

A Toolkit for Making Healthy Lifestyle Changes

“When diagnosed with a health condition, people are often forced to make a lifestyle change. This can be both challenging and stressful. Learning about your condition and the roads others have travelled in dealing with the same issue can give you back some of the control you may feel you have lost.

There is no “one-size-fits-all” solution to lifestyle change. People have different styles and different needs. This toolkit offers a “buffet” of options from which you can choose. The idea is that you take a look around and find something that you like, whether it’s a targeted worksheet, online support, or a great book. Pick the resource (or combination) that you think will work for you.”

— Dr. Mike Evans

General Information

Healthy Eating



Visit online:

- [Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/guide/index_e.html) — This is a Canada’s gold standard when it comes to nutrition and meal planning. http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/guide/index_e.html
- **Modified Food Guide for Older Adults**
 - While based on the American Food Pyramid (similar to Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating, this is geared to help people 50 years and older (and especially those over 70) eat a healthy diet. As your body changes and you become less active later in life, you need less food to maintain your weight. www.nutrition.tufts.edu/consumer/pyramid.html
- This site offers a great outline of healthy foods, especially for people with diabetes. www.diabetes.ca/Section_About/about_basics.asp
- This site offers an interactive meal planner and education resource for people with diabetes. Developed by Medline Plus, the patient education resource from the National Library of Medicine, this is a simple but comprehensive starting point for people looking to understand the basics of nutrition. www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/diabetesmealplanning/htm/video.htm

Getting Active



Visit online:

- Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living for Older Adults
 - Older people often think that activity is just for younger people. This is simply not the case. This review exposes typical barriers to getting active and outlines beginner programs for those hoping to get started in a practical way. www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/older/why.html

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Websites and Online Tools

The Basics



Visit online:

- This site offers a great collection of tools to help you assess and improve your lifestyle. It includes everything from online BMI tables to diabetes risk calculators.
www.healthyontario.com/Health_Tools.htm

Worksheets



Visit online:

- This is an excellent Canadian site with a series of instructive worksheets on promoting good mental health and lifestyle change. They are based on quality information from well-conducted research. Each 4-page module is descriptive and interactive, describing key components of mental well-being and useful tips on handling the normal ups and downs of life. www.heretohelp.bc.ca/helpmewith/wellness.shtml

Weight Loss



Visit online:

- Weight Watchers has developed some excellent online tools but of course access to them isn't free. The cost is about \$40 initiation and \$22/month. This gives you access to the point system which outlines a simple way to stay on track with your food choices. It also provides a basic core healthy eating plan, many recipes, and access to an online community. Many of my patients find the online tools very helpful and feel they save money in the long run.
www.weightwatchers.ca

Smoking Cessation



Visit online:

- Health Canada's website offers some great tools to help you tackle your nicotine addiction, including important facts about the harmful effects of smoking, action plans and tracking records to motivate you, and a description of the 5 stages to quitting.
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/tobacco/quitting/index.html#tools
- This is a great website for anyone who wants to quit smoking. It offers lots of support through online discussion groups, motivational emails and program tools that are both fun and effective. www.stopsmokingcenter.net/
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation
 - This Canadian site has some excellent articles on smoking cessation including a 10 minute motivator.

<http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=38&SubCategoryID=129&Src=living&Type=Article>

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Bibliography

“Bibliotherapy is when we prescribe a book to improve the health and well-being of an individual. Some people do well with just advice from their caregiver or friends, but at other times sitting down with a book, especially one that is inspiring and based on high-quality research, is the best solution.”

— Dr. Mike Evans



Read:

- Claiborn, J., & Pedrick, C., ***The Habit Change Workbook: How To Break Bad Habits and Form Good Ones***. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger, 2001.
 - Let’s face it: change is difficult and many of us resist it. If you have one or two (or more!) habits that you really feel you need to change, this book will take you step-by-step through this process.
- Fletcher, Anne M., ***Thin for Life: 10 Keys To Success From People Who Have Lost Weight and Kept It Off***. Chapters Pub. Ltd., 1994.
 - This book has been around for a while but it looks at the practices of a rare species: the 5-20% of the population who are actually able to manage their weight over the longer term.
- Freeman, Mason W. and Junge, Christine E., ***Harvard Medical School Guide to Lowering Your Cholesterol***. McGraw-Hill, 2005.
 - For many, the first warning sign that a lifestyle change is needed is a lab test that shows their cholesterol is rising. This is a comprehensive and up to date guide for people who want to lower their cholesterol.
- Heller, Marla, ***The DASH Diet Action Plan***. Amidon Press, 2005.
 - The DASH diet has been proven to have a significant positive effect on blood pressure. The only problem with it is that it is based on a “feeding study” where the researchers pre-packaged the food. The authors of this book have attempted to convert the success of the trial to the average eating style of consumers.
- Lindsay, Anne, ***Anne Lindsay’s Lighthearted Everyday Cooking: Fabulous Recipes For A Healthy Heart***. CGD Books Canada Inc., 1991.
 - This Canadian classic outlines basic healthy meals that are heart friendly.
- Mosca, Lori, ***Heart to Heart: A Personal Plan For Creating A Heart-Healthy Family***. HCI, 2005.
 - We tend to focus on the individual but making lifestyle change is most likely if the whole family transforms their behaviour. This book explores healthy choices that every family member can make.
- Rippe, James M., ***Weight Watchers Weight Loss that Lasts***. John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd., 2004.
 - This book outlines the science behind weight loss and specifically outlines the Weight Watchers approach.
- Schlosberg S., ***Fitness for Dummies*** (3rd edition). John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd., 2005.
 - I find these books generally well researched and fun to read. This particular book covers state-of-the-art fitness techniques, equipment, programs, and health clubs in a practical, friendly way. They also have a version for people over 40.