

# GOD'S PLAN FOR HEALTHY LIVING



“I have come that they may  
have life, and that they have  
it more abundantly.”

John 10:10 (NKJV)



## WORSHIP AND TRUE LIVING

God is our Creator, He created man from sounding clay and bestowed upon him the gift of physical soundness, a perfect health from a perfect God. God also bestowed all the resources upon him for his physical sustenance. “And God said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.’” (Genesis 1:29). As far as (Pratham Purush) Adam’s eyes could see, was the abundance of God’s blessings. Therefore it is proved that man is created for a vegetarian diet. It is also found in Bhagavad Gita that Sattva food (vegetarian diet) increases the duration of life, purifies one’s existence and gives strength, health, happiness and satisfaction... Such foods are wholesome and pleasing to the heart – *Bhagavad Gita*, 17.8

He created man to have dominion over His creation to be God’s overseer. For this purpose he entrusted them with trust and moral responsibility: “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” (Genesis 1:26).

So mighty is his greatness; yea, greater than this is Purusa. All creatures are one-fourth of him... *Rig-veda* 10.90.5-6

God is interested in man’s overall well-being, not just the physical. He fashioned us and breathed into us of His spirit. He owns our whole being. God provided not only the bounty of physical food but also the spiritual guidance for our salvation.

When one’s food is pure, one’s being becomes pure – *Chândogya Upanisad* 7.26.2

God calls us, His believers to be grateful: “For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.” (1 Timothy 4:4).

According to Hindu belief, food is very important to Brahman (Annam Parabrahma Swaroopam). Because it is a gift from God, it should be treated with great respect. ([http://www.hinduwebsite.com/hinduism/h\\_food.asp](http://www.hinduwebsite.com/hinduism/h_food.asp))

## KEYS TO A LIFE THAT PLEASURES GOD

God has sent down clear guidance for healthy living. Here are some of the key principles:

### 1. Be mindful of God's nearness.

God is “ever-near”, nearer to us than our own jugular veins. He has put in our nostrils his breath of life, and has made our bodies the dwelling place of his spirit (Aatma). Don't you know that God placed his Holy Spirit in your hearts? Don't your bodies in this way become the House of God? You must honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

### 2. Learn to chose what is right.

God encourages all the believers to live healthy lives, but He also gave us faculties to decide. God does not work by force, but rather by invitation and wise decisions. “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous.” (Deuteronomy 30:15-16).

Being healthy, of course, has many advantages and enables individuals to be able to better serve others. In summary, remember that: “Whatever a man sows he will also reap.” (Galatians 6:7).

### 3. Nutrition matters.

Whole, unrefined, plant-based foods make up a large part of a healthful diet

She who bears plants endowed with many varied powers...O Earth may we recline on thee who bearest portioned share of food... Prithvi-Sukta Verse 2 & 29 (Atharva Veda)

Some of the people who believe in the Bible particularly Adventists avoid alcohol and don't eat beef; they avoid meats in general. They eat more fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole grains. Most of them do consume milk, milk products and eggs, and those who consume tend to use these items moderately.

The principle of eating healthy foods is best explained in the following statement: “Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator.”(Genesis 1:29).

“You will make known to  
me the path of life...”

Psalms 16:11



“Therefore, whether you  
eat or drink, or whatever  
you do, do it all to  
the glory of God.”

1 Corinthians 10:31

(NKJV)



A well-known Adventist religious leader wrote: “These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing”. In summary, “So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

These guiding principles have blessed the Adventists people for over 150 years.

a similar idea to the Hindu tradition of sprinkling water on and around the food accompanied by some mantras or prayers before eating.

So, before you decide what to eat, be mindful of:

- The remembrance of God’s blessings through prayer. ‘When he provides food and shelter to human beings he becomes thereby a world for human Beings...’ Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, 1.4.16
- Eating a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, preferably fresh. ‘Bitter, sour, saltish, unripe green vegetable, fermented, oily, mixed with til seed, rape seed, intoxicating liquors, fish, meat... should not be eaten.’ (Hathayoga Pradipika, 1.61)

A vegetarian diet is to be preferred, but eating meat is a matter of choice. He created cattle so that we can produce food with their help. Today, many are following a meat-free diet for health reasons. Most Adventists also incorporate into their meals a variety of meat alternates, such as tofu and other plant protein foods. An increasing number of Adventists follow a vegan diet that is entirely plant-based. A plant-based diet is not only healthy for an individual, but is now also recognized as healthier for our planet.

- Insisted of choosing White bread, polished rice, and foods made from refined grains. We must use whole-grain foods include oats, whole-wheat bread, brown rice, whole-grain Chapati.
- Eating legumes often, including lentils, beans, split peas, soy, tofu, and hummus.
- Including nuts and seeds daily in the diet. Walnuts, almonds, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, caraway, flax meal, peanuts, almond butter, and peanut butter are a few of the many options.
- Eating a healthful breakfast every day, and keep evening meals moderate in calories.

- Using dairy foods (whole milk, cheese, yogurt, cream, eggs, and butter) moderately. Many individuals opt for soy, almond or other types of milk (preferably fortified with calcium and B12).

Hindu teachings have always considered milk as among the highest forms of food – Satvic. Cow’s milk is believed to have a great calming effect and improves meditation.(www.quora.com)

- Limiting sugar, soft drinks, and sweets. Enjoy nature’s sweets, such as berries, pineapple, peaches, tangerines, and dates. Instead of sugar-sweetened drinks, choose pure fruit juices, such as grape juice, orange juice, cane sugar, or mango juice.
- Limiting salt and high-sodium foods. While this may be a new concept for many, it’s an increasingly popular one for those interested in optimum nutrition.
- Fasting. Fasting can help to improve blood fat levels, detoxicate the body and make us more aware of the presence of God. Fasting once in a week is very much beneficial for our physical and spiritually betterment.

#### 4. We were meant to move.

Being physically active is an important part of health and can include a variety of activities, such as brisk walking, biking, swimming, jogging, active sports, strength training, playing with one’s family, or bowing down before God in worship. Also, instead of sitting for prolonged amounts of time, take frequent breaks to walk or stretch is beneficial and increase our working capacity. The Holy Bible talks about a man whose name was Elijah. He was so fit that he outran fourteen miles the evil King Ahab in his chariot (1 Kings 18:46). The following statement on physical activity has given guidance for Adventists for more than 100 years:

#### 5. Tobacco, alcohol, and recreational drugs harm health.

Adventists believe it is their duty to avoid those things that clearly destroy health (such as smoking) or things that adversely influence the mind or cloud judgment (such as drugs or alcohol). For millions of people drinking coffee is a favorite past time and yet, caffeine should be discouraged, as it can become addictive and damaging to health. The Bible does not specifically





“When the weather will permit, all who can possibly do so ought to walk in the open air every day, summer and winter.”

Counsels on Health, 52

“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”

3 John 1:2 (NKJV)



prohibit drinking coffee, they give us clear guidance: “Everything is permissible,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible,” but not everything is edifying.” (1 Corinthians 10:23) “Every person is faced with two choices: the good and the pleasant (tempting but unethical/wrong)” - Katha Upanishad.

### **6. Follow the principle of moderation.**

Moderation involves avoiding things that are harmful and being sensible in things that are good. Work a healthy amount of hours, but don't be a workaholic. Take time for recreation, but don't spend all your time playing. Eat good foods, but in healthy portions. Don't sit too much, don't watch too much TV, and don't spend too much time playing computer games. Moderation keeps life in balance, away from extremes.

### **7. Wellness requires rest.**

The night time is originally God's intended time for rest while the day time is for work.

To be productive and to enjoy good physical and mental health, everyone needs periods of rest and relaxation, as well as an adequate amount of sleep (at least seven to eight hours each night for adults, and more

for children).


Famous writer William Blake says “Think in the morning. Act in the noon. Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night.”

A life of rest also involves taking at least one day off a week to rest and recuperate; to connect with one's family and friends, and to spend time with God. By doing this one regains the energy which that is lost during the week.

According to the commandment that the Almighty sent down to Moses we ought to “Remember the seventh-day (Sabbath), to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work.” (Exodus 20:8-10).

### **8. A healthy environment is a key ingredient for good health.**

Some of the best ways to prevent disease are simple: wash your hands, keep your body and clothes clean, keep kitchen and food preparation areas clean and free of germs, and maintain a clean, sanitary living area. Also, it is essential to have uncontaminated



drinking water and proper sanitation and disposal of waste. Adventists emphasize water as the best beverage option, rather than sugar-sweetened drinks. Sunshine is also beneficial to health, but take it in moderate doses to avoid skin cancer. Helping keep our environment clean and unpolluted, including the air we breathe, is an essential component of good health for all.

### **9. Health involves the whole person**

Adventists believe that physical, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions of life must all work together in a balanced way to achieve optimum health. Thus, it is important to develop healthy habits not just for your body, but also for your mind and spirit. Whole-person health includes habits such as limiting stress, developing good coping strategies, being hopeful and optimistic, spending time in prayer and meditation, volunteering in the community, developing good relationships, strengthening family life, showing compassion, and demonstrating love and forgiveness. Reciting verses from the Word of God is always a free option with maximum benefits.

“Through meditation, the Higher Self is experienced”.  
– Bhagavad Gita.

“For the man of meditation wishing to attain purification of heart leading to concentration, work is said to be the way: For him, when he has attained such (concentration), inaction is said to be the way” Srimad Bhagavad Gita 6.3

### **10. Regular medical care helps protect health.**

Even when it seems you’ve done everything right, it’s still possible to break an arm, get an infection, or develop a chronic health problem. Getting regular medical care, including exams and preventive checks, is an important aspect of healthy living. This also includes regular dental checkups and teeth cleanings, along with daily brushing and flossing. We must also strive to encourage and support others on this journey, maintaining an attitude that allows people to choose, learn, and adopt healthier living practices as God leads.

*\*Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita, English translation and commentary by Swami Swarupananda, [1909], pp 139*

“The Lord will give strength to  
His people; The Lord will bless  
His people with peace.”

Psalms 29:11 (NKJV)



"I will praise You, for I am fearfully  
and wonderfully made; Marvelous  
are Your works, And that my soul  
knows very well."

Psalms 139:14 (NKJV)





## SUMMARY

1. Show gratitude to God by taking good care of your body and soul—God has placed in your heart his spirit.
2. Healthy living is a form of worship.
3. Eat healthy meals, emphasizing whole, plant based foods (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and legumes), and limit highly refined foods and foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol.
4. Be physically active every day, when possible.
5. Avoid smoking, alcohol, recreational drugs, and other harmful substances.
6. Practice moderation in work, play, screen time, and eating.
7. Get adequate sleep (seven to eight hours a night for adults, and more for children and youth), and take off work at least one day a week to rest and strengthen family and spiritual ties.
8. Get adequate sunshine, clean water, and pure air; and commit to good sanitation and preserving a healthy environment.
9. Embrace wholistic living: engage in healthy relationships, have a hopeful outlook on life, balance stress with relaxation, be grateful and optimistic, practice prayer and meditation, give time in unselfish service, and show love and forgiveness in daily life. “The one who loves all intensely begins perceiving in all living beings a part of himself. He becomes a lover of all, a part and parcel of the Universal Joy. He flows with the stream of happiness, and is enriched by each soul. (Yajur Veda)”.
10. Get regular medical and dental care, including preventive exams.

## COME TO ME, THOSE WHO ARE WEARY...

More than two thousand years ago a sick woman came to see Yeshu Masih. She had been sick for twelve years and had used all the money she with doctors and medicines that did not help her. She had heard that He had healed a blind man by creating new eyes, raised a child from the dead and returned her to her grieving parents, cast away evil spirits which cause a child to fall in the fire, and healed 12 men with leprosy. Hiding under a cloak, she came from where he could not see her, and gently touched his clothes. Yeshu Masih loved her, and healing came from him. But he wanted not just to release her from her physical suffering, but invite her to experience peace (Shanti) as a complete person again.

Turning towards her, and without wanting to shame her, he kindly asked: “who has touched me?” People were amazed, in such a crowd how could he asked,

who has touched me? But he was not talking as one of them, he was speaking about a touch of faith. The woman was wrong to think that the clothes of the honourable Yeshu Masih had especial powers, but she had faith that he could heal her and because of her faith, He did. The woman came forward and told her story of suffering, defilement and shame. From the lips of the Master, words of life came to her: “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.” No longer she was a defiled woman, but a beloved of God.

If you are experiencing suffering, sickness or confusion as to how to chose the right things, Yeshu Masih, who has the power to heal, has these words for you: “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest”. (Matthew 11:28). Are you coming too?



“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were brought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NKJV)





"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing;  
therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants might live.

That you may love the Lord your God,  
that you may obey His voice, that you may cling to Him,  
for He is your LIFE and the length of your days."

**Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (NKJV)**



GENERAL CONFERENCE

Adventist  
Health Ministries

