

I think health is very important. Fortunately, I am healthy and I am rarely ill. I sometimes have a cold or a stomach-ache but not too often. Not only physical but mental health is also very important. Mental health means healthy thoughts, and a happy, balanced life. Healthy thoughts are positive thoughts. Love, calmness, happiness and self-esteem. Negative thoughts are fear, anger, worry and similar thoughts. Many people are full of negative thoughts even though they are physically healthy. You can keep healthy by leading a healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle includes plenty of exercise (testmozgás), a healthy diet, and a stress-free life. Exercise is very important. You can play sports but if you don't have the time or the money, you can walk, jog or cycle. I like walking and cycling very much. I don't like ball games but I played football and basketball in primary and secondary school. We played football and basketball in the P.E. lessons. Physical exercise also reduces stress. Too much stress causes illnesses so it is important to have less stress. Keeping a dog or a cat makes you calm if you are nice to the animals, so it reduces stress. I have a dog and 2 cats. They like each other and me and I also like them very much.

Personal hygiene is also important. You must wash your hands after the toilet and before eating and after you work with something dirty, like repair your car or something. It is also important to have a shower or a bath quite often. Some people say Queen Elizabeth I said: "I bathe once a month whether I need it or not." We don't know for sure but you certainly need to have a shower or a bath more often than this.

There is an English saying: "Prevention is better than cure." This is absolutely true about illnesses. It is much easier and better to prevent an illness than to cure it. You must take care of yourself and if you don't feel well, you must immediately do something about it, like drink honey with tea or if you are cold, put on something warm. If you cannot cure yourself, you must go to a doctor or ask somebody in the family or a friend for advice. Of course, if you have a more serious illness, you always have to go to a doctor. Fortunately, I am healthy so I rarely go to the doctor. In fact I don't remember when I was last in our family doctor's surgery. More than a year ago.

Some common illnesses and health problems are: cold (nátha), stomach-ache, headache, sprained ankle, flu, mumps, measles, high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke and cancer. When you are ill, you often have a temperature.

You also have to go to the doctor if you have an accident, for example if you fall and hurt your leg or arm badly. If you hit your head on something, you may have concussion.

Sometimes the doctor not only gives you medicine but also says you must follow a diet or change your lifestyle (for example, stop smoking). You must always do what the doctor tells you, you should not think "Ah, this is not so serious, I don't care about it." If you don't take a little illness seriously, it becomes a big illness. If you are ill, the doctor gives you a certificate which says that you don't have to go to school or work.

Children get vaccinated against serious illnesses at school.

If somebody is ill in the family, you may have to look after him or her: make them food, give them whatever they want if they can't get up from bed, tell them a bedtime story if they are little children and so on.

When you are ill, you first go to your family doctor. If they can cure you, they give you a prescription for some medicine. If they can't cure you, they will send you to a specialist or to hospital. There are many cures that people use for illnesses. You can take medicine, you can

change your diet, you can have physiotherapy or you can try alternative medicine. There are many kinds of alternative medicine, such as acupuncture, acupressure.

Of course, a lot of things can endanger your health. Spending a long time in strong sunlight damages your skin. It may even cause skin cancer. Smoking, drugs (for example cocaine, heroin, amphetamines, cocaine and others), and too much alcohol can seriously damage your health too. Unfortunately, many people smoke, drink and take drugs. They don't take the dangers seriously. Schools should teach the children more about these dangers. Of course, I don't smoke, don't drink and don't take drugs. I smoked a little when I was a teenager but only very little. I drank a little too at that time, and I got drunk twice in my life. But I didn't like it so I haven't drunk alcohol since then.

Playing sports is healthy. There are different kinds of sports, such as team sports and individual sports, ball games and technical sports. I like several sports, for example running, cycling, car racing, swimming, table tennis (or ping pong) and figure skating. The girls are very beautiful in figure skating. Of course, I don't do all these sports but I sometimes run and cycle. People usually do sports either to be healthy or to compete. A lot of people do sports because of health and fewer people compete. Governments support sportspeople who compete and achieve good results but competition can be dangerous and damage your health. Sportspeople want to win so much that they often take drugs to make them stronger. This is illegal. It is called doping. Doping can damage your health so some champions compete for a short time only and then become very ill. But they do it because there is big money in sport.