1) What do you do to stay healthy?
I eat a **balanced diet** with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables and take some form of exercise every day. I also make sure that I get enough sleep.

2) Do you get ill very often?
Fortunately, I’m very healthy and rarely get ill, although I occasionally **catch a cold** in the winter.

3) Is there anything you’d like to improve about your fitness?
I really want to take up yoga because I often feel stiff after exercise and I think it would help. It would also make me more flexible and less likely to get injured when I **work out**.

4) Are you careful about what you eat?
I try very hard to have a **healthy diet**, even when I eat out at a restaurant. I rarely buy takeaways and if I do go out with friends for fish and chips, I only have the fish with some peas.

5) How important is a healthy lifestyle for you?
It’s one of the most important things for me because I want to feel good and to enjoy life. if you don’t have **good health** then everything else in life is a struggle.
Part 2

Describe a change you have made to improve your health and that you would recommend to others.

You should say:
• what it is
• why you decided to do it
• how you have benefitted from it
• and explain why you would recommend it to others.

I often make changes to my lifestyle to try and look after my health but the one I'd like to tell you about is cutting down on how much meat I eat.

There's been a lot of stuff in the media about how unhealthy it is to eat too much meat, especially red meat and processed meat. I was already fairly healthy and ate a balanced diet, but when I took up a new sport, which involved vigorous exercise, I started to think that maybe I should try to cut down on it a little. I was particularly concerned about the increased risk of heart disease and of having a stroke. I know a healthy diet can help to prevent these.

I started by cutting out meat one day a week and making a vegetarian meal instead. This was easy so I started doing it twice a week and then for three days. Soon I began to look forward to my non-meat days as I was discovering many delicious foods that I'd never tried before. I also started to eat more fish which has many health benefits.

Within two months I'd lost nearly half a stone in weight. Although I hadn't actually had a weight problem, it was a nice surprise. Even better, my cholesterol level went down which I was especially pleased about. I certainly felt as fit as a fiddle. Many of my friends who still eat lots of red meat suffer from high cholesterol and I'm sure there's a connection.

Over time, I've found that the less meat I eat, the less I want to eat, and I'm now down to just cooking meat dishes at the weekends. Maintaining this diet is made easier by the fact that I live on my own so can cook and eat whatever I want to without being influenced by anyone else. If I had to cook a chicken casserole or steak pie for my family I don't think I'd be strong enough to resist eating it myself.

I don't think I'll ever cut out meat altogether as I enjoy it too much. I can say, however, that going partly vegetarian has definitely saved me money as meat has gone steadily up in price over the past few years. For this reason, as well as all the others I've mentioned, I would definitely recommend cutting down on meat.
1) Do you think people have become more health-conscious in recent years?
In my opinion, many people are more concerned about living a healthy lifestyle than, say, ten years ago and understand how to stay fit and healthy. Lots of adults of all ages go to the gym, cycle to work, jog in their spare time or have taken up a sport. The shops seem to offer more healthy eating options every week so the demand is obviously there.

On the other hand, I heard on the news that over 70% of the population of my country is overweight so most people aren’t taking good care of their health. There are lots of programmes on TV about health problems related to obesity and how to change your life and get healthier so I have to conclude that people are more conscious of health issues these days but that many choose to do nothing to improve them.

2) Why do some people choose to live unhealthy lives?
As someone who tries hard to live healthily, I find it hard to understand why many people chose unhealthy lifestyles. Personally, I think they are in denial over the long-term damage to their health of eating and drinking too much and not taking enough exercise. In many cases, it’s just laziness.

However, I do believe that there are some people who really do want to lose weight and get fit but find it very difficult to change their dietary habits or find the motivation to exercise. I have a work colleague who was so overweight and unfit that he couldn’t play football with his children. He was so upset by this that he went on a diet and started to take regular exercise. He lost over 40kg and is in really good shape now. More importantly, he can now run around with his kids and play football which they really love.

Sometimes it takes a situation like this or a health scare for someone to make better health decisions.

3) What are the health benefits of playing a sport?
In my view, there are many great health benefits to be gained from taking part in sports activities. Firstly, it helps you to stay physically fit and healthy, and to lose weight if that’s a problem.

Secondly, it’s good for your mental health as it can help to relieve stress and improve work-life balance. I find this myself. I can have a really difficult day at work but when I go out training on the river with my rowing crew in the evening, that stress disappears.

Finally, playing a sport is an excellent way of making new friends as you meet like-minded people who share your interest. Having good friends around you is also good for your mental health. If you play a team sport, training with your teammates pushes you to get fitter, so that’s an added advantage, and it’s fun to work out together.
Health Vocabulary for IELTS

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www.ieltsjacky.com/health-vocabulary.html