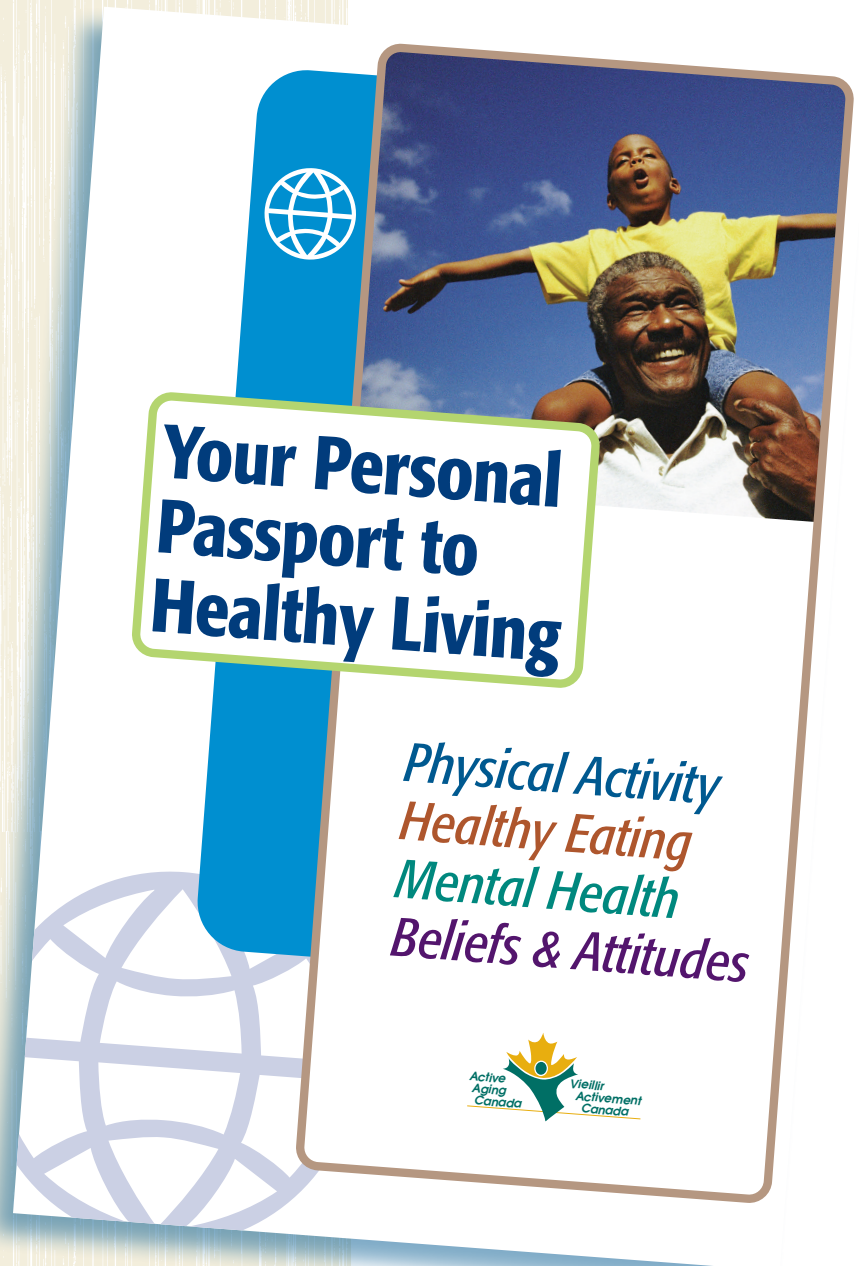


# Guidebook for Community Leaders

*To support use of*

## **Your Personal Passport to Healthy Living**

from  
**Active Aging Canada**



# Active Aging Canada Guidebook for Community Leaders

Active Aging Canada is pleased to provide you with this compendium of resources to assist you in offering Healthy Living Workshops for Older Adults.

These resources have had a long journey. The first edition of the *Community Leader's Guidebook* (2012) was created with a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada. It was developed based on our national consultation, which told us that evaluation and measurement tools would help leaders to better evaluate the success of their programs. This revised Guidebook will provide you with tips, resources, templates and of course lots of information and suggestions for your programs.

Our second resource was designed for use by your participants in a Healthy Living Workshop. *Your Personal Passport to Healthy Living*, (2012) was initially developed for primary or secondary diabetes prevention programs. Although there are still specific notes relating to diabetes in the Passport, older adults suggested that the workshop should be designed for overall healthy living and not focus only on diabetes. The Passport is specifically designed to inform, educate and inspire behaviour change in your older adult participants. The Passport is a separate resource and is available through the Active Aging Canada office.

The third resource included in this publication is the Tool Kit (revised 2021). Building on our previous work, the Tool Kit provides modules containing specific workshop lesson plans and resources for the 6-week Healthy Living Workshop for Older Adults.

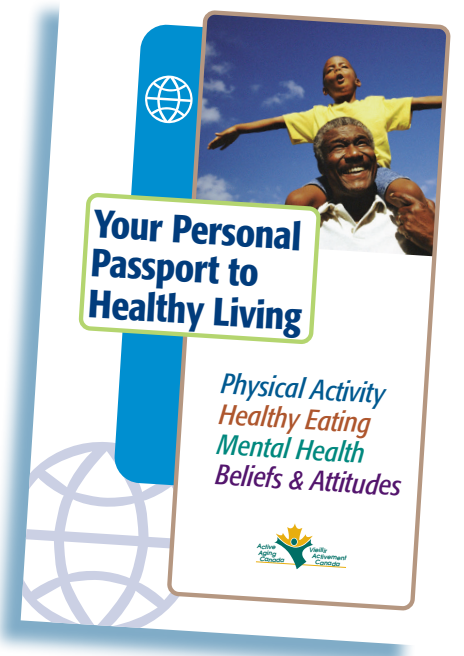
In 2021, with a financial contribution from the Seniors Community Grant Program, we were able to revise our resources and include additional content in order to offer the workshop in a virtual setting. The pandemic prevented many older adults from participating in group activities. We expect that when the pandemic is over, a hybrid approach to offering workshops will continue. Our resources will provide you with all the content, handouts and references needed to offer successful workshops either in person or virtually.

We sincerely hope that you will find these resources useful and effective in your group settings and we thank you for your support in promoting active healthy aging for older adults.

Yours in health,



Patricia Clark  
Active Aging Canada, National Executive Director



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**A digital version of this book can be found at:**

[www.activeagingcanada.ca/practitioners/resources/  
healthy-living-workshop.htm](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca/practitioners/resources/healthy-living-workshop.htm)

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## INTRODUCTION

### Two Tools For Your Use

- 🌐 A *Guidebook for Community Leaders* will provide information on references, training, program evaluation, individual measurements, tips, and resources
- 🌐 *Your Personal Passport to Healthy Living*, is a self-management tool for the older adult participant. It will evaluate change in four components: physical activity, healthy eating, mental health, and knowledge beliefs and attitudes. The tool is designed to motivate older adults, and serve as a baseline for program evaluation

Active Aging Canada is a partnership of organizations and individuals with an interest in the field of aging. Active Aging Canada encourages older Canadians (55+) to enhance and maintain their well-being and independence through a lifestyle that embraces daily physical activities.

Active Aging Canada has developed a measurement tool called *Your Personal Passport for Healthy Living* (referred to from here on as “the Passport”) that reflects best practice and the needs of older adults.

The *Guidebook for Community Leaders* (herein known as “the Guidebook”) was subsequently developed for community leaders to support them in using the Passport to motivate older adults and to assist in evaluating their programs. Both the Passport and Guidebook are for use by non-clinical, community-based leaders. These resources will help leaders deliver programs in their community settings to older adults who are interested in making healthy living choices in their life, or have or are at risk for developing Type 2 diabetes.

## Using the Guidebook for Community Leaders with Your Personal Passport to Healthy Living

This section contains the following information:

- 🌐 The purpose of the *Guidebook for Community Leaders*.
- 🌐 Preparation on using the Passport.
- 🌐 Evaluating your program.
- 🌐 Facilitating communication.

The Passport is a self-management tool that has been developed to assist with prevention and management of diabetes among older adults who have, or are at risk of developing, Type 2 diabetes. The Passport is a booklet written in plain language providing information on Type 2 diabetes. It also includes steps that can be taken to address risk factors for diabetes and other chronic diseases. The content is evidence-informed and has been quality assured by professionals with knowledge of Type 2 diabetes and experience working with an older adult population.

The Passport invites older adult participants to make lifestyle changes by providing tips, checklists, and logs to measure their progress throughout the program. Great care has been taken to consult with professionals, community leaders and older adults across Canada to ensure the development of a useful tool that can be used in programs by community leaders or individually by motivated older adults.



***The universe is change; our life is what our thoughts make it.***

*Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*

## 1.1 The Purpose of the Guidebook

The Passport and the Guidebook are designed with you, the non-clinical community leader, in mind

The Guidebook will support community leaders who choose to integrate the Passport into their current program. As a non-clinical community-based leader working with individuals who have or are at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, you may be asking, “Do I have the knowledge and skills to assist them in setting goals and achieving the health benefits from my program?” Don’t panic – you don’t have to be an expert on diabetes in order to help them! The Passport and the Guidebook are designed with you, the non-clinical community leader in mind. They will provide you with the knowledge and skills you need to help the older adults get the greatest possible benefits from your program and also to assist you in evaluating the effectiveness of your program. While the Passport is designed for use by the older adults in your programs, the Guidebook will assist you in facilitating the use of the Passport, providing you with:

- information on the risk factors, signs and symptoms, and prevention of Type 2 diabetes;
- ethics of using the Passport with individuals and groups;
- insight on motivating behavior change in older adults;
- tips on facilitating groups in using the Passport;
- suggestions on how to measure participant progress and the success of your program;
- guidelines around the successful use of the Passport and
- resource and reference materials.

As with the Passport, there is no right or wrong way to use the Guidebook. It is meant to be a resource to assist you, the community leader, in helping participants to achieve the maximum health benefits from your program. The Guidebook follows the sections in the Passport, aligning facilitation tips and information, e.g. setting goals etc., to an appropriate section. When you are planning your program you can use the sections in any order, but it is suggested that you start with Section 2.

Each section in the Guidebook contains the following:



Information



Suggestions



Activities



Resources

Go through the Passport and decide on how much you want to integrate the Passport into your program. The length of your sessions is up to you and your assessment of your group, so base your objectives for the session on how much time you have and plan accordingly. For each session decide on the main points that you want to get across. This may differ depending on your group and what they are looking to achieve. A session using the Passport usually includes:

- Planning and preparation.
- Group work;
  - Introduction
  - Activities and/or discussion

You also need to consider your beliefs and values as a community leader – see Section 5 on Ethics.



Your Personal Passport to Healthy Living was created as a measurement and evaluation tool to be used in community-based primary and secondary diabetes prevention programs. It has been designed for use by non-clinical community leaders for two key purposes:

- a) to inform, educate and motivate older adults and
- b) to assist you with program evaluation.

The Passport serves as a self-evaluation tool for older adults to measure their progress in a confidential document that belongs to the individual. It is unethical to use the information for program evaluation without consent (for more information on Ethics see Section 5). For this reason the Guidebook includes a definition of program evaluation, tips for applying the Passport to evaluating your program, and also information on types of program evaluation, scenarios (Section 6), and samples of a variety of tools that you may be able to use.

Active Aging Canada is aware of the importance of confidentiality and therefore has included a one page evaluation form in the Passport. This form is to be completed by the participant and submitted to Active Aging Canada to assist in evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the Passport.

## Preparation – Using the Passport

1.2

## Evaluating Your Program

1.3

Active Aging Canada is aware of the importance of confidentiality and therefore has included a one page evaluation form in the Passport. This form is to be completed by the participant and submitted to Active Aging Canada to assist in evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the Passport.

## 1.4 Facilitating Communication

As a community leader, you will be a facilitator of change, a facilitator of a program and possibly a facilitator of groups in your organization. As a facilitator it is essential that you are seen as open to diverse perspectives and positive with intentions. To be an effective facilitator you must be able to:

- 🌐 communicate effectively;
- 🌐 facilitate group dynamics;
- 🌐 manage;
- 🌐 relate to others;
- 🌐 value differences;
- 🌐 validate knowledge from experience and education;
- 🌐 believe that those most affected by a problem have ideas on how to solve the problem; and
- 🌐 analyze and conceptualize.



For more facilitation information visit the Active Aging Canada website [www.activeagingcanada.ca](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca).

***It is never too late  
to become what you  
might have been.***

*George Eliot*



## Introducing the Passport to Others

2

This section contains the following information:

- 🌐 Using the Passport – What is *Your Personal Passport to Healthy Living?*
- 🌐 Diabetes and Active Living – What I need to know
- 🌐 Other Chronic Diseases



The Passport provides information on diabetes and other chronic diseases that can be prevented or better managed with a healthy lifestyle. This can include the benefits of physical activity, good healthy eating, mental health, and information on the influence of beliefs and values and stages of change. It provides tips for action to improve overall health. The Guidebook for Community Leaders is designed to provide additional tools and information to support clients in using the Passport.

The Passport is a self-management tool that has been developed to assist with primary and secondary prevention of diabetes among older adults who have or are at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

The content is evidence-informed and has been quality assured by professionals with knowledge of Type 2 diabetes and experience working with an older adult population. It is written in plain language. The Passport invites older adult participants to consider making small lifestyle changes by providing:

- 🌐 tips,
- 🌐 checklists, and
- 🌐 logs to measure their progress through a program.

## Using the Passport – What is the Passport?

2.1

Active living involves a holistic approach to health and wellness that is incorporated into daily living

**Icon Key**

Information	
Suggestions	
Activities	
Resources	

## Preparation

Plan your sessions so that you know what you are going to be doing at each meeting. You can use the suggestions and activities as an aid if you wish.

### Facilitator tip:

In preparing a plan you can think about the:

- tasks;
- relationships and the characteristics of the person or group that might be important;
- learning styles;
- literacy level;
- gender, culture, language and
- socio-economic group.

If you would like more information on facilitating please visit the Active Aging Canada website: [www.activeagingcanada.ca](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca)

Think about an icebreaker for the first session. If you wish you can ask everyone to state what their favorite food is or ask the group a little bit about themselves. For other ideas you can Google “icebreakers”.

### The session(s) – Introduction



Introduce yourself to the group and get everyone to introduce themselves as well. For the first meeting you could ask participants what they are hoping to get out of coming to the course.

### Ethical tips:

- People need to be assured that the information they, as participants, write in their Passport is confidential to them.
- All thoughts, ideas, and experiences shared by participants will be kept confidential and not shared with others outside of the group, unless otherwise decided upon.
- Include some time to set ground rules for the group; keep them in sight when you are meeting.

See the Ethics section (section 5) for more information.



Encourage your participants to personalise their Passport. There is a space at the front where a participant can place a picture or words of encouragement. They could include a group photo of family or friends or maybe a photo of a place they would like to visit. They might want to include their favourite quote.



Give out the Passports and take people through them so that they can familiarize themselves with the booklet. Tell them that you will be going through all of the sections as you go through the course.

### Facilitator tip:

There are three steps to an activity:

1. Introducing and explaining the activity.
2. Participating in the activity.
3. Discussing the results of the activity.



Type 2 diabetes is a disease in which a person’s pancreas does not produce enough insulin, or their body does not properly use the insulin it makes. A healthy body gets energy by making glucose from foods like bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, milk and fruit. To use this glucose, your body needs insulin, which is produced in the pancreas. Insulin is a hormone that helps your body control the level of glucose (sugar) in your blood. If a person has Type 2 diabetes, glucose builds up in the blood instead of being used for energy. Type 2 diabetes is a progressive, life-long condition; over time, it may be more difficult to keep your blood glucose levels in your target range. Left untreated or improperly managed, diabetes can result in a variety of complications, including heart disease, kidney disease, eye disease, problems with erection (impotence), and nerve damage.

Today, more than ever before, people with diabetes can expect to live active, independent and vital lives if they make a lifelong commitment to careful management of the disease. It is important to be tested for Type 2 diabetes. Taking steps to prevent or manage diabetes also prevents and manages many other chronic diseases and promotes health throughout life.

### Signs and Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of diabetes include the following:

- Unusual thirst
- Frequent urination
- Weight change (gain or loss)
- Extreme fatigue or lack of energy
- Blurred vision
- Frequent or recurring infections
- Cuts and bruises that are slow to heal
- Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet
- Trouble getting or maintaining an erection

## Diabetes and Active Living – What I Need to Know

Icon Key

Information

Suggestions

Activities

Resources






It is important to recognize, however, that many people who have Type 2 diabetes may display no symptoms.

**Risk factors**

There are risk factors for Type 2 diabetes that cannot be changed:


- Age
- Family history of diabetes
- Ethnic background – Aboriginal, Hispanic, Arabic, South Asian, Asian, and African descent are higher risk groups
- A history of gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy)

But there are also modifiable risk factors (things that can be changed):

- Being overweight, especially if most of the weight is carried around the middle
- Inactivity
- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- Excessive alcohol intake
- Obstructive sleep apnea
- Not eating well
- High cholesterol or high triglycerides

However, lifestyle changes can help manage blood sugars and control diabetes.

The modifiable risk factors for addressing Type 2 diabetes are the same risk factors for many other chronic diseases. Physical activity, proper healthy eating and some simple changes in lifestyle can play a role in preventing diabetes and other chronic diseases.



For more information please go to:

[www.diabetes.ca/type-2-risks/risk-factors---assessments](http://www.diabetes.ca/type-2-risks/risk-factors---assessments)

**Individual measurement – how do I assess individuals at risk?**

For non-medically trained community leaders, assessment of risk factors for Type 2 diabetes may feel a bit daunting. The Passport provides space on page 11 “Tips for Success” where participants can record information on the following:

- Height
- Weight
- Waist girth
- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol
- Blood sugar

They can update this information after each health checkup so they can see their progress. Healthy ranges for these results are included in the Passport so that individuals can understand whether their tests are within a healthy range, or whether they are at risk. These same healthy ranges can help you appreciate the risk level of your participants. For example, knowing the normal levels of blood sugar and cholesterol will help you understand whether your participants are at risk or have been diagnosed with health problems that lifestyle modification can help to control.

It will be helpful for you to initially concentrate on a few easy calculations such as weight and waist girth or circumference. Encourage your participants to visit their local health clinic or doctor so they can record the results of their blood work and blood pressure in their Passport. You can also have a self-regulated blood pressure cuff at your facility to assist participants with monitoring blood pressure.

**Waist Circumference**

The waist circumference provides an indicator of abdominal fat. Excess fat around the waist and upper body (also described as an ‘apple’ body shape) is associated with a greater health risk than fat located more in the hip and thigh area (described as a ‘pear’ body shape).

A waist circumference at or above 102 cm (40 in.) for men, and 88 cm (35 in.) for women, is associated with an increased risk of developing health problems such as diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. The cut-off points are approximate, so a waist circumference just below these values should also be taken seriously.

In general, the risk of developing health problems increases as waist circumference increases above the cut-off points listed above.

**Here’s how to take a proper waist measurement**

1. Clear your abdominal area of any clothing, belts or accessories. Stand upright facing a mirror with your feet shoulder-width apart and your stomach relaxed. Wrap the measuring tape around your waist.
2. Use the borders of your hands and index fingers – not your fingertips – to find the uppermost edge of your hipbones by pressing upwards and inwards along your hipbones.

**Tip:** Many people mistake an easily felt part of the hipbone located toward the front of their body as the top of their hips. This part of the bone is in fact not the top of the hip bones, but by following this



***A leader is a dealer in hope.***

*Napoleon Bonaparte*



**Leadership is not about changing the mindset of a group, but in the cultivation of an environment that brings out the best and inspires the individuals in that group.**

Arthur F. Carmazzi

spot upward and back toward the sides of your body, you should be able to locate the true top of your hipbones.

- 3. Using the mirror, align the bottom edge of the measuring tape with the top of the hipbones on both sides of your body.

**Tip:** Once located, it may help to mark the top of your hipbones with a pen or felt-tip marker in order to aid you in correctly placing the tape.

- 4. Make sure the tape is parallel to the floor and is not twisted.
- 5. Relax and take two normal breaths. After the second breath out, tighten the tape around your waist. The tape should fit comfortably snug around the waist without depressing the skin.

**Tip:** Remember to keep your stomach relaxed at this point. Still breathing normally, take the reading on the tape.

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**The Results**

WC Cut-off Points	Risk of developing health problems*
Men ≥ 102 cm (40 in.) Women ≥ 88 cm (35 in.)	Increased

\*Risk for type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, hypertension.

Adapted from: WHO (2000) Obesity: Preventing and Managing the Global Epidemic: Report of a WHO Consultation on Obesity.

 For a downloadable version of “How to measure your waist” visit the Heart and Stoke Foundation website at: [www.heartandstroke.ca/healthy-living/healthy-weight/healthy-weight-and-waist](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/healthy-living/healthy-weight/healthy-weight-and-waist)


Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure that uses a calculation of weight and height to help understand a person’s risk for health conditions like diabetes and heart disease. It is more helpful when it is used along with a measure of a person’s waist circumference (WC). Participants in your group may want to use BMI and WC to help track their progress if weight loss is their goal. If they are hoping to make more important health decisions based on these numbers, they should speak to their doctor who can use these values along with their entire medical file to advise them.


The BMI has a few limitations, for example it may not be as accurate for people over 65 years old or Chinese, South Asian, and Aboriginal people. For more informaiton on BMI: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/healthy-eating/weights-poids/guide-ld-adult/cg\\_quick\\_ref-ldc\\_rapide\\_ref-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/healthy-eating/weights-poids/guide-ld-adult/cg_quick_ref-ldc_rapide_ref-eng.php)

**Preparation**


Read the information on Diabetes prior to your session. Go to this link to shop for resources: [www.diabetes.ca/shop](http://www.diabetes.ca/shop). You can order these leaflets from [orders.diabetes.ca](http://orders.diabetes.ca), however you will have to pay for shipping and handling.


**The sessions**

 If you or your participants have Internet access you can go to this website [Health Canada Diabetes Questionnaire](http://HealthCanada.ca/DiabetesQuestionnaire) to assess your risk for pre-diabetes.

 If you have internet access you could show a video from the American Diabetes Association “What is Diabetes” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHIWM8\\_iqfA&list=PL7w2f4Xy5xYoA\\_a69dB64ZrINHxpBiUA0&index=8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHIWM8_iqfA&list=PL7w2f4Xy5xYoA_a69dB64ZrINHxpBiUA0&index=8)

or from Diabetes UK: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SZGM\\_E5cLI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SZGM_E5cLI)

 To help people know what help and support is available to them in their area, get the group to brainstorm facilities in their community. You could create a list for them to give out at the next session. Use the Engaging Your Community handout on page 62.

 Ask people in the group what being a Type 2 diabetic means to them or what they know about Diabetes. Capture their thoughts on a flip chart; you will require a flip chart and marker pens. Use the information you have gathered from the Passport, this Guidebook and the above resources to prompt a discussion.

**Evaluation tip:**

You could capture their thoughts on a flipchart and refer back to it at the end of the course to see if anything has changed.

**Group work**

2.2.1

The Passport is designed to help older adults self-assess their current lifestyle and to record and note success along the way.

### **Ethical tip:**

Ensure your group knows that you will refer back to this at the end of the course and why.



You could do some group work (either in one large group or split your participants into smaller groups) to discuss what their signs and symptoms were, or what they know could be the signs and symptoms. Make sure that the signs and symptoms identified in the information section above is covered.

### **Facilitator tips:**

- When leading discussions, give people a chance to share their feelings or what they learned from each other.
- Asks questions that help people name what they experienced; look for connections and add other ideas.
- Summarize the outcome of the discussion.



You could do an activity with each group drawing a diabetes life line. Ask people what are the key points related to diabetes and awareness of diabetes in their life or in the lives of others around them. Think about how that impacted on their lives and the changes it made to them.

Ask people to plot the risk factors along the lifeline. For example at the beginning you can put family history, ethnic background etc. Ask the group to state which factors are within their control and those which are not. Then get the group to identify factors within or outside of their control. Identify them on the line by using different colour marker pens.

### **Facilitator tips:**

When introducing the activity, explain the purpose of the activity and describe how it's done step by step. Tell them the time allowed and ask if everyone is clear on what to do and check for understanding. Then distribute the materials needed. If the activity is in small groups, give ideas on how to divide, and suggest work spaces for small groups.

To do this activity you will need to consider:

- the number of people;
- time available;
- characteristics of people and
- physical space.



You could ask people to fill in the "At Risk" sheet accessed from [www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/en/canrisk](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/en/canrisk) and record their measurements in their Passport and then take the necessary action (i.e. see their health professional).

### **Making a referral**



Making a referral to a health practitioner is good practice when you identify a person at risk. Discuss concerns with the older adult and explore medical resources in your area such as:

1. Do they have a family doctor?
2. Is there a walk in clinic in your area?
3. Is there a diabetes assessment clinic?

Each community has different services to provide medical assessment of risk factors for diabetes and other chronic diseases. Therefore, it will be important for you to be aware of what is available to support your program as you use this Passport and Guide.

All these chronic diseases are 'lifestyle diseases'. This means that you can prevent and manage them with a healthier lifestyle. It's a big challenge to change habits of 30 or 40 years. We suggest that you encourage your participants to make this a lifetime journey, starting with small steps and making simple changes. Encourage your participants to build these changes into their daily routine.

Information on the following chronic diseases can be found in the Passport:

- Heart Disease & Stroke
- Cancer
- Arthritis
- Dementia
- Osteoporosis

### **Preparation**

Read the information on chronic diseases contained in the Passport. For further information see the following websites:

[www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)  
[arthritis.ca](http://arthritis.ca)  
[osteoporosis.ca](http://osteoporosis.ca)

[www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)  
[alzheimer.ca/en](http://alzheimer.ca/en)

## **Other Chronic Diseases**

2.3

### **Group work**

2.3.1


## 2.4 Foot Care for People with Diabetes

### 2.4.1 Group work

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Information	
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### The sessions – Introduction

Introduce the session by saying what you are going to cover in your session.


 Divide the group into 2 or 3 participants and ask them to talk about and write down on a flip chart all the information they know about the above chronic diseases. Ask them to provide feed back to the rest of the group. Add any information that has not been captured by asking open questions.

Sometimes, people with diabetes can have nerve damage resulting in a loss of sensation to their feet and hands. There may be numbness and no feeling of pain that could result in ulcers and poor wound healing. Don't take chances. Chronic wounds are ulcers or sores on the skin that last longer than they should.

### Preparation

Review the information in the Passport and visit the website below for further information.


[www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/240-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you](http://www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/240-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you)

 If you know of a podiatrist or a nurse that has been trained in foot care, invite them to the group to talk about foot care. Encourage your participants to look in their Passport and assess their feet against the checklist provided. Ask them to look at the helpful hints to help treat their feet with care and to ask their doctor about any wound or sore that will not heal. Wounds Canada has some handouts on foot care and Diabetes that can be downloaded or ordered from their website:

[www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public](http://www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public)

[www.woundscanada.ca/for-clinicians#posters](http://www.woundscanada.ca/for-clinicians#posters)

[www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/90-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you](http://www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/90-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you)





 Encourage your participants to complete the checklist below in their Passport and to see their health professional if there are any concerns.

- ☐ Are your feet numb, painful, or tingling?
- ☐ Do your feet feel like blocks of wood?
- ☐ Are your feet changing shape?
- ☐ Does one foot look or feel different than the other?
- ☐ Are your feet dry, callused, or cracked?
- ☐ Do they have sores or blisters?


## Using the Passport to Motivate Change and Achieve Success

3


This section will enable you and your participants to think about and prepare for the changes ahead and will help you and your group to succeed. It contains:



-  Motivating older adults
-  Stages of change
-  Impact of Active Living in Prevention of Diabetes and other Chronic Diseases
-  Goal Setting

### Lifestyle Change – How can I motivate lifestyle change in older adults?

 In this section we have included information on factors that motivate older adults as well as identifying some barriers to participating in active living programs. We are hoping that this information can assist you in designing your programs. We have also elaborated on the stages of change included in the Passport so that you can have examples to help you in assessing the stage of your participants.

#### How are older adults motivated?

 What motivates older adults (age 55+) to stay active or become more active? In a survey conducted with older adults by Active Aging Canada in 2007, their responses included:

-  Social interaction (42%) (Companionship, being active with partner, meeting new people, getting out of house/home, laughing)
-  Stay active in mind and body (45%) (To be healthy, stay in shape, feel good about myself, rehab, to live longer,

### Motivating Older Adults

3.1



**Change in all things is sweet.**

*Aristotle (384-322 BC)  
Greek philosopher*

**3.1.1 Group work**

learning new things, feel good, acquire more energy, maintain healthy weight, and decrease health issues associated with aging, to be mobile and independent, to be productive)

- 🌐 Fun/enjoyment (13%)

Other studies have reported that grandchildren were also a motivator to stay active.

**Barriers** to physical activity are consistent across all recent research and include:

- 🌐 Accessibility – transportation, class times, safety issues to get to the facility
- 🌐 Programs – safety (fear of injury), suitability, availability, insufficient information, leadership
- 🌐 Cost – programs, transportation to facility
- 🌐 Psycho-social support – motivation, social interaction
- 🌐 Existing physical limitations such as a past injury
- 🌐 Enjoyment of sedentary living, to overcome this mindset

Barriers to healthy living also include socio-economic status – whether a person has an income to support healthier choices.

It is important in using the Guidebook that a Community Leader is sensitive to various socio-economic and cultural conditions and uses these preferences in designing a program and coaching lifestyle change.

The Passport is designed to help older adults self-assess their current lifestyle and to record and note success along the way. It cannot address the barriers, but does recognize the importance of social supports. In designing programs, it is important that you as a leader are aware of the motivators and barriers to active living for older adults and work with participants and your community in addressing them. The more skill you have in motivating a change in lifestyle for older adults, the more likely they will live longer and live more productive lives.

**Preparation**

Read through the section below so you have an understanding of change and the process we go through when determining whether to change or not. Plan your sessions so that you know what you are going to be doing at each meeting, you can use the suggestions and activities as an aid if you wish.

**The sessions - Introduction**

Introduce the session and what you are going to cover. Do this for each session that you have for this section.



Remind participants of what they have put in the front of their Passport to motivate them.



Ask the group to share and discuss what motivates them to do things and what is stopping them from undertaking activities. In the notes pages at the back of the Passport, ask participants to write down what motivates them to do things and what stops them. Ask them to think about the personal barriers to change that they have and note those down as well.



We go through different stages when we are going to make a change in our life. We can go back and forth with the stages as we go through them. It is important that you, as a community leader, have an understanding of the stages of change so that you can support older adults in moving from one stage to the next. Participants will need support and acknowledgement that change takes time.

**The Process of Change**



**Precontemplation**

- 🌐 This is the “don’t bug me” stage.
- 🌐 There is no intention of making a change right now.
- 🌐 It is like being in a “denial” state.
- 🌐 This is the time to think about what you want to change and get information on it.

*Ex. “There is no use in changing what I bake at home. Everyone prefers doughnuts anyway.”*

**Stages of Change**

**3.2**

Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.

Corrie Ten Boom

Contemplation

- This is the first big step.
- There is more serious thoughts to making the change.
- The more reasons there are to make the change, the easier it is to go to the next step.

Ex. "Okay, I guess there are good reasons for healthier snacks for me and my family. We could all use with better eating habits."

Preparation

- This is when you get serious.
- Plans are under way to make the change in the near future.
- Steps are starting toward making the change.

Ex. "I will get information on healthier snacks to chose."

Action

- The big leap has been made.
- There is a successful change in behavior.

There has been success however, there will be slip ups. Ensure your participants know that they will slip up – but get them to feel that this is OK – just get back to making good choices.

Ex. "I noticed that I am eating healthier snacks. There are better choices than doughnuts, and they even taste good!"

Maintenance

- The change has been successful for the last six months.

Ex. "I have chosen to always have healthier snacks and food served for me and my family."

Here is what you can say to your participants. There may be times when the going is not so easy or you slip off your road, but hang in there! Think about how much better you feel! Brag about it! If you go backwards, don't feel guilty, just get back on board, again!

Make sure your participants recognize and celebrate their success.

There are several processes that individuals go through to move from one stage to the next. The suggested activities in this guide, follow these processes and will help to move people through the stages.



For more information on the processes and stages of change, refer to the following resource:  
Prochaska, J., Norcross, J., DiClemente, C. *Changing for Good, A Revolutionary six-stage program for overcoming bad habits and moving your life positively forward.* William Morrow & Co., New York. 1994.

Preparation

Read through this section before your meeting; think about the changes you have made in your life and whether you went through this cycle. Try and think about changes you could share with the group.

The sessions – Introduction

Introduce the session and what you are going to cover. Do this for each session that you have for this section.



Draw the cycle of change on a flipchart. Explain each phase, and get the group to think about a specific lifestyle change. If you feel comfortable, share your experience of change with the group. Ask the group how they feel about changing their lifestyle and whether any of them have done this before. Also get the group to think about what changes they would like to make, such as getting more exercise. Ask the participants to go through the checklist on page 22-23 and record how they feel about their beliefs and attitudes at home. Refer the group to pages 24-25 in their Passport and ask them to pick which stage they are at with respect to healthy eating and physical activity habits.



At the middle and end of the program, ask participants to record their beliefs and attitudes, to see if they have made any changes. If you can, ask them to share with the group.



Ask participants to think about and write in the notes pages at the back of their Passport "In order for me to maintain this lifestyle, I will:..."

Group work

3.2.1

Icon Key

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Resources



### 3.3 Impact of Active Living in Prevention of Diabetes and Other Chronic Diseases

#### 3.3.1 Group work

Icon Key

Information

Suggestions

Activities

Resources








Growing older is an experience we all share and many of us worry about. As we age, we face many changes and sources of stress that make it difficult to cope, but it can be done. The changes and keys to coping with aging are shown in the table below.

Changes	Coping strategies
we are not as strong as we used to be	a positive long-term lifestyle
we may become lonely	the strength of relationships with family and friends
eventually we must give up our jobs and retire	a willingness to stay interested in and involved with life

#### Preparation

Read through the information below and think about the changes in your life and what strategies you have used to cope with stressors.

#### The sessions



Refer back to the previous activity and discuss the coping strategies above in relation to the changes identified. Get the group to think through some positive coping strategies as outlined above. Ask your participants what they feel about them and if they can see a way to use them. It is very important to help your participants to think carefully about what will happen with aging and how they are going to deal with the changes that will happen. Share your story with the group if you feel you can. Refer the group to pages 22-23 in their Passport and ask them to complete the checklist on page 23.

Content adapted from [www.mindtools.com/page6.html](http://www.mindtools.com/page6.html)



Setting a goal gives a person something to focus on. As a community leader, try to encourage everyone to set at least one goal for the program. They may want to choose one of the sections in the Passport to focus a goal (e.g. healthy eating, physical activity, mental health).

#### Specific

A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal, ask the participant to answer the six “W” questions:

- Who: Who is involved?
- What: What do I want to accomplish?
- Where: Identify a location.
- When: Establish a time frame.
- Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
- Why: Outline specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

EXAMPLE: A general goal would be, “Get in shape.” But a specific goal would say, “Join a health club and workout 3 days a week.”

#### Measurable

Encourage the participant to establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal they set. When participants measure their progress, it will help them to stay on track, reach target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that will spur them on to continued effort required to reach their goal.

To determine if a goal is measurable, ask questions such as, How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

#### Attainable

When each person has identified goals that are most important to them, they begin to figure out ways to make them come true. They develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them. They begin seeing previously overlooked opportunities that will bring themselves closer to the achievement of their goals.

Anybody can attain almost any goal when a person plans their steps wisely and establishes a time frame that allows them to carry out those steps. Goals that may have seemed far away and out of reach eventually move closer and become attainable, not because goals shrink, but because the person grows and expands to match them. When a person lists their goals, they build self-image and see

### Goal Setting 3.4

*Leadership consists not in degrees of technique but in traits of character; it requires moral rather than athletic or intellectual effort, and it imposes on both leader and follower alike the burdens of self-restraint.*

*Lewis H. Lapham*

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themselves as worthy of these goals. They then develop the traits and personality that allows them to possess them.

**Realistic**

To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which a person is both willing and able to work. A high goal is frequently easier to reach than a low one because a low goal exerts low motivational force. Some of the hardest jobs you ever accomplished actually seem easy simply because they were a labour of love.

A goal is probably realistic if you truly believe that it can be accomplished. Additional ways to know if your goal is realistic is to determine if you have accomplished anything similar in the past or ask yourself what conditions would have to exist to accomplish this goal.

**Timely**

A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there’s no sense of urgency. If you want to lose 10 lbs., when do you want to lose it by? “Someday” won’t work. But if you anchor it within a timeframe, “by May 1st”, then you’ve set your unconscious mind into motion to begin working on the goal.

**Tangible**


A goal is tangible when you can experience it with one of the senses, that is, taste, touch, smell, sight or hearing. When your goal is tangible you have a better chance of making it specific and measurable and thus attainable.






**Preparation**


Getting some practice and setting goals for yourself will help you in facilitating goal setting with your participants. Read through the information above and think about your goals. Are they specific? Are they achievable? Perhaps you want to set some goals of your own on healthy living.

**The sessions**


 Have each person create a S.M.A.R.T. goal(s) using the information and examples below to guide goal setting, going through each one separately. Suggest your participants write them down in their Passport on page 29.

 Suggest to your participants that they think about how they are going to make the change.



-  Think about how you are going to make the change. What are the benefits for you? Tell yourself “you can do it.”
-  Encourage the participants to write in the Setting Goals section in their Passport, “To do this, I need to: ….”

 Refer back to the goals regularly and using the cycle of change ask the participants to explain where they are in terms of achieving the goal. For example, if someone has decided they are going to eat more vegetables you can ask them whether they are in contemplation, action or maintenance.

You won’t get to second base until you get your foot off of first!


-  Start planning to make the change.

Find out about self-help groups. Gather information and check out resources. Make the appointment. Ask someone to join you for support.

-  Encourage the participants to write in the Setting Goals section in their Passport, “I will start the plan on: ….”
-  Go for it!

Start making the change. Small changes can add up to a big change.

Encourage participants to write about the improvements they have made in their Passport

 Suggest they use pages 30–31 in their Passport to track their progress.

**Group work**





3.4.1

*Probably my best quality as a coach is that I ask a lot of challenging questions and let the person come up with the answer.*

*Phil Dixon*

## Encouraging Healthy Lifestyles

This section provides some activities that complement the handouts in the resource section at the back of the Guidebook. This section contains group work on:

-  Physical Activity
-  Lifestyle
-  Healthy Eating
-  Mental Health

### 4.1 Physical Activity













Active living involves a holistic approach to health and wellness that is incorporated into daily living – this includes feeling good about oneself, connecting with others and with the world. It also includes daily physical activity to the best of one's ability.

Over the years, adults lose muscle mass and strength, placing them at risk for disability, falls and diseases like diabetes. However, age is no barrier to a healthy, active lifestyle. A person can never be too old to start being more physically active. The benefits of physical activity increase as the physical activity increases.

Physical activity is shown to benefit overall wellbeing, reduce anxiety and depression, and reduce the risk of injury and chronic disease. Along with healthy eating, physical activity helps you maintain a healthy weight. Research has shown that a loss of about 5% of excess body weight can reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by almost 60%.

The risk of illness and injury increases with age and therefore it is important to be involved and active throughout life. Scientists have shown that being active reduces the risk of:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  heart disease;       |  osteoporosis;   |
|  falls and injuries;  |  stroke;   |
|  obesity;             |  depression;   |
|  high blood pressure; |  adult-onset diabetes and  |
|  premature death;     |  breast, colon, endometrial, esophageal, renal, and gastric cancers. |

### Preparation

Read through the information above and in the Passport. When planning your sessions you might like to do a physical activity or two plus some content from another section like healthy eating as well. This will break up your session and make it more interesting.



At the beginning of every session you could build in a small exercise routine as an icebreaker. For example, you can put on an upbeat song and do the following movement to warm the body up. You can keep your feet marching the whole time. Shoulder shrugs. Shoulder circles. Arm circles. Chicken wings. Reach up to the sky and back down. Wrist circles. Wiggle fingers. Knees up. The length of time could be increased each week so participants can see how they are improving. However, you will need to make sure of your liability or that participants do these simple exercises at their own risk.



See if there is a Physiotherapist, Certified Fitness Instructor (specializing in older adults) or a certified Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology (CSEP) trainer in your area that is willing to come to the group and take them through some basic exercises to get them started. They may be able to attend for a few weeks to take your participants through general fitness exercises including cardio, strength training and stretching. They may also have some suggestions as to where your participants can go to get some enjoyable exercise.

### The sessions



Get a member of the group to research walking groups and/or trails and swimming pools in your area. There may also be some community gyms/centres or walking tracks that are free or only have a small charge to access.








It may be worthwhile at this point to refer to the physical activity goal your participants identified earlier. Perhaps they may want to modify it after this group activity.



Ask the group what benefits physical activity could offer to them. Examples of potential benefits include:

Benefits when starting out:

-  Meet new people
-  Learn new skills
-  Feel more relaxed
-  Sleep better
-  Have fun

### Group work

#### Icon Key

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The objectives of the program are to help participants better understand what Type 2 diabetes is and how it can affect their health

#### Benefits from regular physical activity:

- ✎ Improved self-esteem
- ✎ Continued independent living
- ✎ Weight maintenance
- ✎ Better posture and balance
- ✎ Improved quality of life
- ✎ Stronger muscles and bones
- ✎ More energy
- ✎ Relaxation and reduced stress
- ✎ Move with fewer aches and pains
- ✎ Looking and feeling good about yourself
- ✎ Improved immune system
- ✎ Better physical and mental health



Refer to the Physical Activity handout on page 56 and 57, and ask your participants what activities of daily living require cardio, strength, balance and flexibility. Go through each component separately.

Encourage the group to consider doing more of these activities. Every little bit counts! Get the group to suggest general activities around the home and garden that they can choose to do. Refer to the list in the handout to make sure relevant activities are included.



It is often difficult to know where to begin and how best to recognize and encourage a person through a change process. But it is important to recognize that small changes are easier to achieve than very large ones. Example: Suggest participants start with walking around the house before walking miles, to the corner store or down the hall in their building.

#### **Evaluation tip:**

You could use the flipchart to refer back to at the end of your course to find out how helpful that was.



Ask the group what physical activity they used to do in the past and what they could do now.



Ask the group what they can do to start to build physical activity into their daily routine. Use the Physical Activity handout at the back of the Guidebook as a reference. They could set a goal for each week using the Passport as a guideline and to track their progress.



Ask the group to identify and gather information on community resources that may be of interest to them or help to motivate their community to encourage activity for all older adults. To support this activity see the handout “Engaging your Community” at the back of the Guidebook.



Many factors influence the way in which we live — our values, our resources, our upbringing, our cultural beliefs and expectations. Individual lifestyle choices affect not only a person’s health but also the health of their family, community, and if one extends the understanding of health, individual choices can affect society at large. On an individual level, a person choosing to smoke puts themselves at risk for many chronic diseases and increases the likelihood of progressive changes and the development of diabetes-related complications. For example, people who smoke, face three times the risk of having a heart attack compared to those who do not smoke and have diabetes. Alcohol also causes health and social problems. Alcohol is acceptable in moderation, even for people with diabetes. However, drinking alcohol can result in low blood sugar, especially in people using insulin. Creating conditions where people can make healthy lifestyle choices is as important as providing information on what to do.

Here are some steps that can manage diabetes and help maintain overall health and wellness – today and in the future:

- ✎ Don’t smoke
- ✎ Follow a balanced meal plan
- ✎ Be physically active
- ✎ Maintain a healthy weight
- ✎ Take medication as prescribed
- ✎ Manage stress effectively
- ✎ Keep blood pressure close to target level
- ✎ Check blood glucose levels regularly and keep them within target range
- ✎ Keep cholesterol and other blood fats within target range
- ✎ Take care of feet
- ✎ In addition to regular check-ups with the doctor, also include regular visits to the dentist and eye care specialist (every one to two years)

#### In summary:

- ✎ **Exercise.** Fitness and exercise releases endorphins, which make us feel good and feel healthy.
- ✎ **Eat well.** The body and mind connection is a powerful thing. How we eat directly influences our mental outlook.
- ✎ **Get Out.** Being outside does wonders for almost everyone. In fact, the more contact with nature we have, the better we feel.
- ✎ **Get Stress Relief.** Using stress management techniques can be very helpful in reducing negativity.

## Lifestyle

4.2

4.2.1

Group work

Icon Key

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- Laugh Often.** They say that laughter is the best medicine, and that a life full of smiling and laughing, from whatever cause will be uplifting and makes us more vibrant and healthy.
- Get plenty of rest.** Sleep refreshes, provides energy and relieves stress.

### Preparation

Read through the above information. If you have a group of smokers, they might like to have someone to talk to them about quitting smoking, or you might be able to get a local health professional such as a Public Health Nurse to come to the group to talk about smoking cessation and the use of alcohol.

### The sessions

- Give the group the Lifestyle handout on page 61. Ask the group how they can create a place where healthy lifestyle choices can be made within their home. Capture these on a flipchart.

### Evaluation tip:

You could use the flipchart to refer back to at the end of your course to find out how helpful that was.

- Brainstorm with the group about what steps they can take to manage diabetes and maintain overall health and wellness. Capture their suggestions on a flipchart. Arrange the words into groups such as:

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Exercise         | Healthy eating |
| Getting outdoors | Stress relief  |
| Fun              | Rest           |

- Ask the group to reflect on this information in relation to the goals that they have identified.

- Eating foods from each food group helps the individual to manage their blood glucose levels which is important in managing diabetes. Most people want to learn more about what they can do to eat well.

Eating a variety of foods from each food group helps you get the energy and nutrients that you need each day. Whole grains, vegetables, fruits, low fat milk and yogurt, lean meats and beans are examples of nutritious choices. With diabetes it is especially important not to skip meals and to eat at regular times throughout the day. This helps to manage blood glucose levels.

### Preparation

In preparation for this section read through the information in the Passport. There may be a local dietitian who can talk to the group about healthy eating.

- Depending on where the group meets and the facilities you have, you can make a meal together or you can give out the recipes at the previous session and ask each member to make a dish and bring it to the session for a potluck.

### Recipes

- UnlockFood  
[www.unlockfood.ca/en/default.aspx](http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/default.aspx)  
[www.unlockfood.ca/en/Seniors.aspx](http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Seniors.aspx)

Heart and Stroke Foundation  
[www.heartandstroke.ca/healthy-living/recipes](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/healthy-living/recipes)

### The sessions

- Discuss with the group the types of food that can go into a meal. Using a paper dinner plate, draw a line to cut the plate in half and another line to cut one half into quarters as shown in the Passport on page 27. Use this, along with pictures of vegetables, grains, starches and meats or meat alternatives, to talk about portion and serving sizes. Use the Healthy Eating handout on page 58 as a guide.

- Using the dinner plate food portions in the Passport, discuss how the groups' favourite dishes or recipes would fit into a balanced meal. If you can bring in some recipes as examples you can link this into the discussion.

Healthy Eating

4.3

Group work

4.3.1

4.4 Mental Health



Ask the group to refer back to the goals in their Passports. Some may have made goals around healthy eating and may want to update or set new short term or long term goals. For example, a short term goal may be drinking water instead of pop, with the long term goal being weight loss. Encourage the group to track their eating habits in the Passport.

If you have downloaded some recipes you could use them as a base for the discussion. For instance, what category of food group do they fall into, what would the portion size be, does it have high fibre or is it a lower fat choice. Use the Healthy Eating handout on page 58 as a guide.



Mental health is the capacity to feel, think and act in ways that allow a person to enjoy life and deal with life's challenges. Older adults, as with all adults, will experience ups and downs however, this stage of life can present additional challenges and losses. As a community leader, it is important to be aware of these life transitions and the mental health challenges that may be faced as people age.

Although depression is the most common mental health problem in older adults, it is not a normal part of aging. It is important to dispel the myth that it is a typical consequence of aging. In addition to depression, changes in mood, behaviours, and thinking may also indicate a mental health problem. It is important to support older adults through these changes and to ensure that they do not feel that challenges associated with mental health are personal weaknesses or shameful. These are stigmatizing myths and may prevent people from seeking help.

Living with a physical disease can impact mental health. Participants in your group who live with diabetes should also be aware that emotional stress, caused by excitement, anger, worry, or fear, could cause an increase in blood sugar. Physical activity helps to control this. At the same time, physical activity is an important part of promoting mental health and brain wellness.

As a community leader, you should also be aware of the risk of suicide in late life. By learning about suicide warning signs, you can learn to recognize when an older adult may be at risk for suicide and in need of help. If you are not a mental health professional, don't worry - nobody expects you to become one. Your primary role is to be aware of the warning signs for depression that may make an older adult more prone to be at risk for suicide (see p. 29 in the Passport).

Remember, you're not alone! Develop relationships with health care providers and learn about the resources and supports in your community. If you are ever concerned about the immediate risk of suicide for one of your group members be sure to call 911 and/ or go to the nearest emergency room. There are many types of treatment for depression, including psychotherapy and medications. Depression is an illness that can be treated – at any stage of life!

Preparation

Read through the following information. You may be able to ask a Public Health Nurse or someone from a local division of the Canadian Mental Health Association to attend the session to talk about mental health issues.



If you or someone you know is concerned about growing older, check your local library or bookstores for some helpful books that can give you more information. There are also professional counsellors who specialize in the problems of aging. If you need more information about resources in your area, contact a community organization, such as the Canadian Mental Health Association, which can help you find additional support.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
1-800-463-2338 [www.camh.ca](http://www.camh.ca)

Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health  
1-289-846-5383 ext. 223 [ccsmh.ca](http://ccsmh.ca)

Canadian Mental Health Association  
1-416-646-5557 [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)

The sessions

You may feel uncomfortable with some of these suggested activities. If that is the case then see if someone from your local mental health association or mental health team would be willing to facilitate these sessions for you. On the other hand, you may feel that these sessions are not needed for your group.



Refer to the "Mental Health" Handout in the back of the Guidebook on pages 59-60. Pick some of the bullet points for discussion in the group; for example, "Keep a positive attitude". Ask the group how they could do this, or you could ask them to list their skills and abilities and think of different ways they can use them such as in volunteering.

Group work

4.4.1

Icon Key

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**Do not wait for  
leaders; do it alone,  
person to person.  
Be faithful in small  
things because it is  
in them that your  
strength lies.**

*Mother Teresa*



In the group start a conversation about depression and other mental health challenges. Use the discussion to raise awareness about risks, symptoms, and the many treatment options for depression.



Discuss the items in the table below with your participants as these are some things they can do to cope with changes in their circumstances:

Stay active, and look for new social contacts	Most communities have a number of programs which can help replace the support that used to be provided by family and life-long friends. These programs provide older people with the chance to try new activities and make new friends
Try to make friends with people of different ages	You may be pleasantly surprised to find how much you have in common with someone 15 or 20 years younger than you
Spend time with grandchildren or other young children	Very young children can brighten up your life with their enthusiasm and energy. Volunteer to help part-time in a local school or day-care centre
Learn to recognize and deal with the signs of depression	Sadness or low mood, loss of appetite and weight, inability to sleep, loss of energy and motivation, and thoughts of suicide are all signs of depression. Remember, these aren't normal consequences of aging. It's very important to talk about these changes with someone you trust, and your health care provider. Work with them to find a treatment plan that works well for you!



Ask the group what they can do to enjoy their life. You could do a bucket list and then brainstorm ways in which this can be achieved.

**Creative Roundtable – Facilitator tips:**

The purpose of this activity is to interrupt the habit of group members to become fixed in one role. It can be useful in helping the group to find answers to issues or ideas when brainstorming for some of the activities.

For a specified period of time, every member talks from one focus:

- Every person says what they LIKE about an idea, then
- every member says how they FEEL about it (from the heart, not the head), then
- every member says one CONCERN about the idea, then
- every member says what they would do to IMPROVE the idea.



Do some physical exercise after this session to provide balance to the session, mentally and physically or do a group activity that everyone will enjoy.

**Note: For the Last Session of your Program – Evaluation tip:**

In the last session you will want to reflect on the program. If you have recorded comments on flipcharts, now is the time to review these with the participants. To gather feedback on the program there are several evaluation tools in the Guidebook appendices. This will help you to evaluate your program. The information can be used to report to your funders or managers. If the program is continuing, the evaluation results can be used to improve your program offerings.

Ask the participants to complete the evaluation survey at the end of the Passport and return them to you to forward to Active Aging Canada.

Ask participants to complete the evaluation survey at the end of the Passport and return them to you to forward to Active Aging Canada.



## Ethics – Ensuring Competence and Accountability as a Leader

Values and beliefs guide our decision making and our behaviours. In the same way that we ask participants to reflect on their values and beliefs about lifestyle change, it is important that you reflect on your own personal values and beliefs as a community leader.

- ☞ Am I a good role model for the lifestyle change I advocate?
- ☞ Do I treat myself and others with respect?
- ☞ Can I be trusted?

Being able to answer these questions is critical to your success as a competent community leader. Being a competent community leader also means being an ethical community leader; a person deserving of trust. This section will provide information on ethics and some guidance in considering ethics in your practice and programs. If you respect yourself and others, care about participant progress, are worthy of trust, and are motivated to offer a program built on community needs and current evidence, then you will make a difference in the lives of the people you work with and are truly a competent and accountable community leader.

Ethics are the rules of conduct recognized as acceptable to an organization or particular group of people.

Ethics are important because they:

- ☞ guide our processes and decisions in a way that is fair and meets the needs of the client population and the organization;
- ☞ protect the organization and the client population and
- ☞ ensure those working within the organization are competent, knowledgeable, accountable and have integrity.

Before starting your program, it is important for you to have a clear understanding of your organization's ethical guidelines as well as your provincial "Freedom of Information and Protection Privacy Act". Make sure you are aware of what type of programs, procedures and behaviors are acceptable on your part as well as the part of the client population.

When collecting personal information from clients, always make sure they know why you are collecting it and what you are going to do with it. Personal information is defined as any information about a person that is identifiable including their name, an identifying number such as a driver's licence number, birth date, email address, or credit card information. Implement a variety of security measures to ensure that personal information is not lost, misused, altered, or unintentionally destroyed.

If you are going to share program participants' personal information with others, make sure they are aware of that and have them sign a consent form giving you permission to do so. Remember that participants always have the right to refuse to share personal information with you or to change their mind about letting you share it with others at any time, even if they previously signed a consent form.

**Definition of Ethics**

5.1

**Importance of Ethics**

5.2

**Ethical Conduct**

5.3

**Whoever is careless  
with the truth in  
small matters  
cannot be trusted  
with the important  
matters.**

*Albert Einstein*

In regard to your program, it is always a good idea to set up some working guidelines and ground rules with participants. This should be done at the beginning of the program by the participants with guidance from program staff. The guidelines and ground rules should outline:

- ☞ how participants want to be treated while attending the program;
- ☞ what rules need to be in place in order for participants to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences and
- ☞ what behaviors within the group are acceptable and unacceptable.

It is important to regularly review these guidelines and ground rules or post them on a wall where all participants can see them. If the guidelines and ground rules are not being adhered to, it is essential that you revisit them and work with participants to either overcome the issues or revamp them.



For more information on the 'Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act' go to the [www.justice.gc.ca](http://www.justice.gc.ca) website.



# Measuring and Evaluating Your Program

The Personal Passport to Healthy Living was created as a measurement and evaluation tool to be used in community-based primary and secondary diabetes prevention programs. It has been designed for use by non-clinical community leaders for two key purposes, a) to inform, educate and motivate older adults and b) to assist you with program evaluation.

While the Passport is one tool to assist you in evaluating your program, Active Aging Canada is aware that program evaluation can involve many dimensions beyond the scope of the Passport, and that different tools may be required. For this reason this section provides not only a definition of program evaluation and tips for applying the Passport to evaluating your program, but also information on types of program evaluation, scenarios, and samples of a variety of tools that you may be able to use.

One way to measure the success of your program is to conduct a program evaluation. A program evaluation is an organized method of collecting and analyzing data on program activities and outcomes to measure program effectiveness. It helps determine:

- ☞ how a program is working;
- ☞ what activities are most effective;
- ☞ how successful your program is in meeting its objectives;
- ☞ the impact your program has on participants;
- ☞ level of participant satisfaction with the program and
- ☞ program strengths and weaknesses.

## Evaluating the Success of Your Program

## 6.2 Types of Program Evaluation

### 6.2.1 Outcome evaluation

Evaluation should always be a part of your program. Every individual/group you work with is different; there are always lessons to be learned that will help you improve your program or provide reassurance that you are doing things right and meeting the needs of your clients.

This section of the Guide provides basic information on the different types of program evaluation, how to use the Personal Passport to Healthy Living to help evaluate your program, scenarios and tips to help you work through the evaluation process, an overview of various data collection methods, and how to analyze and use your evaluation findings.

The type of program evaluation you do depends on what you want to know about your program. In most cases, it is helpful to look at both outcomes and process.

Outcomes are the results of your program activities – what actually happened. They are compared with your intended program results (what you hoped to accomplish) to determine if your program was successful in achieving its objectives.

An outcome evaluation is carried out to determine if a program:

- ✔ is successful in achieving the program objectives – did the program accomplish what it set out to accomplish;
- ✔ has an impact on participants – did clients benefit from the program; did it result in any desired changes and
- ✔ should continue to be offered – were the program outcomes positive enough to justify continuing to offer the program.

This type of information is generally collected from program participants and then used by the program staff to determine if the program was successful and should continue to be offered. Below is a sample program scenario, and some questions you might ask participants as part of an outcome evaluation.

#### **Sample Program Scenario:**



You are conducting a Type 2 diabetes program with older adults who promote healthy eating and physical activity. The objectives of the program are to help participants better understand what Type 2 diabetes is and how it can affect their health; to provide participants with the knowledge they need to make healthier food choices that will help better control their

Type 2 diabetes; to promote the importance of physical activity in controlling Type 2 diabetes; to provide participants with some tips on how to increase their physical activity level; and to teach participants how to use the Passport to move forward with some positive changes and monitor their progress.

Some outcome evaluation questions you might ask participants:

- ✔ Do you have a better understanding of what is Type 2 diabetes?
- ✔ Do you have a better understanding of how Type 2 diabetes can impact on your health?
- ✔ Do you have a better understanding of the importance of healthy eating in controlling your Type 2 diabetes?

These questions are included in the sample forms at the end of this section.

Process is the method used to plan and carry out program activities. A process evaluation is carried out to determine:

- ✔ If the process used to deliver the program was effective
- ✔ If the program was carried out as planned
- ✔ Program strengths and weaknesses
- ✔ Level of client satisfaction with the program

This type of information is generally collected from program participants and staff to find out if the program process was effective, and determine ways to improve program plans and procedures. Using the same sample program scenario above, below are some questions you might ask program participants and staff as part of your process evaluation.



Some examples of process evaluation questions you might ask participants include:

- ✔ Was the program well organized? Held in a good location? Held at a good time of day? Easy to access?
- ✔ Did the program staff do a good job of presenting the information?
- ✔ Was the program information presented in a way that was easy to understand? Logical?

These questions are included in the sample forms at the end of this section.

Make sure you record all relevant data in your assessment form or log book

### Process evaluation

### 6.2.2

## 6.3 Planning Your Program Evaluation

Some process evaluation questions you might ask program staff include:

- 👍 How did you feel the program unfolded? Are you satisfied with the planning process? The implementation process? The response by participants?
- 👍 Did the program unfold as planned? If not, what changes were made? Why were they made?

These can be included in a similar questionnaire to the samples at the end of this section.

Some examples of administrative data you may want to collect as part of the process evaluation would include:

- 👍 How was the program promoted? What promotional activities were most effective?
- 👍 How many individuals signed up for the program?
- 👍 How many individuals took part in the program?

These can be included in a similar questionnaire.

Prior to conducting your program evaluation, take the time to plan. This will ensure your evaluation process is well thought out and focused. Following are some tips to help you plan.

- 👍 Build evaluation into your program up-front – it is easier to collect data as the program unfolds than to try and collect it once the program is finished
- 👍 Determine what type of evaluation you want to focus on – outcome evaluation, process evaluation or both
- 👍 Keep it simple – always focus on the need to know and ensure you do not over evaluate
- 👍 Ensure participants are made aware of the evaluation, why you are doing it, and how the information collected will be used
- 👍 Be cautious of what information you collect. Many people are very sensitive about personal information such as weight and blood sugars, etc.
- 👍 Reassure participants that any information you collect from them will be kept confidential
- 👍 Do not leave information for others to see
- 👍 Think carefully if you want to focus more on behavior changes rather than numbers. What information is “need to know” versus “nice to know”?

If you would like more information on evaluation please visit the Canadian Evaluation Society <https://evaluationcanada.ca/>

The Passport is a key tool that will support your evaluation process. It is designed to help you collect valuable information from participants on their behaviors and level of change. During the first program session, provide participants with a copy of the Passport and explain to them how it will be used to help motivate them as well as track their progress.

If the program is 8-weeks, you may want to do a check-in at the mid-point to see where participants are at and then at the end of the program. If it is a 12-week program you may want to check in at the 4 week mark, 8 week mark and then the end of the program. Make sure participants are reminded of the check-ins, and to bring their Passports on the check-in dates. Also remind them to regularly record their activity level in their Passport – e.g. number of times per week they exercise etc.

As part of the check-ins, take participants measurements (e.g. weight and waist circumference), review their exercise logs and eating charts, discuss their behavioural changes, and help them address any barriers or issues. Please note that for some participants who are trying to lose weight, they may want to weigh-in more often. To meet their needs and help motivate them, ensure they have the opportunity to do so. Make sure to record all information collected so you can use it to determine the extent to which the program has helped participants make positive changes.

To collect some feedback on the program in between the check-ins, you may want to do a round table discussion with participants at the end of each session to ask them what they found most beneficial about the session and what they feel could be improved upon. Participants do not generally equate this with evaluation and it provides you with some helpful feedback immediately.

### **Facilitator tips – Receiving feedback:**

- 👍 Receive feedback with the attitude – “I’m willing to learn”
- 👍 Think of feedback as information about the other person’s experience
- 👍 Don’t react to feedback – look for patterns in the information you receive and adjust your approach

The Passport is only one tool that will help with your evaluation. In order to collect more comprehensive evaluation data on your program, you may want to use other data collection tools. The types of data collection tools you use will depend on the type of data you want to collect. Following is a brief overview of two of the most common data collection methods (surveys and focus groups), and some tips on how to use them.

## Using the Passport to Assist in Evaluating Your Program

6.4

## Data Collection Methods

6.5

## 6.5.1 Surveys

Surveys are written questionnaires which allow you to easily and quickly collect general information on your program in a non-threatening way. You may want to conduct a survey at the mid-point of your program to collect some feedback on the program content, delivery, and participant learnings.

### **Evaluation tips – Creating a Survey:**

- 👍 Do not ask too many questions – focus on the need to know versus the nice to know
- 👍 Keep the questions simple – use plain language whenever possible
- 👍 Make sure you use lots of white space and a clear font such as Arial. You are better off having a two page survey with the questions well-spaced than a one page survey with the questions too close together
- 👍 Make sure the questions are organized in a logical manner; it is often helpful to organize them into sections – e.g. Learnings, Organization
- 👍 Always provide a question at the end of the survey that allows participants to share their experience in a qualitative way – e.g. Please use this space to share any other thoughts or suggestions for improvement
- 👍 If using a rating scale, ensure it is included on each page of the survey so participants do not have to flip back to the first page where the scale is defined

## 6.5.2 Focus groups

Focus groups are facilitated group discussions designed to provide participants with the opportunity to freely discuss their experiences, observations and ideas. You may want to conduct a focus group at the end of your program to provide participants with the opportunity to discuss their experience and level of satisfaction with the program.

### **Evaluation tips: Conducting a Focus Group:**

- 👍 Determine the purpose of the focus group – this will help you stay focused
- 👍 Do not ask too many questions – the number of questions you ask will depend on how many people take part in the focus group – the larger the group, the fewer questions you will be able to work through
- 👍 Ensure the questions are open-ended so they promote discussion
- 👍 Arrange the questions in a logical order
- 👍 Have some prompts prepared to guide the discussion and ensure participants stay on track
- 👍 Never go longer than two hours

- 👍 Always use a tape recorder or have someone to take notes (if using a tape recorder, ensure you ask participants for their permission)
- 👍 Always start a focus group with a more general question to lead into the topic and then get into the more detailed questions
- 👍 Be realistic with the number of questions you ask – because the questions are descriptive and are asking participants to share their experiences, you often only have the time to work through a small number of questions

Data analysis can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative analysis considers the numbers; for example, the number of participants who completed the program. Questions that give you a yes/no answer would be an example of quantitative data, as you can then add up the number of participants who respond yes or no.

Qualitative analysis examines themes that emerge from people's experiences and observations that they have recorded in your evaluation form. An example of a theme that emerged from the pilot testing of the Passport is that people were motivated when working with a leader or in a group environment.

Once the evaluation findings have been analyzed, it is important to use them. Share them with all members of the program staff and use them to develop recommendations to make improvements as necessary.

Please note that recommendations are not always related to changes. If some aspects of the program are working really well, a recommendation would be to continue to deliver that aspect of the program. Where the program is not working well, the recommendation should be presented as a solution to address the issue.

### **Example:**

If a significant number of participants noted that the explanation of Type 2 diabetes was too difficult to understand, then the recommendation might be to simplify the Type 2 diabetes presentation by using simpler language, more visuals and diagrams, and more examples relevant to the client population.

## Data Analysis

6.6

## Using the Evaluation Findings

6.7

Sample Form

Participant 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_

	Waist Girth	BMI	# of Fruits Eaten Per Day	# of Vegetables Eaten Per Day	# of High Fibre Foods Eaten Per Day	# of Glasses of Water Per Day	# of Meals Per Day	# of Times Per Week Exercise	Stage of Change
Pre-Assessment									
Mid-Point Check-In									
End-point Check-In									

Participant 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_

	Waist Girth	BMI	# of Fruits Eaten Per Day	# of Vegetables Eaten Per Day	# of High Fibre Foods Eaten Per Day	# of Glasses of Water Per Day	# of Meals Per Day	# of Times Per Week Exercise	Stage of Change
Pre-Assessment									
Mid-Point Check-In									
End-point Check-In									

\*\* Please note that this is only a sample and by no means all inclusive. You may want to create a format that better suits your needs or include other measurements and behavior changes from the Passport.



Survey Sample – Predetermined Options

TYPE 2 SENIORS DIABETES PROGRAM – Evaluation Survey

Read the statements. Circle the answer that best applies to you.

PART A: WHAT I LEARNED

1.	I better understand what Type 2 Diabetes is.	Yes	Sort Of	No
2.	I learned how Type 2 Diabetes can affect on my health.	Yes	Sort Of	No
3.	I better understand the importance of healthy eating in helping me control my Type 2 Diabetes.	Yes	Sort Of	No
4.	I picked up some good information that will help me make healthier food choices.	Yes	Sort Of	No
5.	As a result of what I learned about healthy eating, I have made some changes to my diet.	Yes	Sort Of	No
6.	I better understand the importance of physical activity in helping me control my Type 2 Diabetes.	Yes	Sort Of	No
7.	I picked up some tips on how to increase my physical activity.	Yes	Sort Of	No
8.	As a result of the program, I have increased my level of physical activity.	Yes	Sort Of	No
9.	I was provided with a good introduction to the Passport.	Yes	Sort Of	No
10.	The Passport provided me with some helpful tips to move forward with positive changes.	Yes	Sort Of	No
11.	I used the Passport to monitor my progress.	Yes	Sort Of	No

PART B: PARTICIPATION

12.	I felt comfortable taking part in the program.	Yes	Sort Of	No
13.	I had plenty of chances to share my thoughts and experiences.	Yes	Sort Of	No
14.	I had plenty of chances to interact with and learn from other participants.	Yes	Sort Of	No

PART C: ORGANIZATION

15.	The program sessions were well organized.	Yes	Sort Of	No
16.	The program staff did a good job.	Yes	Sort Of	No
17.	The location of the program was good.	Yes	Sort Of	No
18.	The information was given in a way that was easy to understand.	Yes	Sort Of	No
19.	The learning activities and exercises were helpful – e.g. portion plate display, stretching exercises, label reading exercise, etc.	Yes	Sort Of	No
20.	I am satisfied with topics covered.	Yes	Sort Of	No

PART D: FINAL THOUGHTS

21.	I enjoyed the program.	Yes	Sort Of	No
22.	I would recommend the program to others.	Yes	Sort Of	No



# TYPE 2 SENIORS DIABETES PROGRAM

## Evaluation Survey

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

1.	I better understand what Type 2 Diabetes is.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I learned how Type 2 Diabetes can affect my health.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I better understand the importance of healthy eating in helping me control my Type 2 Diabetes.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I picked up some good information that will help me make healthier food choices.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	As a result of what I learned about healthy eating, I have made some changes to my diet.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I better understand the importance of physical activity in helping me control my Type 2 Diabetes.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I picked up some tips on how to increase my physical activity.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	As a result of the program, I have increased my level of physical activity.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I was provided with a good introduction to the Passport.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The Passport provided me with some helpful tips to move forward with positive changes.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I used the Passport to monitor my progress.	1	2	3	4	5

12.	I felt comfortable taking part in the program.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I had plenty of chances to share my thoughts and experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I had plenty of chances to interact with and learn from other participants.	1	2	3	4	5

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

15.	The program sessions were well organized.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The program staff did a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	The location of the program was good.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The information was given in a way that was easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	The learning activities and exercises were helpful – e.g. portion plate display, stretching exercises, label reading exercise, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I am satisfied with the topics covered.	1	2	3	4	5

21.	I enjoyed the program.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	I would recommend the program to others.	1	2	3	4	5

[illegible]

## Focus Group Guide Sample

1. In general, how do you feel the program unfolded?
  - How satisfied were you with the planning process? The implementation process? The response by participants?
2. To what extent did the program unfold as planned?
  - If it did not unfold as planned, what changes were made? Why were they made? How did they impact on the program?
3. What aspects of the program do you feel worked best – were most successful in meeting the needs of participants?
4. What aspects of the program do you feel could be improved upon and what suggestions do you have to improve the program?
5. To what extent are you satisfied with what was achieved through the program?
  - Do you feel the program was successful in achieving the desired objectives? If not, what do you feel could be done to ensure the program objectives are achieved in the future?

**A digital version of this book can be found at:**

[www.activeagingcanada.ca/practitioners/resources/healthy-living-workshop.htm](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca/practitioners/resources/healthy-living-workshop.htm)

## References

### Section 1 – Using the Guidebook

- 1.3 Evaluation – How Do I Measure Program Effectiveness?
  - 1) Author: Nishka Smith, Nishka Smith Consulting
  - 2) Canadian Evaluation Society, [www.evaluationcanada.ca](http://www.evaluationcanada.ca)
- 1.4 Facilitating Communication
  - 1) Excerpts from the Circle of Health Facilitator Handbook, The Quaich Inc., 2010
  - 2) Circle of Health©1996, PEI Health and Community Services Agency, [circleofhealth.net](http://circleofhealth.net)

### Section 2 – Introducing the Passport

- 1) Author: Nishka Smith, Nishka Smith Consulting
  - 2) Excerpts from the Circle of Health Facilitator Handbook, The Quaich Inc., 2010
- 2.2 Diabetes and Active Living – What do I need to know?  
Signs and Symptoms, Risk Factors
    - 1) Canadian Diabetes Association, [www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca)
      - a) <https://www.diabetes.ca/about-diabetes/newly-diagnosed>
      - b) Canadian Diabetes Association 2008  
*Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Diabetes in Canada*
      - c) Are you at risk? <https://www.diabetes.ca/type-2-risks/risk-factors---assessments>
    - 2) Active Aging Canada, Research Update, Issue 1, May 2001, [www.activeagingcanada.ca/practitioners/resources/research-updates/research-updates.htm](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca/practitioners/resources/research-updates/research-updates.htm)
    - 3) Public Health Agency of Canada, Type 2 diabetes info-sheet for seniors, 2006

### Section 3 – Motivation

- 3.2 Stages of Change
  - 1) Author: Jan (Cochrane) Kroll RN BSN CDE  
Adapted from: Staged Model of Change. Prochaska, J.O.
- 3.3 Impact of Active Living in Prevention of Diabetes and other Chronic Diseases
  - 1) [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)
- 3.4 Goal Setting
  - 1) Personal Goal Setting Planning to Live Your Life Your Way, [www.mindtools.com/page6.html](http://www.mindtools.com/page6.html)

## References

### Section 4 – Healthy Lifestyles

#### 4.1 Physical Activity

- 1) Canadian Assoc. for Advancement of Women and Sport (CAAWS) [womenandsport.ca](http://womenandsport.ca)
- 2) Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology – Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines [csep.ca](http://csep.ca)
- 3) Health Canada [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

#### 4.2 Lifestyle

- 1) Canadian Cancer Society, [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
- 2) Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation, [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)
- 3) The Penningtons, [www.naturalhealthlifestyles.com/healthy-attitude.html](http://www.naturalhealthlifestyles.com/healthy-attitude.html)

#### 4.3 Healthy Eating

- 1) Dietitians of Canada [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)
- 2) Health Canada [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

#### 4.4 Mental Health

- 1) Canadian Mental Health Association [cmha.ca](http://cmha.ca)

### Section 5 – Ethics – Ensuring Competence and Accountability as a Leader

- 1) Author: Nishka Smith, Nishka Smith Consulting
- 2) Freedom of Information and Privacy Act [www.justice.gc.ca](http://www.justice.gc.ca)

### Section 6 – Evaluating your program

- 1) Author: Nishka Smith, Nishka Smith Consulting

## Further Resources

### Diabetes

Active Aging Canada, 1-800-549-9799  
[www.activeagingcanada.ca](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca)

Diabetes Canada, 1-800-BANTING (226-8464)  
<https://www.diabetes.ca/DiabetesCanadaWebsite/media/Managing-My-Diabetes/Tools%20and%20Resources/are-you-at-risk.pdf?ext=.pdf>

The Canadian Diabetes Risk Questionnaire – CANRISK  
[health.canada.ca/apps/canrisk-standalone/pdf/canrisk-en.pdf](http://health.canada.ca/apps/canrisk-standalone/pdf/canrisk-en.pdf)

Diabète Québec, 1-800-361-3504  
[www.diabete.qc.ca/fr/](http://www.diabete.qc.ca/fr/)

Dietitians of Canada  
1-416-596-0857  
[www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

National Aboriginal Diabetes Association, 1-877-232-6232  
[nada.ca](http://nada.ca)

Public Health Agency of Canada, 1-844-280-5020  
[www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/chronic-diseases/diabetes.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/chronic-diseases/diabetes.html)

“What is Diabetes”  
[www.diabetes.ca/en-CA/about-diabetes/what-is-diabetes](http://www.diabetes.ca/en-CA/about-diabetes/what-is-diabetes)

“What is Diabetes” video  
[www.youtube.com/user/CDA1927/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/CDA1927/videos)

### Chronic Diseases

Active Aging Canada Research Updates, 1-800-549-9799  
<https://www.activeagingcanada.ca/practitioners/resources/research-updates.htm>

Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability  
[ala.ca](http://ala.ca)

The Alzheimer Society, 1-800-616-8816  
[alzheimer.ca/en](http://alzheimer.ca/en)

The Arthritis Society, 1-800-321-1433  
[arthritis.ca](http://arthritis.ca)

Canadian Cancer Society, 1-888-939-3333  
[www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

Heart and Stroke Foundation, 1-888-473-4636  
[www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)

## Further Resources

Hypertension Canada, 1-905-943-9400  
<https://hypertension.ca/educational-programs/>

Osteoporosis Canada  
Toll-free (English): 1-800-463-6842; Toll-free (French): 1-800-977-1778  
[osteoporosis.ca](http://osteoporosis.ca)

Obesity Canada, 1-780-492-8361  
[obesitycanada.ca](http://obesitycanada.ca)

### Foot Care

Wounds Canada – Healthy Feet, 1-416-485-2292  
[www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public#](http://www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public#)

Your Foot – A Closer Look: Foot Examination  
[www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/90-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you/for-patients-and-public/diabetes-healthy-feet-and-you/your-foot-a-closer-look/77-your-foot-a-closer-look](http://www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/90-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you/for-patients-and-public/diabetes-healthy-feet-and-you/your-foot-a-closer-look/77-your-foot-a-closer-look)

Diabetes and Healthy Feet Resources and Handouts  
[www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/240-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you/for-patients-and-public/267-information-about-diabetes-and-healthy-feet#plan](http://www.woundscanada.ca/for-patients-public/240-diabetic-healthy-feet-and-you/for-patients-and-public/267-information-about-diabetes-and-healthy-feet#plan)

## Physical Activity

Active Aging Canada, Aerobic Fitness for Older Adults  
[www.activeagingcanada.ca/assets/pdf/active-living-tip-sheets/Aerobic-Fitness-For-Older-Adults.pdf](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca/assets/pdf/active-living-tip-sheets/Aerobic-Fitness-For-Older-Adults.pdf)

The Power of Strength Training for Older Adults  
[www.activeagingcanada.ca/assets/pdf/active-living-tip-sheets/Strength-Training-For-Older-Adults.pdf](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca/assets/pdf/active-living-tip-sheets/Strength-Training-For-Older-Adults.pdf)

Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging, 1-866-661-1603  
[www.uwo.ca/ccaa/](http://www.uwo.ca/ccaa/)

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, 1-877-651-3755  
<https://csepguidelines.ca/adults-65/>

Exercise is Medicine  
[www.exerciseismedicine.org/support\\_page.php/rx-for-health-series/](http://www.exerciseismedicine.org/support_page.php/rx-for-health-series/)

ParticipACTION – Benefits and Guidelines  
<https://www.participaction.com/en-ca/benefits-and-guidelines/adults-65-plus>

Public Health Agency of Canada – Physical Activity Tips for Older Adults  
[www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/physical-activity-tips-older-adults-65-years-older.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/physical-activity-tips-older-adults-65-years-older.html)

The Rural Route to Active Aging  
[sites.ualberta.ca/~active/older-adults/rural/guides/booklet-rural.pdf](http://sites.ualberta.ca/~active/older-adults/rural/guides/booklet-rural.pdf)



## Lifestyle

### Alcohol

What Older Adults Need to Know About Drinking Alcohol  
[ccsmh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CCSMH\\_Alcohol\\_brochure\\_ENG.pdf](http://ccsmh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CCSMH_Alcohol_brochure_ENG.pdf)

Alcohol and Diabetes  
[www.diabetes.ca/DiabetesCanadaWebsite/media/Managing-My-Diabetes/Tools%20and%20Resources/alcohol-and-diabetes.pdf?ext=.pdf](http://www.diabetes.ca/DiabetesCanadaWebsite/media/Managing-My-Diabetes/Tools%20and%20Resources/alcohol-and-diabetes.pdf?ext=.pdf)

### Falls

Public Health Agency of Canada – You CAN prevent falls  
[www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/aging-seniors/publications/publications-general-public/you-prevent-falls.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/aging-seniors/publications/publications-general-public/you-prevent-falls.html)

Falls in Seniors from Parachute Canada  
[parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/fall-prevention-for-seniors/](http://parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/fall-prevention-for-seniors/)

### Smoking

For tips on how to quit smoking, visit or call the Smokers Help Line, 1 877 513-5333  
[www.smokershelpline.ca/](http://www.smokershelpline.ca/)

Canadian Cancer Society's –You can quit one step at a time, 1-888-939-3333  
<https://cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/resources/publications/osaat-you-can-quit>

Learn more about the risks of smoking, the benefits of quitting, and tips on how to quit from the Heart & Stroke.  
[www.heartandstroke.ca/heart-disease/risk-and-prevention/lifestyle-risk-factors/smoking-and-tobacco](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/heart-disease/risk-and-prevention/lifestyle-risk-factors/smoking-and-tobacco)

Talk Tobacco is a program to help First Nations, Inuit or Métis quit smoking or vaping, 1 833 998-8255  
[smokershelpline.ca/talktobacco/about](http://smokershelpline.ca/talktobacco/about)

It's never too late to quit. Learn about different tools to help you make a plan to quit from SmokeFree60+:  
[60plus.smokefree.gov](http://60plus.smokefree.gov)

### Cannabis

Cannabis and Older Adults  
[www.activeagingcanada.ca/participants/projects/cannabis-and-older-adults.htm](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca/participants/projects/cannabis-and-older-adults.htm)

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 1-800-463-2338  
[www.camh.ca](http://www.camh.ca)



## Further Resources

### Healthy Eating

Are you eating right as you age? Find out with this easy online tool!

[www.activeagingcanada.ca/blog/healthy-eating/are-you-eating-right-as-you-age-find-out-with-this-easy-online-tool/](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca/blog/healthy-eating/are-you-eating-right-as-you-age-find-out-with-this-easy-online-tool/)

Canada's Food Guide

[food-guide.canada.ca/en/](http://food-guide.canada.ca/en/)

Canada's Food Guide – Healthy Eating for Seniors

[food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/seniors/](http://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/seniors/)

Healthy eating as you get older from the Dieticians of Canada

[www.unlockfood.ca/en/Seniors](http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Seniors)

Healthy eating tips from Diabetes Canada

[www.diabetes.ca/nutrition---fitness/healthy-eating](http://www.diabetes.ca/nutrition---fitness/healthy-eating)

#### Recipes

Heart-healthy recipes from Heart & Stroke

<https://www.heartandstroke.ca/healthy-living/recipes>

Basic Meal Planning from Diabetes Canada

[www.diabetes.ca/resources/tools---resources/basic-meal-planning](http://www.diabetes.ca/resources/tools---resources/basic-meal-planning)

Recipes from the Dieticians of Canada

<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Recipes.aspx>

### Mental Health

Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health, 289-846-5383 EXT. 223

[ccsmh.ca](http://ccsmh.ca)

Canadian Mental Health Association, 1-416-646-5557

[cmha.ca](http://cmha.ca)

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 1-800-463-2338

[www.camh.ca](http://www.camh.ca)

### Beliefs & Attitudes

Prochaska, Norcross, DiClemente. Changing for Good, New York, 1994.

Ageism

<https://www.who.int/data/maternal-newborn-child-adolescent-ageing/ageing-data/ageing---ageism>

Overcoming Ageism in Active Living

<https://www.activeagingcanada.ca/participants/projects/ageism.htm>

The Impact of Resilience Among Older Adults.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0197457216000689#sec5>

### Ethics

Department of Justice

[www.justice.gc.ca](http://www.justice.gc.ca)

### Evaluation

Canadian Evaluation Society, 1-855-251-5721

[evaluationcanada.ca](http://evaluationcanada.ca)

### Internet Support for Older Adults

Connected Canadians, (613) 699-7896

[www.connectedcanadians.ca](http://www.connectedcanadians.ca)

## Handouts

The following pages contain some handouts for you to use as a resource. Please feel free to photocopy these as many times as you wish.

# Physical Activity

## FLEXIBILITY ACTIVITIES

### Daily

Flexibility activities help you to **move more easily** so that you can **accomplish the daily tasks** necessary for **independent living** and **self-reliance**. Flexibility activities help you to **keep your joints healthy** and **maintain your mobility**. They will help to ensure that you can:

- 🌐 tie your shoes;
- 🌐 clip your toenails;
- 🌐 reach behind your back or straight up overhead;
- 🌐 get down on the floor and back up again;
- 🌐 get in and out of the tub; and
- 🌐 reach up to that top shelf in the kitchen.

Consider doing more bending, stretching and reaching. Every little bit counts! Here are some activities to choose from...

### Check off the ones you do, or would like to do!

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yard work                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mopping the floor | <input type="checkbox"/> Washing & waxing the car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuuming         | <input type="checkbox"/> T'ai Chi                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowling           | <input type="checkbox"/> Curling                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing           |   |

*Physical activity can have an effect on your blood glucose for up to 12 hours. Make sure to monitor your blood glucose before, during and many hours after your activity. You will be able to see the benefits of physical activity and how it affects your blood glucose levels.*

## ENDURANCE ACTIVITIES

### 4–7 days a week

Endurance activities help you to **increase energy** and keep moving for **longer periods of time**. They make you **feel warm** and **breathe deeply**. Endurance activities are good for your **heart, lungs, circulation, and muscles**. Do what you can and slowly build up. Aim for 150 minutes per week of endurance activities.



### Here are some activities to choose from...

Check off the ones you do now and those that interest you!

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking              | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing              | <input type="checkbox"/> Skating  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking               | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-country Skiing |                                   |

# Physical Activity

## STRENGTH & BALANCE ACTIVITIES

### 2–4 days a week

Strength activities are those that **challenge all your muscles**. Do more **pulling, pushing, lifting, and carrying**. Strength and balance activities help you to:

- 🌐 keep muscles and bones strong;
- 🌐 reduce bone loss; and
- 🌐 improve balance and posture.

When you maintain your strength and balance through regular activities, you:

- 🌐 are less likely to fall or to have accidents that cause injuries;
- 🌐 will be able to lift garbage bags, carry groceries, push and pull furniture, open jars, and carry a suitcase;
- 🌐 are more able to get around safely; and
- 🌐 know your personal limits.



### Here are some activities to choose from...

Check off the ones that you could build into your routine!

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifting weights or soup cans | <input type="checkbox"/> Weight-training classes                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Piling wood                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing stairs                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wall push-ups                | <input type="checkbox"/> Carrying the laundry                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrying groceries           | <input type="checkbox"/> Standing up & sitting down several times in a row |

Getting started is easier than you think

- 🌐 Build physical activity into your daily routine.
- 🌐 Do the activities you are doing now, more often.
- 🌐 Walk wherever and whenever you can.
- 🌐 Move around frequently.
- 🌐 Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- 🌐 Find activities that you enjoy.
- 🌐 Try out a class in your community.

# Healthy Eating



*When assessing your food habits and making a plan to improve your healthy eating to prevent or self-manage Type 2 diabetes consider the following.*

**Alcohol can affect** blood glucose levels and cause you to gain weight. Talk to your healthcare professional about whether you can include alcohol in your meal plan and how much is safe.

Aim to eat a **variety of healthy foods** each day; Include plenty of vegetables and fruits. Try making half of your plate vegetables and fruits.

Eat a variety of protein foods like eggs, milk, cheese products, beans, fish, and meat. Try making protein foods one quarter of your plate.

Choose whole grain breads, pastas, and cereals. Try making them one quarter of your plate.

**Include high fibre foods** such as whole grains (i.e. oats, brown rice, pot barley), fresh fruits, vegetables and legumes (i.e. dried beans, peas, and lentils).

**Make lower fat choices** such as skim milk, reduced fat cheese, and extra lean ground beef.

**Limit the higher fat foods** such as chips, French fries and pastries.

**Limit sweets** such as sugar, regular pop, desserts, candies, jam and honey.

**Eat three meals per day at regular times** and space meals no more than six hours apart. You may benefit from a healthy snack.

**Eat more high fibre foods** such as whole grain breads and cereals, lentils, dried beans and peas, brown rice, vegetables and fruits.

**If you are thirsty, drink water.**

**Healthy eating habits should be built around a healthy lifestyle – keep active every day.**

# Mental Health

*As you grow older, your body will naturally change. You may tire more easily than you used to. You may become ill more often. You may not see or hear as well as you did when you were younger.*

Here are some things you can do to cope with these physical changes:

🌐 **Accept aging is normal.** Adjusting to changes of aging will make life more enjoyable for you and the people around you. Investigate resources and activities that will allow you to age optimally.

🌐 **Keep a positive attitude.** Remember that slowing down does not mean you have to come to a complete stop. Chances are you will still be able to do almost all the things you used to; you may just need to take a little more time and learn to pace yourself.

🌐 **See your family doctor regularly.** The doctor can address with you any changes or symptoms that require medical attention.

🌐 **Be careful about your medications.** As you get older, they may begin to interact differently with other drugs and affect you differently than before. Make sure your doctor knows about all your medications, even those prescribed by another doctor.

🌐 **Take responsibility** for your own health. Do not hesitate to ask your doctor questions; some do not offer explanations unless asked.

🌐 **Change your eating habits.** Adopt a balanced diet with fewer fatty foods, and try not to over-eat. Use the portion and serving sizes from the healthy eating session.

🌐 **Drink less alcohol.** Your body will react differently to alcohol as you age.

Everyone needs some time alone, but being alone against your will is very painful. You risk losing your sense of purpose and self-worth, and becoming depressed. As family members and friends die and children become more involved in their own lives, it is important for you to find ways to cope with loneliness. You may want to consider some of the following suggestions:

🌐 **Stay active**, and look for new social contacts. Most communities have a number of programs which can help replace the support that used to be provided by family and life-long friends. These programs provide older people with the chance to try new activities and make new friends.

🌐 Very young children can **brighten up your life**. Try to make friends with people of different ages. You may be pleasantly surprised to find how much you have in common with someone 15 or 20 years younger than you.

🌐 **Spend time** with grandchildren or other young children. Very young children can brighten up your life with their enthusiasm and energy. **Volunteer** to help part-time in a local school or day-care centre.

# Mental Health



- 🌐 **Learn to recognize and respond to the signs of depression.** Sadness or low mood, loss of appetite and weight, inability to sleep, loss of energy and motivation, and thoughts of suicide are all signs of depression. Remember, these aren't normal consequences of aging. It's very important to talk about these changes with someone you trust, and your health care provider. Work with them to find a treatment plan that works well for you!

Information courtesy [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)

Your retirement can be a major source of stress because your job is usually a very important part of your life. This stress may be even greater if you have been forced to retire because of your employer's retirement policies. You may lose your sense of identity and feel less worthwhile. You will probably miss the daily contact with friends from work.

However, retirement can be one of the best times of your life, and there are things you can do to meet the challenges facing you, such as:

- 🌐 Make a list of your abilities and skills. The skills and experience you have gained from a lifetime of work may help you succeed in a small business or do valuable volunteer work for a favourite charity.
- 🌐 Enrich your life by renewing contacts with neglected family members and old friends. All too often, our work gets in the way of our relationships and those we care about.
- 🌐 Renew your interest in the hobbies and activities you enjoy. You now have time to play - enjoy!
- 🌐 If you can afford it, travel. There are probably places you have wanted to see all your life. The early years of your retirement can be the ideal time to become a nomad for a while.

# Lifestyle

Here are some steps you can take to manage your diabetes and help maintain your overall health and wellness – today and in the future:

- 🌐 Don't smoke
- 🌐 Follow a balanced meal plan
- 🌐 Be physically active
- 🌐 Maintain a healthy weight
- 🌐 Take your medication as prescribed
- 🌐 Manage your stress effectively
- 🌐 Keep your blood pressure close to target level
- 🌐 Check your blood glucose levels regularly and keep them within your target range
- 🌐 Keep your cholesterol and other blood fats within your target range
- 🌐 Take care of your feet
- 🌐 In addition to regular check-ups with your doctor, also include regular visits to your dentist and eye care specialist (every one to two years)



## In summary:

- 🌐 **Exercise** — Fitness and exercise releases endorphins, which make you feel good and feel healthy.
- 🌐 **Eat well.** The body and mind connection is a powerful thing. How we eat directly influences our mental outlook.
- 🌐 **Get Out.** Being outside does wonders for almost everyone. In fact, the more contact with nature we have, the better we feel.
- 🌐 **Get Stress Relief.** Using stress management techniques can be very helpful in reducing your negativity.
- 🌐 **Laugh Often.** They say that laughter is the best medicine, and that a life full of smiling and laughing, from whatever cause will uplift you, and make you more vibrant and healthy.
- 🌐 **Get plenty of rest.** Sleep refreshes you, gives you more energy, and relieves stress.

# Engaging Your Community

Check out these community contacts to see what can help you build physical activity into your life:

- 🌐 **Talk** to the local recreation department to see what programs they have for older adults.
- 🌐 **Ask** about safe walking paths and mall-walking programs in your community.
- 🌐 **Check out** the seniors' centres in your neighbourhood.
- 🌐 **Ask** the local Y or fitness clubs if they have programs at a reduced cost for older adults.
- 🌐 **Visit** health centres and clinics to help you plan a program.
- 🌐 **Ask** physicians or other health-care providers to help you decide what's right for you;
- 🌐 **Approach** health organizations such as The Osteoporosis Society, Heart and Stroke Foundation, and The Arthritis Society to help you choose programs that are right for you.
- 🌐 **Visit** libraries and bookstores to get information about physical activity.
- 🌐 **Ask** your local health department to help you find what is available in your community.



Communities can make it easier for everyone to be more physically active.

An active living community helps make active choices easy choices by:

- 🌐 **encouraging community use of schools** for older adult physical activity programs;
- 🌐 **recruiting older adults as volunteers** in supervising young children in active (walking) transportation to and from school;
- 🌐 **promoting physical activity** in community parks, recreation facilities, older adult residences, and special events;
- 🌐 **opening shopping centres** to facilitate walking programs in the winter;
- 🌐 **facilitating transportation** to and from physical activity programs for older adults in need; and
- 🌐 **sponsoring safe, active transportation** through bike paths and lanes, well-lit and scenic walking trails, pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods, snow- and ice-cleared walkways, and secure bike parking at local businesses.

Ask your community leaders what they are doing to help people like you be physically active in your community.

## **Active Aging Canada**

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Shelburne ON L9V 3L8

Toll Free: 1-800-549-9799

Phone: 1-519-925-1676

Email [info@activeagingcanada.ca](mailto:info@activeagingcanada.ca)

Web [www.activeagingcanada.ca](http://www.activeagingcanada.ca)

