

YOUR CARE POLMED

May 2022



“It’s never too late to
change old habits.”

- Florence Griffith
Joyner



Dear Member

Did you know that around 19% of South African adults are smokers, and about 44 000 South Africans die as a result of tobacco-related diseases every year?

In this month’s newsletter, we’ve included an infographic that explains why **quitting smoking** will not only be good for your health, but can also make the management of diagnosed conditions much easier.

We also share how a healthy weight can ensure a healthier you, and why too much sugar is not so sweet for your health.

May you have a wonderful month, and keep making small, healthy changes!

Kind regards,
Polmed Your Care Support Team

In this issue...

TOO MUCH SUGAR ISN'T SWEET FOR YOUR HEALTH

Drinking one sugar-sweetened drink per day can increase your risk for diabetes by 13%. Excess sugar can also increase your risk for overweight and obesity, and consequently heart disease and hypertension.

> [READ MORE...](#)

A HEALTHY WEIGHT FOR A HEALTHIER YOU

Because being overweight or obese increases your risk for hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and cancer, monitoring your weight plays an important role in managing your health.

> [READ MORE...](#)

HOW DOES SMOKING AFFECT THE BODY?

Around 19% of South African adults are smokers and around 44 000 smokers die as a result of tobacco-related diseases each year. We can help you quit!

> [READ MORE...](#)

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*Please use the latest browser to view the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS).



**KIDS OVER 12+ YEARS OLD CAN NOW
BE REGISTERED FOR VACCINATION.**

<https://vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za/#/>

COVID-19 Public Hotline: 0800 029 999
WhatsApp Support Line: 0600-123456

**STAY
SAFE**

PROTECT SOUTH AFRICA

COVID-19
Online Resource & News Portal
SAcoronavirus.co.za



health
Department
of Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

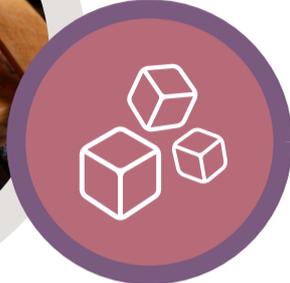


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March 2022



Too much sugar isn't sweet for your health



Sugar can be hard to resist, but it's not good for your health. Drinking one sugar-sweetened drink per day can increase your risk for diabetes by 13%. Excess sugar can also increase your risk for overweight and obesity, and consequently heart disease and hypertension.



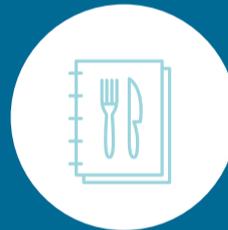
While the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends limiting sugar intake to less than six teaspoons a day, South Africans consume between 12 and 24.

In 2018, the government implemented a sugar tax, which has led to South Africans buying 28% less sugary drinks. But there are other ways in which you can reduce your sugar intake.



LOOK OUT FOR SECRET SUGAR

“Healthy” foods usually contain added sugar to make them taste better. “Just because something appears to be healthy doesn't always mean that it's low in sugar. Products such as granola bars, smoothies and cereals often have a high sugar content,” says Raffaella Brafa, registered dietitian.



READ FOOD LABELS

While sugar is found naturally in foods such as lactose in milk and fructose in fruit, it's the added sugars that are the problem. Reading food labels can help you see how much added sugar you're consuming. Common names for added sugar include sucrose, high fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, coconut sugar, maple syrup, and fruit juice concentrate.

“Total sugar” refers to the amount of both natural sugar and added sugars in the product. Foods containing more than 22.5g of total sugar per 100g should be avoided, whereas foods with 5g or less are acceptable. The amount of sugar that you consume a day should not exceed 25g, so even if you're eating foods low in sugar, try not to eat too much of them. It would also be best to avoid energy drinks and soft drinks, as both of these are high in sugar.

**Sugar may be sweet
on the tongue, but try to
cut back for the sake of
your health.**

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- Raffaella Brafa, Registered Dietitian from Nutritional Solutions

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If you have any questions or need more information, please call Polmed on 0860 765 633 (select the option for the Disease Management Programme), or send an email to polmeddiseaseman@medscheme.co.za with your membership number and contact details.

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May 2022



A healthy weight For a healthier you

Statistics from the World Obesity Federation suggest that



one in three South African adults is expected to be obese by 2030

11 MILLION 5 MILLION

Because being overweight or obese increases your risk for hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and cancer, monitoring your weight plays an important role in managing your health.



Here are a few ways to monitor and manage your weight for a healthier you:

WEIGHT ASSESSMENT TOOLS

BODY MASS INDEX

Body mass index (BMI) is the most common method of identifying and measuring obesity.

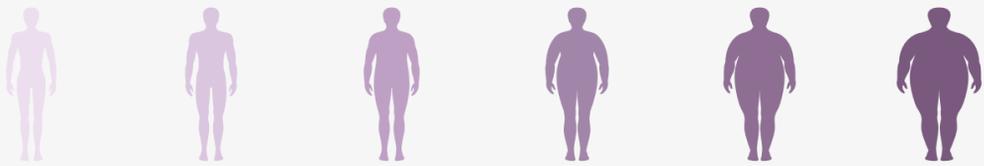


1. Weigh yourself on an accurate scale.
2. Measure your height. Calculate your height squared.
3. Divide your weight in kilograms (e.g. 55 kg) by your height in metres squared (e.g. 1.6 m x 1.6 m = 2.56), as follows:

EXAMPLE: 55 kg ÷ 2.56 = 21.48 (this is your BMI)

A BMI over 25 is considered overweight, and over 30 obese is considered.

Reports indicate that 4.7 million global deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in 2017 were linked to a high BMI. This number is expected to grow to 5.5 million deaths by 2025.



UNDERWEIGHT

NORMAL

OVERWEIGHT

OBESE

SEVERELY OBESE

MORBIDLY OBESE

<18.5

18.5-24.9

25-29.9

30-34.9

35-39.9

>40

WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE

A large waist circumference can increase your risk for heart disease and mortality.

A HEALTHY waist circumference:



For men
= <102 cm



For women
= <88 cm

WAIST-TO-HIP RATIO

To calculate your waist-to-hip ratio, measure your waist and hip circumferences; then divide the waist measurement by the hip measurement.

A HEALTHY waist-to-hip ratio:



For men
= <0.9 cm



For women
= <0.85 cm

POLMED HAS A WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The aim of the Programme is to help get you started on your weight loss journey.

How will this treatment be funded?

Polmed covers the full cost of the Programme for qualifying members from the overall in-hospital benefit at Polmed rates and not from your out-of-hospital (day-to-day) benefits.

How can we help?

Should you require assistance, information or have any questions, you may call Polmed on **0860 765 633** (follow the voice prompts to the Disease Management Programme) between 08:30 and 17:00 Monday to Friday, or send an email to **polmedwmp@medscheme.co.za**

Following a healthy diet and exercising regularly can help you to manage your weight. However, you should consult your doctor before embarking on any new programme.

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• Dr Jaco Grobler, medical doctor

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How does smoking Affect the body?



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SMOKING AND YOUR HEART

Cigarette smoke can damage blood vessels and cause a build-up of plaque in the arteries. It can also increase the levels of LDL cholesterol, which can damage the heart, and reduce the levels of HDL cholesterol, which helps to keep the heart healthy.



Statistics suggest that quitting smoking can reduce the risk for heart disease, the risk for repeat heart attacks, and death by heart disease by 50%.

SMOKING AND DIABETES

Diabetes is the second-leading cause of death in South Africa. Smoking makes it more difficult for those living with diabetes to manage their insulin, which can then increase the risk for complications such as infections and nerve damage.



SMOKING AND HYPERTENSION

Smoking can significantly raise blood pressure, which will then increase the risk for hypertension, which affects around 53.5% of people in South Africa. Quitting smoking can help to reduce blood pressure, both in those who have hypertension and those who don't.



HOW TO CUT BACK ON SMOKING

1. IDENTIFY YOUR TRIGGERS: Recognising the factors that cause you to smoke, such as stress, social settings and alcohol, will help you to find alternative ways of dealing with them.

2. MANAGE YOUR STRESS: There are healthier ways of managing stress than smoking. These include meditation, journaling, and even gardening.



3. JOIN A SUPPORT GROUP: Quitting smoking is no easy task, but interacting with people who understand your struggle can help.



Polmed offers a programme which can assist you in quitting smoking - GoSmokeFree. Book a pre-quit assessment with our GoSmokefree advisor and begin to feel the benefits immediately. Visit our website at www.gosmokefree.co.za for more information.

Not only will quitting smoking be good for your health, but it can also make the management of diagnosed conditions much easier.

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