

# FIT TO SERVE

**S**piritual preparation is vital to a missionary's success. But physical and mental preparation are also required. The Missionary Department Health Services Committee has these suggestions for physical and mental readiness.

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

Start at least 2 years before your mission, and work with your doctor and dentist.

**Exercise regularly** (5–6 times a week). Missionaries need to be able to walk 6 miles a day and ride a bike 12 miles a day.

**Get enough sleep** (7–8 hours a day). Make a habit of being in bed between 10:30 p.m. and midnight and out of bed between 6:30 and 8:00 a.m.

**Maintain an appropriate weight** for your height.

**Eat healthy meals**, and learn to prepare them using proper sanitary and cooking methods.

**Practice good hygiene.** Wash your hands, care for your nails and hair, wear neat and clean clothes, and keep an orderly room.

**Resolve chronic problems.** Treat gastrointestinal, heart, or breathing problems; headaches; and athletic injuries or other orthopedic problems.

**Take care of your teeth.** Brush and floss your teeth, make regular dentist visits, and repair cavities. If you need orthodontic care (braces), complete it before your mission.

**Treat skin problems**, such as extreme acne.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Some concerns may require evaluation by a mental health counselor. Where available, use LDS Family Services.

**Emotional extremes** may require professional help. These include excessive feelings of depression, anxiety, or fear; mood swings; or problems with anger or temper.

**Obsessive thoughts** or extreme worry, guilt, perfectionism, or repetitive behavior (like hand-washing) may also require professional help.

**Treat extreme learning problems**, such as attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

**Resolve eating disorders**, such as excessive overeating or anorexia.

**Learn to be comfortable away from home** and parents.

**Overcome extreme shyness.** Learn to meet and talk to people, speak before groups, and be appropriately assertive.

**Learn to work hard and well and be reliable. *NE***

For ideas on health, go to [www.providentliving.org](http://www.providentliving.org).

