Prior to implementing any of the following health tips or changing your exercise patterns, consult with your physician.

- 5 Quick Tips for Better Health:
  - **Eat More Protein**—protein helps you to feel fuller longer. Some suggest that you consume one gram of protein per every 2.2 pounds of body weight each day. Proteins function as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood.
  - **Eat More Antioxidant-rich Foods**—antioxidants repel diseases and promote good health. Antioxidants are believed to protect against free radicals which are harmful molecules, thought to result in cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and aging. Berries, artichokes, beans, carrots, apples, and dark chocolate all contain powerful antioxidants.
  - **Get More Sleep**—adults should be getting a full 7.5-8 hours of sleep each night. Researchers have found that sleep plays a critical role in immune function, metabolism, memory, and learning. Research has also shown that those who get adequate sleep are able to lose more weight.
  - **Manage Stress**—stress can play a part in many problems, such as headaches, high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, skin conditions, asthma, arthritis, depression, and anxiety. Stress also increases the production of cortisol, a chemical that can be damaging to the body, piling on the pounds and potentially leading to heart disease. Practice controlling the stress in your life. Though you cannot control all of your circumstances, you can control your reaction to them.
  - **Drink Water**—drinking water is essential for good health. Water helps maintain the balance of body fluids, can help control calories, energizes muscles, keeps skin looking good, helps your kidneys, and helps maintain normal bowel function.

- **Reducing Stress** (Clinton & Hawkins, 2001):
  - Stress is defined as the “normal, internal, physiological mechanism that adapts us to change.”
  - Stress is a normal part of life and can be positive, alerting us to a problem area needing attention and helping us respond to it.
  - Stress can also be negative when a person is constantly stressed without relief or relaxation between challenges.
  - Stress without relief can lead to physical symptoms, such as headaches, upset stomach, elevated blood pressure, chest pain, and problems sleeping.
  - Exercise is as effective as medications in reducing your stress levels. Exercising three to five times each week for 30 to 40 minutes each time can improve health and reduce stress.
  - In order to reduce stress, break down stressors into manageable components and address each component individually.
  - Plan times of quiet and solitude to balance a busy life.

- **Quotes:**
“There is nothing more important than our good health—that’s our principle asset.”—Arien Specter

“Life is not merely to be alive, but to be well.”—Marcus Valerius Martial

“Good health is not something we can buy. However, it can be an extremely valuable savings account.”—Anne Wilson Schaef

“Your body hears everything your mind says.”—Naomi Judd

“The greatest wealth is health.”—Virgil

“In order to change we must be sick and tired of being sick and tired.”—Unknown

“Health and cheerfulness naturally beget each other.”—Joseph Addison

• **Action Steps for Better Health** (Clinton & Langberg, 2011):
  o Assess your lifestyle choices:
    ▪ Examine your eating habits to see if they are nutritionally sound.
    ▪ Take the time to track your exercise regimen.
    ▪ As you evaluate your exercise and eating patterns, research the risks and consequences of poor diet and nutrition. Often, this is the first step to change.
  o Evaluate the emotional aspects:
    ▪ Whether you’re overeating, dieting obsessively, or just eating junk food, emotions are frequently involved.
    ▪ Pinpoint the emotional or mental aspect of any poor diet and exercise choices by asking, “Why am I dieting (or eating junk food)? What are my comfort foods? What thought processes are guiding my eating/dieting behaviors?”
    ▪ Until you get to the root issue of your eating habits or lack of exercise, it’s likely you won’t change.
  o Watch for triggers:
    ▪ Believe it or not, you’re not a victim of your body’s cravings.
    ▪ Begin looking for triggers that lead you to eat unhealthily. Is it stress, conflict, lack of time, habits, convenience, depression, or loneliness?
    ▪ Once you identify triggers, you can begin to adjust your schedule and lifestyle to make healthy eating more feasible.
  o Make a plan:
    ▪ Breaking the cycle of poor diet and nutrition may take time, but the long-term benefits are critical.
    ▪ Behaviors form lifestyles. You can begin making choices today that will cultivate a healthier you.
    ▪ Make sure that your plans are realistic—there’s nothing worse than setting unachievable goals.
  o **Tips for Getting Started:**
    ▪ Stay away from minimalistic, starvation-style diets.
    ▪ Write a master grocery list that eliminates junk food.
    ▪ Snack on vegetables, fruits, and nuts.
- Stay away from sweet, rich desserts.
- Build time into your schedule to exercise (and do something you actually enjoy).
- Drink plenty of water and avoid sodas.
- Choose healthy options for eating out.
- Develop new, more active hobbies (hiking, running, walking, swimming, etc.).
- Take a multivitamin and dietary supplements.

**Verses:**

- “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”—1 Corinthians 6:19-20

- “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”—Philippians 4:6-7

- “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”—Romans 12:2

- “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”—1 Corinthians 10:31

- “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.”—1 Corinthians 16:13-14

- “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”—John 10:10

- “For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well.”—Psalm 139:13-14

**Endnotes**
