



## LIFESTYLE MEDICINE FOCUSES ON 6 AREAS TO IMPROVE HEALTH



# LIFESTYLE MEDICINE

Lifestyle medicine is an evidence-based approach to preventing, treating and even reversing diseases by replacing unhealthy behaviors with positive ones — such as eating healthfully, being physically active, managing stress, avoiding risky substance abuse, adequate sleep and having a strong support system.



**NUTRITION** Food is Medicine. Choose predominantly whole, plant-based foods that are rich in fiber and nutrient dense. Vegetables, fruit, beans, lentils, whole grains, nuts and seeds.



**SUBSTANCE ABUSE** The well-documented dangers of any addictive substance use can increase risk for many cancers and heart disease. Positive behaviors that improve health include cessation of tobacco use and limiting the intake of alcohol.

# 6 WAYS TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH



**EXERCISE** Regular and consistent physical activity that can be maintained on a daily basis throughout life – walking, gardening, push ups and lunges – is an essential piece of the optimal health equation.



**STRESS** Stress can lead to improved health and productivity – or it can lead to anxiety, depression, obesity, immune dysfunction and more. Helping patients recognize negative stress responses, identify coping mechanisms and reduction techniques leads to improved wellbeing.

Being mindful of your food choices, managing your stress, being physically active, avoiding risky substance use, getting plenty of sleep and having a strong emotional support system in your life — are “just what the doctor ordered” to powerfully prevent, treat, and, often, even reverse chronic disease and select autoimmune conditions.



**SLEEP** Lack of, or poor-quality sleep can lead to a strained immune system. Identify dietary, environmental and coping behaviors to improve sleep health.



**RELATIONSHIPS** Social connectedness is essential to emotional resiliency. Studies show that isolation is associated with increased mortality. Considering a patient's home and community environment improves overall health.

## LIFESTYLE MEDICINE'S UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

- Allows the body to protect and heal itself by promoting healthful lifestyle choices
- Educates, guides and supports positive behavior changes
- Places a focus on evidence-based optimal nutrition, stress management, sleep and physical activity
- Encourages active patient participation
- Treats the underlying, lifestyle-related causes of disease
- Uses medications as a supplement to therapeutic lifestyle changes
- Considers the patient's home and community environment

The American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) is the nation's medical professional association for physicians, allied health professionals, healthcare executives, and those in professions devoted to transforming health and redefining healthcare through lifestyle medicine.

[lifestylemedicine.org](http://lifestylemedicine.org)