

HEALTH

& Wellness

Fall 2022

A Special Supplement to

 **The
CALEDONIAN
RECORD** SINCE 1837

7 Ways To Reduce Breast Cancer Risk

Breast cancer is the second-most common cancer among women but there are ways for women to reduce their risk.

Strategies To Lose Weight Safely

The struggle millions of individuals experience



What To Do About Wellness After 50

7 Common Fitness Mistakes To Avoid



HEALTH & Wellness

- 4 Strategies To Lose Weight Safely
- 5 What To Do About Wellness After 50
- 6 What The Nutrients Found In Many Fruits And Vegetables Do For Your Body
- 7 Get Kids On A Healthy Track
- 8 What is Movember?
- 10 7 Ways To Reduce Breast Cancer Risk
- 11 7 Common Fitness Mistakes To Avoid



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Strategies To Lose Weight Safely

The struggle millions of individuals experience in regard to maintaining a healthy weight has led public health agencies to characterize overweight and obesity as a major public health crisis. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, nearly one in three adults in the United States are overweight, while more than 40 percent are considered obese. Data from Statistics Canada indicates individuals also are struggling with their weight in Canada, where nearly 27 percent of adults can be classified as obese and more than 36 percent are classified as overweight.



With so many adults in North America classified as overweight or obese, it's no wonder that fad diets and additional programs to lose weight are so easy to find. Individuals who are overweight or obese should aspire to lose weight, as doing so can lower their risk for various conditions, including some which can be deadly, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. But it's vital that individuals lose weight in a safe way that gives them the best chance to keep weight off. In recognition of that, the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers these tips to lose weight safely.

- Recognize what makes up a healthy weight loss program. Individuals have all sorts of options that promise to help them lose weight, but that doesn't mean each of those options is safe and/or effective. For example, the American Academy of Family Physicians notes that the typical fad diet is unhealthy and does not result in sustainable weight loss. Some such diets can even be dangerous to your overall health. The USDA describes healthy weight loss programs as those that consist of reasonable and realistic weight loss goals. A reduced-calorie, nutritionally-balanced eating plan is another feature of a healthy weight loss program. Such programs also should encourage routine physical activity and a plan to help people change their behaviors so they can stay on track and meet their goals.

- Know what to expect out of a healthy meal. The USDA notes that calories, portion sizes and nutrition all combine to make a healthy meal. Avoid high-calorie meals by limiting portion sizes. The online health resource Verywell Fit offers a useful breakdown that can help people determine healthy portion sizes:

- 1 palm: a serving of protein
- 1 fist: a serving of vegetables
- 1 thumb: a serving of fats
- 1 cupped hand: a serving of carbs

This breakdown can act as a guideline for individuals, who also can discuss appropriate portion sizes with their physicians or a licensed dietician.

- Change your lifestyle, not just your diet. A successful weight loss strategy will help individuals develop lifestyle habits that help them maintain healthy weights. Fad diets and other quick fixes only provide short-term weight loss, and the USDA urges individuals to avoid programs that they "go on" and "go off" at predetermined intervals. Long-term, healthy weight loss is achieved by changing one's lifestyle, which requires a permanent commitment to physical activity and healthy eating.

A significant percentage of adults in both the United States and Canada is considered overweight or obese. When attempting to lose weight, those individuals can look to a comprehensive approach rooted in healthy eating and routine exercise that can help them shed pounds and keep those pounds off for good.



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What To Do About Wellness After 50



Reaching one's fiftieth birthday in optimal health is an accomplishment to be proud of. The hard work required to be healthy in midlife includes adhering to a nutritious diet and exercising regularly. Once individuals cross the threshold and enter their 50s, they can look to some additional strategies to maintain their physical and mental well-being for decades to come.

- Get a pet. Many people 50 and older qualify as "empty nesters," a term applied to adults whose children have grown up and moved out of their homes. Some empty nesters experience a phenomenon known as "empty nest syndrome," which the Mayo Clinic notes can be marked by feelings of sadness or loss. Pets can help people over 50 with no children at home overcome feelings linked to empty nest syndrome. In 2018, the University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging found that 86 percent of pet owners felt their pets make them feel loved while 73

percent said their pets provided a sense of purpose. Pets also can ensure individuals over 50 stay physically active and provide opportunities to connect with other people.

- Prioritize learning. Whether it's taking music lessons, going back to school or mastering a new hobby, learning has a profound effect on aging brains. For example, a 2013 study published in the journal Psychological Science found that memory function is improved by engagement in demanding everyday tasks. That study reported that people who learned new skills experienced greater memory improvement than people who only socialized or participated in activities that were not as cognitively engaging.

- Make an effort to improve balance. Various factors contribute to a decline in balance as adults age. For example, a decline in muscle mass that begins when people are in their 30s is a normal part of aging. Over time, that natural decline affects strength and agility. Balance exercises can be a valuable component of a fitness regimen that help individuals reduce their risk for falling as they advance through their 50s and into their 60s and 70s. That's a significant benefit, as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one out of every three adults age 65 and older experiences a fall each year, and as many as 30 percent of those falls lead to serious injury.

- Embrace your inner socialite. Socialization is important for people of all ages, including individuals 50 and over. A 2017 study from researchers at Michigan State found that valuing friendships was a strong predictor of health and happiness among older adults. Opportunities to socialize with friends may increase as people navigate their 50s and children move out or become more independent. Individuals can take advantage of opportunities to socialize whenever possible.

Various strategies can help people maintain mental and physical wellness as they make their way through their 50s and beyond.



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The Riverside Life Enrichment Center is a non-profit adult day health services program providing day services to the elders and disabled adults of the Northeast Kingdom. Our program offers the necessary support to allow adults to remain in their homes and communities while also giving needed respite to family and other caregivers. Offering a wide range of services to meet the needs of everyone in attendance, including: health monitoring, nursing services, exercise therapy, recreational and social activities, and coordination of support services, transportation and a safe healthy environment.

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What The Nutrients Found In Many Fruits And Vegetables Do For Your Body

A nutritious diet can serve as a strong foundation for a long, healthy life. Fruits and vegetables are the building blocks of nutritious diets, as they're loaded with nutrients that serve the body in myriad ways.

• **Calcium:** Dark, leafy vegetables like kale, spinach, broccoli, and bok choy contain calcium. Calcium also is found in fruits, including papaya and orange. According to the National Institutes of Health, the body utilizes calcium to build and maintain strong bones. In fact, the NIH notes that almost all calcium in the body is stored in the bones and teeth, where this vital mineral provides structure and hardness. Calcium also helps nerves carry messages from the brain to every part of the body.

• **Dietary fiber:** Dietary fiber is found in various fruits and vegetables. The Cleveland Clinic notes that berries like raspberries and blackberries contain significant amounts of dietary fiber. Pears, artichoke hearts and Brussels sprouts are packed with fiber as well. A high-fiber diet helps stabilize bowel movements and maintain bowel health, and WebMD notes that studies have found a link between high-fiber diets and a lower risk for colorectal cancer. Studies also have linked fiber-rich foods with heart-friendly outcomes like reduced inflammation and lower cholesterol.

• **Magnesium:** The Mayo Clinic reports that magnesium

supports muscle and nerve function and energy production. Individuals with chronically low levels of magnesium could be at increased risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and osteoporosis. The NIH notes that magnesium is widely distributed in plants. That means it can be found in a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, including spinach, edamame, black beans, bananas, and broccoli. Magnesium levels vary significantly in these foods, so anyone concerned about magnesium deficiency can speak with their physicians about the best and healthiest ways to include more in their diets.

• **Vitamin A:** According to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, vitamin A stimulates the production and activity of white blood cells, helps maintain healthy cells that line the body's interior surfaces and regulates cell growth and division necessary for reproduction. Green, leafy vegetables are good sources of vitamin A, as are orange and yellow vegetables like carrots and squash. Vitamin A also can be found in cantaloupe, apricots and mangos.

• **Potassium:** The Dietary Guidelines for Americans established by the United States Department of Agriculture list beat greens, lima beans, swiss chard, baked potatoes (with skin), and yams as great sources of potassium. Kiwi, melon, cantaloupe, and bananas are

additional sources of potassium. The T.H. Chan School of Public Health reports that the main role of potassium in the body is to help maintain normal levels of fluid inside the cells. Potassium also supports a normal blood pressure.

The nutrients found in various fruits and vegetables go a long way toward building stronger, healthier bodies.



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Get Kids On A Healthy Track

Childhood obesity is a serious medical issue affecting children around the world, but notably in North America. While the issue has been around for decades, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says American children and teenagers have witnessed a significant increase in weight gain since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Younger school-aged children have been among the hardest hit during the pandemic. A study published in September 2021 found the percentage of obese children and teens increased to 22 percent compared with 19 percent before the pandemic. The CDC looked at the BMI of study subjects between March 1, 2020 and November 30, 2020. One of the study's authors, Dr. Alyson Goodman of the CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, described the results as "substantial and alarming."

Being less physically active, overweight and eating the wrong foods can start children on a path toward problems that once were only considered conditions of adulthood, namely hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol, offers the Mayo Clinic. To reverse course, parents, guardians and educators can focus on helping children become more physically fit. The following are a few ways to do so.

- Encourage participation in sports or other physical activities. Sports practices, games, competitions, and other activities may keep children moving for an hour or more several days per week. However, the American Academy of Pediatrics states that only 25 percent of children get the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Emphasize a fun activity with a focus on movement that produces shortness of breath, body warmth and sweat. These are indicators that the heart rate is really pumping.

- Use exercise as a reward and not a punishment. Make exercise something kids can look forward to. Reward a job well done on a test with extra time biking with friends or a hiking trip to a scenic national park. Kids will begin to associate exercise with fun.

- Offer a variety of foods. Kids who eat a variety of foods are more likely to get the nutrients the body needs, according to Kids Health® by Nemours. These healthy foods should include at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day, with an emphasis on vegetables.

- Limit screen time. Children may be inclined to entertain themselves by heading for the television, mobile phone or tablet first, especially after a year-

plus of being stuck indoors. But parents can make a concerted effort to limit kids' screen time in favor of more physically challenging pursuits.

- Teach healthy eating habits. A Harris Poll survey conducted on behalf of the American Psychological Association found that 61 percent of respondents age 18 and older reported a median weight gain of 15 pounds during the pandemic. Teach children that weight loss is accomplished when more calories are burned than consumed. Pay attention to portion sizes and explain how beverages like fruit juices can be sneaky sources of extra calories.

Children may need a little extra help getting fit, especially if they gained weight during the pandemic. Teaching healthy habits now can help kids enjoy healthy futures.



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What is Movember?

If you think you're seeing more moustaches lingering over men's upper lips as November unfolds, chances are your eyes are not deceiving you. November has long been synonymous with Thanksgiving and the start of the holiday season, but it's also taken on a whole new persona in recent years, and moustaches are a significant part of that new identity.

Arguably as popular as ever, Movember® is a public health-focused effort designed to raise awareness of and support research into men's health issues such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer and suicide. Men who participate in Movember typically begin growing moustaches on November 1 and keep them throughout the month.

The origins of Movember can be traced to 2003, when two men in Australia, Travis Garone and Luke Slattery, met for a beer in Melbourne. At that point in time, the popularity of moustaches had waned, but Garone and Slattery joked about restoring the stache to its once-lofty status. At the time, a friend's mother was fundraising for breast cancer, and Garone and Slattery were inspired to combine their efforts to bring back the moustache with efforts to raise awareness about men's health and prostate cancer. In a testament to the two friends' skills in the art of persuasion, they were able to find 30 men willing to take up the challenge to grow a moustache. Those who accepted the challenge agreed to follow the rules of Movember, which included paying \$10 to grow a moustache.

That initial campaign generated significant enthusiasm among the initial participants, so the following year a decision was made to formalize their

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efforts and officially support a worthy cause related to men's health. After some research, prostate cancer was chosen as the issue to formally support. The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, though not an official men's health partner of Movember, agreed to accept any funds generated by the 2004 campaign. By that time, 450 men, including some in Spain and the United Kingdom, had agreed to take part, ultimately raising more than AUD \$50,000.



Nearly 20 years later, the moustachioed movement to raise awareness about various men's health issues is still going strong, having funded more than 1,250 men's health projects since its inception. Individuals interested in learning more about Movember can visit us.movember.com.



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7 Ways To Reduce Breast Cancer Risk

Many women are concerned about the potential for developing breast cancer in their lifetimes. Breast cancer is the second-most common cancer among women in the United States and Canada. Despite that prevalence, there are ways for women to reduce their risk for breast cancer.

While it is impossible to change family history or genetic markers like gene mutations that increase breast cancer risk, the following are seven ways women can lower their risk.

1. Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight. Physical activity and monitoring calories can keep weight in check. The Mayo Clinic recommends at least 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity. Strength training at least twice a week also is recommended. Being overweight or obese increases a woman's risk for breast cancer.

2. Consume a healthy diet. The link between diet and breast cancer risk is still being studied. However, research suggests that a diet high in

vegetables and fruit, and calcium-rich dairy products, but low in red and processed meats may lower breast cancer risk.

3. Avoid or limit alcohol consumptions. Alcohol increases risk of breast cancer, even in small amounts. For those who drink, no more than one alcoholic drink a day should be the limit. The more a woman drinks, the greater her risk of developing breast cancer, states the Mayo Clinic.

4. Undergo genetic counseling and testing. Women concerned about a genetic connection or family history of breast cancer can speak to their doctor about testing and counseling that could help them reduce their risk. Preventive medicines and surgeries might help those at elevated risk for breast cancer.

5. Limit hormone therapy. Combination hormone replacement therapy for post-menopausal women may increase risk of breast cancer, indicates the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Similarly, taking oral contraceptives

during reproductive years may increase risk. Women can speak with their physicians to weigh the pros and cons of taking such hormones.

6. Breastfeed children, if possible. Breastfeeding has been linked to reducing a woman's risk of developing breast cancer.

7. Learn to detect breast cancer. Women should get to know their bodies so they can determine if something is awry as early as possible. Early detection of breast cancer increases the chances that treatment will prove successful.

Women can embrace various strategies to reduce their risk of developing breast cancer.



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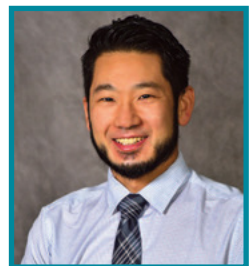
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7 Common Fitness Mistakes To Avoid

It is important to follow appropriate guidance when pursuing fitness goals. However, with so much information available online, it can be challenging to sift through the advice and determine what is safe and effective and what is not.

Fitness enthusiasts may make certain mistakes along the way to achieving their goals. Recognizing which practices should be avoided can lower risk of injury and produce the desired results.

1. Skipping warm-up

Warm-ups are vital before a workout. They help muscles in the body become acclimated to exercise by gradually building up heart rate and muscle flexibility and endurance. A warm-up can include walking, biking or light repetitions of exercises.

2. Getting caught up in "low-fat" foods

It is important to eat a balanced diet that includes real, wholesome foods, according to Lucky 13 Fitness. Many people fill their carts with sugar-free desserts or fat-free items thinking this is healthy eating. When fat or sugar is removed, chemicals often replace these ingredients. Rather than

embracing an extreme diet, focus on balance and moderation.

3. "Cheat days"

Some people operate under the assumption that the weekend or another less regimented day is an opportunity to let loose and stray from a diet and exercise regimen. This can be a mistake. A better approach is to find a routine that has enough balance so a person doesn't feel like he or she needs to go off the rails to indulge.

4. Using the "I'm busy" excuse

There is no such thing as being too busy to exercise. Making exercise a necessary part of a daily routine requires finding time for fitness. Individuals may need to squeeze in exercise in the early morning before work or school. If exercise seems to be getting in the way of family time, engage in a group workout with the kids or your spouse.

5. Pushing too hard

Many people exercise under the assumption that "more is more." Injuries can occur when one pushes too far in a workout, particularly if he or she is lifting

more weight than his or her body can handle. It is essential to give the body some time off to recuperate. Rest helps to prevent injuries.

6. Making vague goals

Establishing fitness goals helps people reach markers that make it easy for them to gauge their success. Statements like "I want to lose weight" or "I want to get stronger" make it hard to measure progress, as they lack specificity. It is much better to make firm goals, such as specific pounds to lose or being able to lift a certain amount of weight by a predetermined date.

7. Hopping from program to program

It's tempting to try everything the gym or the fitness world has to offer. It is better to learn the basics and stick with a program for some time before moving on to another one; otherwise, you may never have enough time to master any routine.

These are just a few of the fitness mistakes to avoid as you begin a journey to improved health and wellness.



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