

Maintaining Healthy Behaviour Change

What is it?

Sometimes getting the motivation to change our lifestyle is easy but actually making that change and sticking with it can be almost impossible. However, there are some simple strategies we can use to help us maintain healthy behaviour change.

Set goals

Goals are important as they help us measure success.

We need to have both long term goals (lose 15 kgs) and short term goals (take the stairs instead of the lift three times this week)

Complete these questions:

- What do I want to achieve in the next month?
- How important is it to achieve these goals?
- What do I need to do to achieve these goals?

Get support

Support can make changing your lifestyle easier and keep you motivated.

Some examples of supports include:

- The [Get Healthy Program](#)
- Joining a gym, walking group, sports team, etc.
- Taking the dog with you
- Using a fitness program (paper based or app)
- Set goals with a friend and review each other's progress

Manage setbacks

There will be times when you may get off track.

When this happens, it is important to:

- Not beat yourself up
- Remind yourself why you are making these changes
- Identify what happened and do something about it
- Look at increasing your supports, in particular in the short term when your motivation may be low

Making changes is like a baby learning to walk. There may be some falls, but they get there!

Stay motivated

Maintaining the motivation to stick with lifestyle changes can be hard. It is important to keep fueling this motivation to make sure it does not run out.

Ways to stay motivated include:

- Remind yourself why you are making these changes
- Review the progress you have made (e.g. losing weight, achieving a fitness goal or eating healthier)
- Find ways to reward yourself (such as a massage or new clothes; avoid food rewards)

Learn new habits

The goal of successful lifestyle change is not to make temporary changes, but to reach a new normal. This involves making life-long changes which take time.

You will still be the same person, but now you:

- Follow healthy eating principles
- Enjoy regular physical activity
- Feel healthier and more positive about life

And that sounds like a pretty nice person to be!

Enjoy the benefits

Take the time to notice the changes becoming healthier has given you.

These could be:

- More energy
- Look and feel better
- Greater sense of wellbeing

Making significant lifestyle changes is achievable. Maintaining them is also achievable. Speak to your GP today about options to start making lifestyle changes.