



Healthy habits start here

Habits are things we do without even thinking. And most people have more than they realize. Our brains like habits because they free our minds to think about other things. Sometimes, we develop good and bad ones by mistake. But there are simple ways to make healthy changes.

Understanding the 4 parts of a habit

All habits start with a “cue” that it’s time for you to do something.
Here’s an example of how it works:

Cue	Craving	Response	Reward
You smoke when you’re stressed.	You have a big project due at work and you’re not making progress. So your body starts to feel stress and you crave a cigarette.	You light a cigarette.	You feel more relaxed.

5 steps to creating or changing habits

Whether you want to create a new, healthy habit or change an unhealthy one, keep these simple steps in mind.

1

Start small

It can be frustrating to choose a big goal and fall short. But breaking it into smaller pieces can help.

- Think of the health goal you want to reach.
- Ask yourself about small changes you can make to move toward your goal.
- Pick one and work to make it a healthy habit.



2

Pick a time and place

It's easier to remember to do things when you do them at the same time, in the same place. Here's an example: "I'll go for a walk at 3 PM in the park."



3

Try stacking your habits

Is there something new you want to add to your routine? Try slipping it into one you already have in place. Here's an example:

Old bedtime routine: Washing your face. Brushing your teeth. Reading for 30 minutes.

New bedtime routine: Washing your face. Taking your medicine. Brushing your teeth. Reading for 30 minutes.



4

Don't stop, replace.

Our habits become part of us and our brains get used to the behavior. So try replacing the one you want to change with something healthier.

Old habit: Eating ice cream after dinner.

New habit: Eating low-fat ice cream after dinner.

Old habit: Drinking soda with lunch.

New habit: Drinking water with lunch.



5

Give yourself time

It usually takes about 2–3 months for a change to become a habit. So be patient with yourself and know that you'll get there!



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