

## Healthy Living Skills: The Hidden Route to Optimal Health

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Summary: Simple healthy living skills are essential to good health. Yet lifestyle stress may keep people from choosing health as they'd like to. Healthy living expert Elizabeth Eckert answers questions from frenzied health seekers eager to balance their lifestyles.

Minot, ND July 17, 2006 -- Simple healthy living skills – like balancing work and home commitments, finding time to prepare healthy meals, keeping up personal relationships, or following expert advice – may be the most important thing standing between millions of people worldwide and their optimal health. The good news is those skills are easily learned.

“People want to make healthy choices,” explains Elizabeth Eckert, who answers healthy living questions at her [Word Cures](#) website, “But let’s face it – our lifestyles are more and more chaotic. Stressed-out people simply aren’t able to choose health as they’d like to.”

New research shows that people’s underlying ability to manage their daily lifestyle is critical to achieving good health. The July 1, 2006 issue of the *British Medical Journal* explores evidence that people who have the skills to follow their doctors’ orders consistently have better health outcomes – regardless of whether the doctor prescribed medicine or a placebo.

“What this should tell us,” Eckert observes, “Is that there are cases where it isn’t the medicine that makes the difference. It’s the patient’s own health behavior.”

One of the main challenges people face is balancing work and home life. Changing family dynamics and a 24/7 marketplace have increased the typical family’s time spent at work. Mom and Dad both juggle multiple roles. The push for businesses to stay competitive in the marketplace drives unpredictable work hours. And the kids still have to get to soccer practice.

People’s real or perceived time concerns wreak havoc with their ability to create a balanced healthy lifestyle, according to a report released last month by the International Labour Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Eckert sees this lifestyle stress as one of the reasons so few of us consistently make the healthy choices we know we should.

“While many people have a general idea where to start, it seems we’re just too stressed out to put a concrete healthy living plan into action without support,” she explains. “The extra energy it takes to think past the drive-thru simply feels like too much.”

Frenzied health seekers can take a breather for inspiration and practical advice with a visit to Elizabeth Eckert’s website and [Healthy Living DIY](#) blog. She invites readers to stop by and ask healthy living questions on the [Word Cures “Ask Elizabeth”](#) page.

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Contact: Elizabeth Eckert  
Telephone: 701-839-4755  
Email: [elizabeth@wellnessimages.com](mailto:elizabeth@wellnessimages.com)

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