



**Ready... Set... Plan!**

## Route to Health and Wellness

The Route to Health and Wellness helps you know if you are healthy and links your health with having a family.

Do you have a plan for your own family?

Do you want to have children?

Are you healthy enough to have a baby?

Do you have health problems or risk factors that could affect you if you decide to have a baby?

Are there health problems in your family history that could affect you if you decide to have a baby?

Do you know your family health history?

Are You Ready?

### Are You Ready?

### What's Your Plan?

The routes help people make choices about how to have a healthy life and a healthy family.

## Ready, Set, Plan! Routes

Ready, Set, Plan! (RSP) takes three routes to a healthier life and a healthier family.

1. Health and Wellness Route
2. Emotional Health and Wellness Route
3. Planning A Family Route

All of the routes share the same goal of bringing people together to talk about the importance of family health and family planning in community-based conversations.

All of the routes ask the questions “Are You Ready?” and “What’s Your Plan?” The “Are You Ready?” questions focus on choices people make that impact their health and the health of their families. The “What’s Your Plan?” questions prompt people to make decisions on what they can do to be healthier.

The training materials you receive will give you different ideas on how to talk about each of the routes. You can present the routes in any order. You might want to focus on the Emotional Health Route first or only the Planning A Family Route. That’s up to you. Ready, Set, Plan! is your project. We encourage you to use the training materials in your own way.

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## Types Of Activities

- Discussion
- Learn More
- Presentation
- Reflection
- Writing

### Use These Activities

You can use these activities to expand your Routes Flip Chart Presentation and as a way to start discussions. The activities are designed to stand alone and can be used over a period of weeks or months.

### Writing Activity

#### Materials Needed

- *My Health Journal*
- *Body Maintenance Manual*

### One Place

This activity will help participants begin to think and plan where they can keep all of their health information together in an easy-to-remember place.

Have you ever had an appointment with your doctor and could not remember when you had a pelvic exam or your cholesterol checked? Or can you recall the names of all the doctors you have seen the last few years?

Tracking and keeping up with your health history is important. It can give you the power to stay on top of your health and to prevent certain illnesses. With our lives so busy with work, school and family activities, keeping track of health exams, tests and screenings can be difficult.

Your new *My Health Journal* or *Body Maintenance Manual* allows you to keep your health history in one place. It is also very informative and explains reasons for many of the screenings and tests that everyone needs to stay healthy. These materials are where you can keep your test results, family history, track your healthcare visits, write your health questions, set your health goals and think about a healthy you.

Develop a relationship with your healthcare providers. They will decide when you need your preventive screenings and immunizations. Always ask questions. Share your concerns. Take your journal every time you visit your healthcare provider.

Hand out the *My Health Journal* to the women and the *Body Maintenance Manual* to the men.

Ask them to complete the Personal Information Section.

Now, ask your group, "Where are you going to keep your health journal so you can remember where it is and to use it?"

## Route to Health and Wellness

### Dear Me

Ask the group to get out their RSP Action Plan handouts or hand out paper and pencils.

Ask them how they define health. Take answers from several volunteers.

Then share your definition of health explained below.

**Health is defined as being completely well — physically, mentally and socially.**

Tell the participants to:

Use your RSP Action Plan handout or paper and write a letter to yourself five years from now. In your letter, tell yourself about a part of your health that you need or want to improve. Tell yourself how you intend to improve your health. Tell yourself where you intend the state of your health to be in five years.

Take time to write this letter and put it in a safe place so that you can read it three months from now.

### Writing Activity

#### Materials Needed

- RSP Action Plan handout or paper

### Discussion

#### Materials Needed

- RSP Action Plan handout or paper
- RSP Flip Chart

## Checkup Challenge

Regular checkups are essential to preventing health challenges and are an extremely important part of taking care of your health. Checkups find and treat minor problems before they become major ones. **There are 10 checkups that are recommended for women and men to get on a regular basis.** Schedule yours today!

#### Screenings And Tests Include The Following:

- 1. Physical Exam** – You need regular physical exams to check your overall health. Ask your doctor how often you need them.
- 2. Blood Pressure Check** – Measures the force of your blood when your heart beats (systolic) and when your heart rests (diastolic). High blood pressure can lead to heart attacks, stroke, loss of eyesight and kidney damage. High blood pressure doesn't always have symptoms or signs.
- 3. Cholesterol Test** – Cholesterol is needed to help your cells grow. But high levels can put you at risk for heart disease. If your level is higher than 200, ask your healthcare provider what you can do to lower it. Ask if you need this test when you schedule your physical exam.
- 4. Diabetes (Blood Sugar) Test** – Diabetes is a disease in which your blood glucose, or blood sugar level is too high. High blood sugar can harm your heart, kidney, nerves, blood vessels and eyes. Talk to your healthcare provider about your risk for diabetes. Ask if you need a glucose test.
- 5. Pelvic Exam, Breast Exam And Pap Test** – A pelvic exam looks at the health of your ovaries, uterus, vagina and rectum. A breast exam looks for lumps that could be cancer. A pap test looks for cancer of the cervix. You need a pelvic exam, a breast exam and a pap test every one to three years. Your doctor will tell you how often is right for you. You may get these exams as part of your physical exam. Or you may get them from an obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN).

### Checkup Challenge (continued)

**6. Mammogram (X-ray of Breast)** – You usually need your first mammogram at age 40. Ask your healthcare provider if you need a mammogram earlier.

**7. HIV/AIDS And Other Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI)**

**Tests** – If you have any HIV or STI risk factors you should be tested. Talk to your healthcare provider if you are at risk.

**8. Eye Exam** – You need an eye exam every two years. You should see your eye doctor more often if your vision changes or if you have high blood pressure, diabetes or heart disease.

**9. Dental Exam** – You should see your dentist at least twice a year for cleanings, preventive care and treatment. Your dentist will check you for gum disease which is also known as gingivitis. You can take daily steps to maintaining a healthy mouth by brushing your teeth after every meal and flossing daily.

**10. Testicular Self Exam** – Monthly starting at age 18, if recommended by your healthcare provider.

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### You Also Need To Stay Current On Your Immunizations.

#### Write down the date you get each shot or dose of vaccine.

- Influenza - need one every year
- Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Td/Tdap) - ages 11-18: one dose of Tdap is recommended. After 18: get a Td every 10 years, one should be a Tdap
- Human papilloma virus (HPV) - three-dose series recommended for females 11 through 26 years of age
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) - at least one dose if born after 1956, some may need a second dose
- Chicken pox (varicella) - need two doses if you haven't had chicken pox
- Hepatitis A - two-dose series recommended for anyone at high risk for Hepatitis A or those who want to be protected
- Hepatitis B - three-dose series recommended for anyone at high risk for Hepatitis B or for those who want to be protected

## Discussion

### Materials Needed

- *My Health Journal*
- *Body Maintenance Manual*

## What's Your Type (Blood Type)?

### My Blood Type

Do you know your blood type? You should. Knowing your blood type could save time if you ever have to have an emergency blood transfusion. Just like many other things, your blood type is inherited from your mother and your father. If you don't know your blood type, ask your healthcare provider to check it for you.

### Possible Blood Types

O+   O-   AB+   AB-   A+   A-   B+   B-

### Sickle Cell Anemia (uh-NEE-me-uh)

What is sickle cell disease? Sickle cell disease is a group of related inherited blood disorders. It is passed from mothers and fathers to their children. Sickle cell disease affects the main protein inside the red blood cells called hemoglobin. Hemoglobin in the red blood cells carries oxygen from the lungs and takes it to every part of the body. The main hemoglobin in the red blood cells of people with sickle cell disease is not normal.

Normal red blood cells move easily through the body because they are soft, round and smooth. With sickle cell disease, red blood cells become hard, sticky and shaped like crescents or sickles. The sickle shape of the red blood cell makes it difficult for them to move through small blood vessels. When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. This blockage prevents red blood cells from transporting oxygen to the body and results in a shortage of red blood cells or anemia and damage to tissues and organs.

A simple blood test can let you know if you have sickle cell disease or if you can pass the sickle cell gene on to your children. You can be tested for free at your local health department. Call the CARE-LINE (1-800-662-7030) for more information.

### Health History

The days of seeing the same doctor from birth to age 21 are gone. It is important to share your health history with all your healthcare providers.

Use your *My Health Journal* or *Body Maintenance Manual* to:

- track all of the medications you currently take.
- record your most recent hospital stays and surgeries.
- record your blood type.
- write the dates you received immunizations.

Make sure you take advantage of all the space given to record your health history.

- Write down any of your health problems or concerns.
- Record any over-the-counter medicines you take.
- List any home remedies, herbal medicines or teas you use.
- List any medicines that you are allergic to.
- Do you have any other allergies? Write them down.

We are human and quite often we forget dates and details. That's why it is very important to have a record of your health history on hand.

### Learn More

Chance to:

- Share more information on the importance of tracking and monitoring personal health history.
- Coach participants on ways to track and monitor personal health history.

### Materials Needed

- *My Health Journal*
- *Body Maintenance Manual*

### Discussion

#### Materials Needed

- *My Health Journal*
- *Body Maintenance Manual*
- My Family Tree handout

### Family History

Heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure and other diseases like sickle cell anemia can run in families. When you see a healthcare provider for the first time, he or she will want to know your family history. Knowing your extended family's health history allows your doctor to tell you what diseases you are at risk of having and monitor you better for those risks.

Understanding that you could be at risk for certain illnesses gives you the chance to take steps to prevent various diseases.

Ask participants to write in the *My Health Journal* or *Body Maintenance Manual* in the section entitled "My Family Health History." Explain that in this section they should write down important health information for close family members.

Participants could also use the My Family Tree handout to log their family's health history and theirs. A sample of the handout can be found on page 12 of this route.

### My Family Tree

Ask participants to look in their *My Health Journal* on page 11 at the section entitled, “My Family Health History” in their *Body Maintenance Manual* on page 3 at the section entitled “Vehicle History Report.” Explain that in this section they should write down the important health information of close family members.

OR

### Planting The Family Tree

Pass out The Family Tree handout (see the next page).

Ask participants to think about their mother’s and father’s side of the family.

Also ask them to think about their brother’s and sister’s health.

Ask participants to fill in as many names as they can on their family tree.

Ask participants to check the diseases that have affected each side of their family. Remind everyone to talk with their family members to get more information that allows them to fill in their family tree more completely.

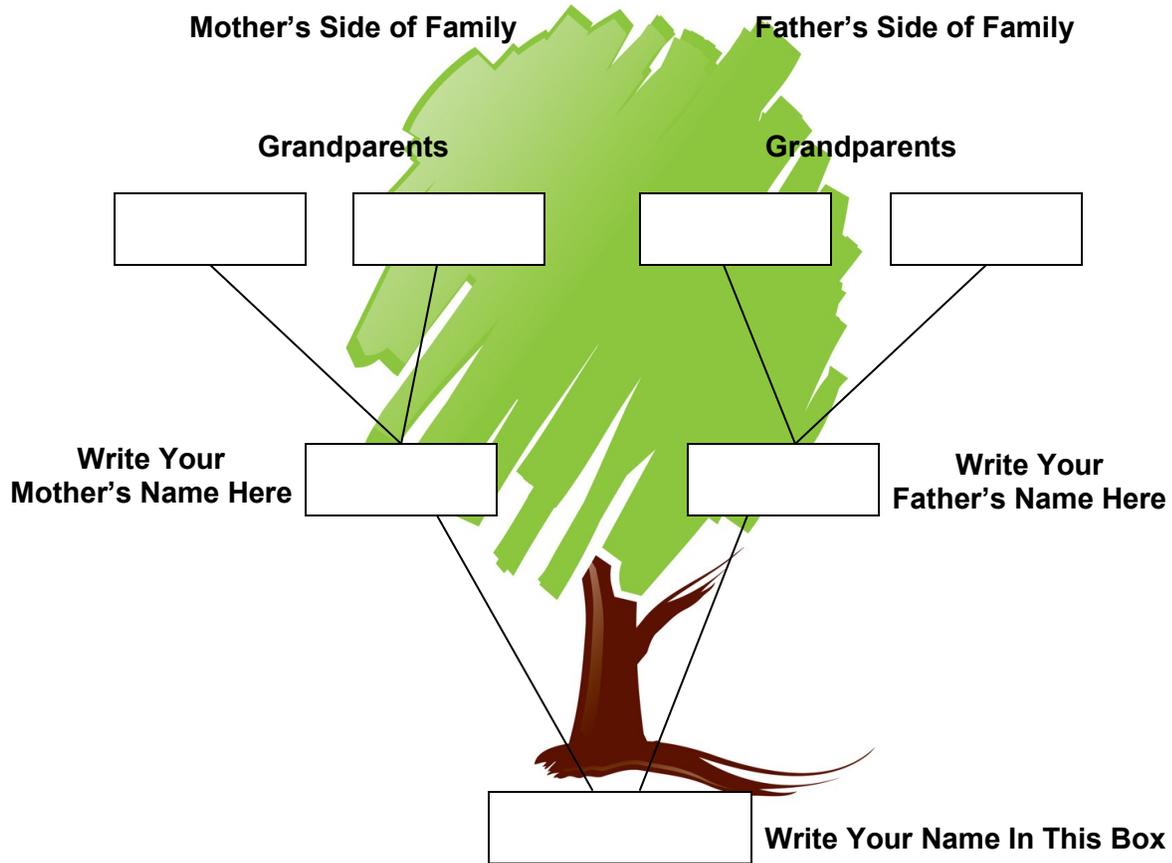
### Writing Activity

#### Materials Needed

- The Family Tree handout
- *My Health Journal*
- *Body Maintenance Manual*

**Route to Health and Wellness**

*My Family Tree*



**Place a check in the white box if disease is known to exist.**

<b>My Mother's Side of the Family</b>		<b>Me</b>		<b>My Father's Side of the Family</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart Disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart Disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart Disease
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes
<input type="checkbox"/>	High Blood Pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	High Blood Pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	High Blood Pressure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sickle Cell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sickle Cell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sickle Cell
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stroke	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stroke	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stroke
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cancer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cancer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cancer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental Illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental Illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental Illness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcoholism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcoholism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcoholism

### Healthier You

A healthier you is easier than you think! All you need to do is change one thing. And when you are done and feeling good, change one more thing. On and on you go, making yourself healthier by small, easy steps. Increasing physical activity, eating healthier and maintaining a healthy weight are just a few easy steps you can take to living a healthy life.

Think about one thing you could do differently. Write it down in your RSP Action Plan handout or *My Health Journal*. Now write down when you will start. Start with something you can do tomorrow.

If you already have a busy life adding an extra 30 minutes for physical activity each day might seem very overwhelming. You can make it easier by breaking it down into three 10-minute periods. Think of things that you would enjoy such as riding a bike, dancing or walking with a friend. You can use your RSP Action Plan handout to record your progress. Studies have shown that doing something for at least three weeks helps make it become a habit.

### Reflection

#### Materials Needed

- RSP Action Plan handout or paper

### Learn More

Opportunity to share more facts and to coach participants

### Materials Needed

- Body Mass Index Chart

## Weight Does Matter

### Maintaining A Healthy Weight

Now, we realize the importance of physical activity and eating healthier. Keeping your weight at a healthy range is also important to living a healthier life. If you want to lose weight, before you start, make sure your healthcare provider knows. It is good to have the proper tests and screenings done to know if you should be aware of any limitations to include in your weight loss plan. When you start to lose weight, do it slowly. Aim for about a pound a week.

Monitoring your weight by weighing yourself is also important, but the number should not become an obsession. Body weight varies a lot in active people, especially with women, because of water weight gain. Also, if you have well-developed muscles, you may weigh more than someone less muscular but may have a healthy body shape and very little fat.

Whatever the results show, the most important thing to remember is that you need to make sure you're eating a healthy balanced diet and keeping physically active.

### Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI is used to screen for weight categories (underweight, healthy, overweight or obese) that may lead to health problems. **A healthy BMI range is between 18 and 24.** But if your BMI is 25 or more you are considered overweight or obese by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Don't stress over the actual number. It's unhealthy to have anxiety over a less-than-perfect body image. **A healthy mental attitude** is important for your overall health.

To calculate BMI, use the chart on the next page.

BMI	Weight Status
17 or Less	Underweight
18 - 24	Healthy
25 - 29	Overweight
30 and Above	Obese

# Body Mass Index (BMI) for Men and Women

**Body Mass Index (BMI)** is a number calculated from a person's weight and height. BMI is an easy way to estimate body fatness for most people. It is used to screen for weight categories (underweight, overweight and obese) that may lead to health problems. The healthiest BMI for adults is 18 to 24.

**Use this table to calculate your BMI. Find your height in the far left column. Then find your weight in the top row. Where your height and weight meet is your Body Mass Index score.**

WEIGHT IN POUNDS

ht	100	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300	310	320
5'0"	20	21	23	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63
5'1"	19	21	23	25	27	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61
5'2"	18	20	22	24	26	27	29	31	33	35	37	38	40	42	44	46	48	49	51	53	55	57	59
5'3"	18	19	21	23	25	27	28	30	32	34	36	37	39	41	43	44	46	48	50	51	53	55	57
5'4"	17	19	21	22	24	26	28	29	31	33	34	36	38	40	41	43	45	46	48	50	52	53	55
5'5"	17	18	20	22	23	25	27	28	30	32	33	35	37	38	40	42	43	45	47	48	50	52	53
5'6"	16	18	19	21	23	24	26	27	29	31	32	34	36	37	39	40	42	44	45	47	49	50	52
5'7"	16	17	19	20	22	24	25	27	28	30	31	33	35	36	38	39	41	42	44	46	47	49	50
5'8"	15	17	18	20	21	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	34	35	37	38	40	41	43	44	46	47	49
5'9"	15	16	18	19	21	22	24	25	27	28	30	31	33	34	36	37	38	40	41	43	44	46	47
5'10"	14	16	17	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	33	35	36	37	39	40	42	43	45	46
5'11"	14	15	17	18	20	21	22	24	25	27	28	29	31	32	34	35	36	38	39	41	42	43	45
6'0"	14	15	16	18	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	29	30	31	33	34	35	37	38	39	41	42	43
6'1"	13	15	16	17	19	20	21	22	24	25	26	28	29	30	32	33	34	36	37	38	40	41	42
6'2"	13	14	15	17	18	19	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	30	31	32	33	34	36	37	39	40	41
6'3"	13	14	15	16	18	19	20	21	23	24	25	26	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39	40
6'4"	12	13	15	16	17	18	20	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	37	38	39

Example, if you are 5' 4" and weigh 140 lbs your BMI = 24. If you are 6' and weigh 170 lbs, your BMI = 23. You are in the green zone and have a healthy weight.

**If your BMI is 17 or less:**

You are underweight for your height. You may get sick more often and be at high risk for weak bones (osteoporosis). Ask your healthcare provider if you need to gain weight and what to eat. Be active every day.

**If your BMI is between 18 and 24:**

Congratulations. Your weight is in the normal range. Staying in this range reduces your risk of diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure. To keep your healthy weight, eat lots of veggies, fruits and whole grains. Be active 30 to 60 minutes a day.

**If your BMI is between 25 and 29:**

You are in the overweight category. You are at higher risk of high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease. Even a small weight loss (just 10 percent of your current weight) may help lower your risks. To avoid gaining more weight, eat fewer processed and fast foods. Eat more veggies, fruits and whole grains. Aim for 30 minutes of activity a day.

**If your BMI is over 30:**

You are in the obese category. You are at risk for high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease and some cancers. The higher your BMI, the higher your risk for poor health. Eat more veggies, fruits and whole grains.

**If your BMI is over 40:**

Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way for you to lose weight.



**1-800-367-2229**  
NC Family Health Resources LLC

### Eat Smart, Move More NC Strategies

#### Enjoy more fruits and vegetables.

- Make fruits and vegetables more than half your plate. What are low in calories, full of essential nutrients and can help reduce your risk for chronic disease? Fruits and vegetables! Make fruits and vegetables half your plate at every meal and for every snack. Fresh, frozen, dried, canned – it all counts. Shake things up by enjoying a variety of colors to stay healthy and fit. Your body will thank you.

#### Right-size your portions.

- Larger Portions = Extra Calories = Extra Pounds! How big are your portions? Eating large portions adds extra calories and extra calories means more pounds on you! Most of us think we eat less than we do. Consume smaller portions of foods and drinks at a leisurely pace to fill you up, not out. So next time, remember to right-size your portions.

#### Re-think your drink.

- Try water with lemon or flavored, unsweetened drinks instead of sugary drinks. We all love a refreshing drink with a meal, as a snack, or after physical activity. Sodas, sweet tea and other sugary drinks taste great but have a lot of calories and no nutrients. Next time you're thirsty, re-think your drink.

#### Choose to move more every day.

- Walk, dance, play, work in your yard ... 30 minutes a day can help you stay in shape and feeling good. Physical activity is essential for all of us. Children, adults and seniors can benefit from moderate activity every day. Take a walk with a friend, take the stairs instead of the elevator or work in your yard. Dancing works, too and is great fun! Thirty minutes or more of motion for adults and 60 minutes for children on most days can help keep you in shape and feeling good. Can't find a 30-minute chunk of time? Break it up throughout the day.

#### Presentation

#### Materials Needed

- Routes Flip Chart

Presentation

**Materials Needed**

- Right-size Your Plate
- *RSP Action Plan* handout
- *My Health Journal*
- *Body Maintenance Manual*

Healthy Eating (continued)

**Prepare more meals at home.**

- All of us can benefit from eating more meals at home. Healthy meals can be quick, easy and inexpensive. Home cooked meals also bring families together. Try using the “rule of thirds”. Fill two thirds of your plate with fruits, vegetables and grains, and one-third with meat or other protein. Busy families can reduce preparation time by using simple, healthy recipes and by getting the family involved.

Remember, talk to your healthcare provider before you make any significant changes in your diet or start to exercise.

## Right-size Your Plate



### Discussion

#### Materials Needed

- *Body Maintenance Manual*
- *My Health Journal*
- *Choices* magazine

## Many Reasons To Quit

We have talked about things to add and change to your lifestyle for a healthier you. Now let's consider things to decrease or eliminate altogether.

#### Smoking Is More Than Just A Habit

Adult smokers, on average, die 13-14 years earlier than nonsmokers. That's like not being around to see your first grader graduate from high school. There is no safe cigarette or safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Smoking also puts you at greater risk for:

- gum disease and tooth loss.
- cataracts (a leading cause of blindness).
- infections.
- wounds not healing after surgery.
- sexual and infertility problems.
- weaker bones after menopause.

Even if you don't smoke, breathing secondhand smoke can cause lung cancer, heart disease, allergies and trigger asthma. Nicotine is the drug that is in cigarettes that causes people to become addicted. Nicotine is as addictive, or more addictive, than some street drugs. The good news is that there are many new smoking cessation aids and counseling services to help smokers kick the nicotine habit.

#### Some Effects Of Using Alcohol And Illegal Drugs

Alcohol, like other drugs, affects the way your mind and body work. Alcohol can increase the risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke and some cancers. Illegal drugs, like marijuana and cocaine, are highly addictive and cause serious problems for your health and relationships. They can damage the brain, heart and other important organs. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs can put you at risk for sexual assault, making poor decisions and accidents ... and can have long-term consequences. If you or someone you know abuses alcohol or uses illegal drugs, there is help. Call the CARE-LINE (1-800-662-7030) for free and confidential information on where to get help and programs in your area.

### The Power Of Positive Thinking And Action

Thinking positive about your ability to quit can help you put a great plan of action into place to break your addiction to alcohol, tobacco or drugs.

Try these tips for quitting gradually:

- Cut down on how many cigarettes you smoke.
- Allow more time between puffs.
- Wait longer between cigarettes.
- Make a quit plan and set a date to quit.

Or just ask for help. There are many resources available to help smokers quit. Talk to your healthcare provider or call the NC Tobacco Use Quit line, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). You can also find counseling and other services to help you quit at your local health department.

### Reflection