

REDUCING**YOUR RISKS****Model**

Although Roberto is only 13 years old, he thinks a lot about the factors that contribute to long-term health. His father has high blood pressure and his grandmother has diabetes. Because these diseases run in his family, Roberto knows that he may have a higher risk of developing them when he gets older.

However, Roberto also knows that there are factors influencing his health that he can control. For example, he can choose to eat healthy foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables. He can stay physically active and maintain a healthy weight. He can also avoid tobacco and other substances that could harm his health. When Roberto thinks about all the factors that influence his health, he is relieved to realize that most of them are things he can control.



Practice

How well do the teens you know control the risk factors that influence their health? Work in groups to conduct a survey. Copy the chart below on a piece of paper. Record the number of students in your group who participate in each behavior. Total the results, and then have someone tally them for the whole class. Write the results on the chalkboard and answer the questions that follow.

Behaviors that Influence the risk of a noncommunicable disease	Number of students who practice that behavior
weight management	
regular physical activity	
healthy eating plan	
stress management	
avoid tobacco	
avoid use of alcohol and drugs	
protect skin from sunlight	

1. Which behaviors are practiced by the most students?
2. Which disease(s) are students reducing their risk for by practicing these behaviors?
3. Which risk factors could students make a stronger effort to control?

Apply/Assess

Write a letter to your body. In your letter, list the behaviors and choices you make that lower your risk of developing a noncommunicable disease. Next identify any behaviors that might increase your risk of a noncommunicable disease. Explain how these behaviors could influence your health. End your letter by describing some changes you could make in your behavior to reduce your risk of developing a noncommunicable disease.



Analyzing Influences

Your risk for noncommunicable diseases is influenced by

- family history.
- weight.
- eating habits.
- level of activity.
- level of stress.
- use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.
- sun exposure.

Self-Check

- Did I identify behaviors and choices that lower my risk for disease?
- Did I identify behaviors that could increase my risk for disease?
- Did I suggest changes that would reduce my disease risk?