

POWER UP YOUR HEALTH

ALBERTA HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAM- CALGARY ZONE NEWSLETTER



Live your Best Life

Are you giving your heart the love it deserves?

Your heart does a lot. It circulates blood, nutrients, and oxygen to your brain, working muscles, and organs. It provides your body with everything it needs to function. A sick heart can drastically impact your quality of life. Heart disease and stroke are the number one killer in Canada. Although factors like age, ethnicity, and family history cannot be controlled, the good news is that many of the risk factors for heart disease can be controlled. These include:

- **Exercise:** [Exercise](#) is good for your heart, muscles, and brain. It can help you improve your sleep, manage stress, strengthen bones, maintain a healthy weight, and so much more.
- **Diet:** [Eating a well-balanced diet](#) can help you not only prevent heart disease, but also maintain a healthy weight, stay energized, improve bone and muscle health, and do the activities that are important to you.
- **Weight:** Diet and exercise are not the only two factors that impact weight, but controlling your diet and exercise can be a good start! The number on the scale does not tell the whole story about how much risk your weight has on your heart health. [Click here to learn more.](#)
- **Stress:** Although stress starts in the mind, it also impacts your body in a number of ways. Although stressors are often things that are outside your control, your responses to stressors (or stress reactions) are. [Learn more here.](#)
- **Smoking:** Tobacco use contributes to the buildup of plaque in your arteries, making your heart work harder. It also increases your risk of having clots. [Learn more here.](#)
- **Alcohol:** Drinking too much alcohol can increase your blood pressure. Learn about how much is too much [here.](#)

The best way to make lifestyle changes is by taking small, gradual steps. These free online classes can help:

- [Living Well with Stress](#) – Tuesday, February 11 & 18, from 1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- [Heart Healthy Eating](#) – Wednesday, February 19, from 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- [Weight Management: Dietitian Question & Answer](#) – Monday, February 24, from 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.



Let's get moving

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em!

Are you a winter lover? Or, are you counting down the days until the garden centres re-open and you can break out your summer clothes again?

The cold weather in Alberta can understandably make us want to hibernate indoors. However, being active outdoors can have huge benefits for your physical and mental health. Exercise is also recommended as a key treatment strategy to manage most chronic health conditions. The following tips can help you embrace the last of the cold weather months:

- Plan activities during the warmest part of the day.
- Plan an activity with family or friends, like walking, snowshoeing, or cross country skiing on a free ski trail or golf course near you.
- Dress for the cold. Do not use cotton as a base layer. Wear warm, waterproof and windproof layers, scarves, neck warmers, and footwear. Cover as much exposed skin as possible.
- [Walk like a penguin](#) to reduce your risk of falls.
- Find an indoor place, like a fitness centre or shopping mall, to walk indoors if the weather is too cold.

Although there are general [movement guidelines](#) available to you to use as a goal, these guidelines might or might not be most suitable to your individual needs. If you live in the Calgary Zone, [click on this link](#) to see how our group supervised exercise program can help you learn to exercise safely and effectively. If you do not live in Calgary, [click on this link](#) to visit our supervised exercise program website to find free exercise programs in your area.

Would you like to receive regular updates from the Alberta Healthy Living Program? [Join our e-mail distribution list.](#)



Fatty Liver Disease: What does this mean and what can I do?

The liver does more than 500 functions that are vital to life. It cleanses your blood, produces bile for digestion, and controls your body's supply of energy, hormones, cholesterol, and essential vitamins and minerals. The question is, what can happen if the liver isn't working as it should?

Steatotic liver disease (also called fatty liver disease) is an umbrella-term for when fat builds up in the liver. Although drinking too much alcohol can be one cause of fatty liver disease, it is not the only cause. Metabolic Dysfunction Associated Steatosis Liver Disease (MASLD), formerly known as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), can lead to liver scarring and liver failure.

Although we do not fully understand why some people have fatty liver while others don't, we do know that the risk for developing this condition increases for people living with obesity, type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance, high cholesterol or triglycerides, or hypertension (high blood pressure). The good news is, there are also lifestyle modifications that can help reduce your risk of developing the condition. In addition to getting enough exercise, and sleep, the following food habits can help you eat well with fatty liver disease:

- Eating fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits every day. Different colours of vegetables and fruits have differing levels of vitamins and minerals, so it is good to eat a rainbow of colours. Try eating veggies and hummus as a snack, or adding frozen vegetables like peas or spinach to soups, stews, chilli, or caseroles. Having an apple with peanut butter, or sprinkling thawed or fresh berries onto your morning oatmeal, can also help you get your daily fruit and vegetable intake.
- Choose whole grains more often. This can include brown rice, oatmeal, whole wheat breads and pastas.
- Eat foods with omega-3 fats, like salmon, trout, tuna, walnuts, chia or flax seeds, and/or fortified eggs a few times per week.
- Limit foods with saturated fats. Saturated fats are solid at room temperature. Choose meat with less marbling, and trim fat off meat like steak or pork chops before preparing it. Cook with oils that are liquid at room temperature, such as olive or canola oil.

Join our online [Eating Well for Fatty Liver Disease](#) class on Tuesday, February 11, from 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. to learn more.

Upcoming In-Person Classes

Click on the class title for more information or to register.

- [Living Well with Stress](#) – Wednesday, February 19, from 9:30 a.m. – noon at the Montgomery Community Association
- [Your Kidney Health](#) – Wednesday, February 19, from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. at the South Health Campus Wellness Centre
- [Understanding the Experience of Grief](#) – Sunday, February 23, from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. at the Montgomery Community Association
- [Better Choices, Better Health® - Chronic Pain](#) – Monday, March 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7 & 14 from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Montgomery Community Association

The Montgomery Community Association is located at 5003 16 Avenue NW, and the South Health Campus Wellness Centre is located at 4448 Front Street SE.

