified health care professional.

Directions: Please read each statement carefully and select the answer that's most accurate for you. When finished, interpret your score at the bottom of the page.

- 1. How many hours do you sleep each night?**
 - a) at least 7 hours
 - b) between 5-6 hours
 - c) Less than 5 hours

- 2. How well do you tend to sleep each night?**
 - a) Very well most of the time
 - b) I have a bit of difficulty falling or staying asleep sometimes
 - c) I don't sleep very well – I frequently have difficulty falling or staying asleep

- 3. How many fruits and vegetables do you eat every day?**
 - a) At least 5
 - b) 2-4
 - c) Less than 2

- 4. How often do you eat high fat foods (butter, cream, whole milk, red meat, fried foods, sausage, processed lunch meats)?**
 - a) Rarely
 - b) 1-2 times per week
 - c) 3 or more times per week

- 5. How often do you eat high sugar foods (candy, cookies, pastries, sugary drinks, soda, etc)?**
 - a) Rarely
 - b) 1-2 times per week

c) 3 or more times per week

6. How often do you eat whole grains (whole grain bread, whole grain cereal)?

- a) At least twice a day
- b) Once a day
- c) Rarely or never

7. Do you eat breakfast?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Rarely or never

8. What is your history of tobacco use (smoking or smokeless tobacco)?

- a) I've never used tobacco
- b) I used to use tobacco
- c) I currently use tobacco

9. How often do you get at least 30 minutes of exercise?

- a) At least 5 days a week
- b) 2-4 days a week
- c) Less than 2 days a week

10. How fast do you tend to drive?

- a) I obey the speed limit
- b) I drive slightly over the speed limit (5 miles per hour over the speed limit)
- c) I speed (drive at least 10 miles per hour over the speed limit)

11. Do you have any unsafe driving habits (following too closely, not obeying traffic rules, or driving when intoxicated with alcohol or drugs)?

- a) Yes
- b) Occasionally
- c) Never

12. Do you wear your seatbelt when riding in any vehicle?

- a) Yes – always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Rarely or never

13. Is your weight in the recommended range?

- a) Yes
- b) No – I am overweight (have a BMI of 25.0 to 29.9)
- c) No – I am obese (at least 20 percent above recommended weight or a BMI of 30 or higher)

14. Do you have family and friends available for support when you need it?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Rarely or never

15. Do you practice safe sex (monogamy or use condoms)?

- a) Always (or you don't have sex)
- b) On occasion I have taken a risk
- c) No

16. How well do you take care of your teeth?

- a) I brush at least twice every day, floss, and see the dentist regularly
- b) I'm not always consistent about brushing twice a day, flossing or seeing the dentist
- c) I rarely see the dentist for cleanings and/or don't brush/floss every day

17. Do you get regular health screenings as recommended by your doctor for your age group?

- a) Yes
- b) Some screenings, but not all
- c) No

18. How relaxed do you feel?

- a) Relaxed most of the time
- b) Sometimes I feel overwhelmed by stress
- c) I frequently feel overwhelmed by stress

19. How would you describe your general mood?

- a) Happy most of the time
- b) Sometimes happy
- c) Rarely happy and often either depressed, angry, or anxious

20. How often do you drink alcohol?

- a) 2 or less drinks a day (for men) and 1 drink or less a day (for women)
- b) 3 drinks a day (for men) and 2 drinks a day (for women)
- c) More than 3 drinks a day (for men) and more than 2 drinks a day (for women)

Scoring

Number of a, b, c and d Answers	Point Value for Answers	Total Point Value (multiply total number of a, b, and c answers by their corresponding point value)
Number of a answers:	All a answers = 10 points	
Number of b answers:	All b answers = 5 points	
Number of c answers:	All c answers = 1 point	
		Score (add total of a, b, and c points):

Your Score	Interpretation
20 -70	Poor – Your score suggests that your lifestyle is putting you at high risk for health problems. Your b and especially c answers indicate areas where you need to make improvements.
71-154	Fair – Your score suggests that you have some good health habits but not enough. Review your b and especially c answers to see where you can make improvements.
155-189	Good – Your score suggests that overall, you have good health habits that help protect you from health problems. But remember that there’s still room for improvement, so make note of your b or c answers as areas that need to be changed.
190-200	Excellent – Congratulations! Your score suggests that you are doing a great job with your health habits!

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Biography

Amy Scholten, MPH, has a Master of Public Health in health promotion and education from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Science in food and nutrition from Framingham State College. She is a freelance health writer and has taught stress management at Ithaca College in Ithaca, NY, USA.

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