

# Look and feel your absolute best!

As summer begins to wind down, your holiday time is over, and your children start preparing to return to school, we thought it would be a good time to remind you of our top ways to *Change Your Way to Health!* When you begin taking positive steps towards putting these tips to work for you, you'll not only feel better, you'll look better, too!

**Boost your energy.** When you feel energetic you're more likely to feel good about yourself. For a quick energy boost, take a brisk 10-minute walk, listen to some upbeat music, or talk with a friend. And if you feel like extending your walk by an extra 10 or 20 minutes, go for it.

**Don't skip meals.** One of the keys to maintaining consistent energy levels throughout the day is to eat more frequently, but in small amounts. Instead of having a large meal for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, try lighter meals at these same times, with healthy snacks in between mealtimes.

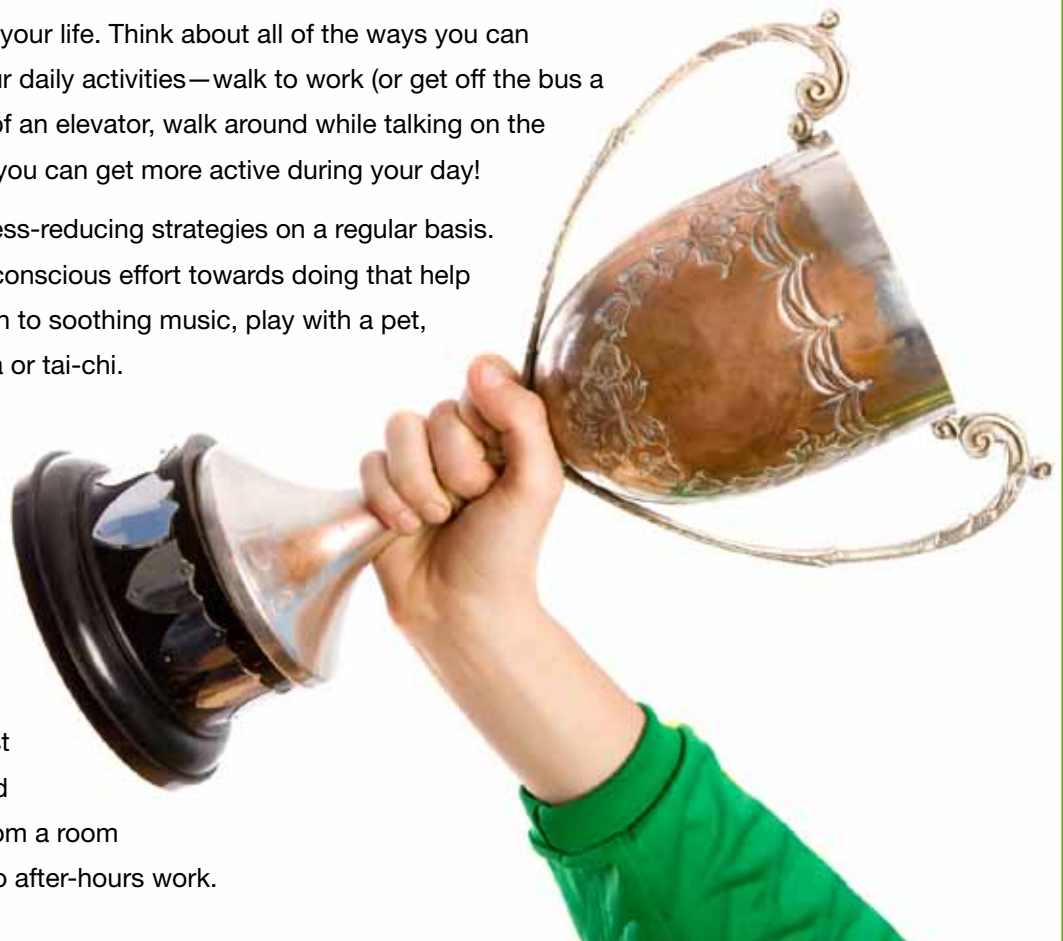
**Eat more raw and whole foods.** Raw foods are high in water content, fibre, and micronutrients (nutrients, like minerals, that your body needs in small amounts to stay healthy, e.g. iron and zinc). When you eat raw and/or whole foods (instead of processed foods), you feed your body the energy it needs to operate at peak performance.

**Make water your drink of choice.** Are you a frequent coffee, tea or cola drinker? You may be dehydrated without even realizing it because drinks containing caffeine can increase your need to urinate which, in turn, can cause dehydration. And when you're dehydrated, you can feel fatigued and experience headaches (among other problems). Remember, your body is made up of about 70% water—not soda or lattes! The solution? Drink water, and plenty of it.

**Move!** Getting active can transform your life. Think about all of the ways you can incorporate more movement into your daily activities—walk to work (or get off the bus a few stops early), take stairs instead of an elevator, walk around while talking on the phone. There are innumerable ways you can get more active during your day!

**Manage your stress.** Practice stress-reducing strategies on a regular basis. These are things that you put some conscious effort towards doing that help calm your mind and your body. Listen to soothing music, play with a pet, take slow and deep breaths, try yoga or tai-chi.

**Get more sleep.** If you wake up feeling tired, or you run out of energy after only a few hours of waking, you might not be getting enough sleep. To help you get more sleep, try to go to bed at the same time each day, and be sure you've finished exercising and eating at least four hours before your predetermined sleeping time. Also, make the bedroom a room to sleep in, not watch television or do after-hours work.



# Make a change!

If the thought of making major lifestyle changes seems overwhelming, break your lifestyle change goals into smaller steps--changing one habit at a time. Start by picking a habit that's a priority for you and make a commitment to yourself and family/friends (as appropriate) that you'll stick with trying to change that habit for the next 30 days. By that time, you'll have formed a new, more healthy, habit! Then, pick a new habit and repeat the process. And so on.

And remember, don't just stop bad habits. You'll have more success at meeting your lifestyle change goals if you substitute healthy habits for bad habits. Here are some examples:

1. Replace soft drinks with water.
2. Replace coffee with green tea.
3. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
4. Replace candy bars and chips with fruits, vegetables, and nuts.
5. Replace watching television before going to bed with meditation.
6. Instead of sitting in a lunch room during your breaks, go for a brisk walk.

## And one more thing...

Be patient with yourself. Habits are often performed unconsciously. You may not realize what you're doing until after you've done it.

By choosing healthy goals, planning small steps that move you towards these goals, substituting good habits for bad habits, and partnering with friends or family to make positive changes together, you'll soon be feeling full of energy and vitality!

And if you want more support making lifestyle changes, Human Solutions is here to help. We have many Plan Smart Services™ that may be just what you need to change your way to health. Choose from a variety of services like *12 Weeks to Wellness* or *Nutritional Counselling*. Call us to find out more.



## Keep in touch



We want your questions, comments, and suggestions.

E-mail us at [changetohealth@humansolutions.ca](mailto:changetohealth@humansolutions.ca).

For more information, to book a counselling session, or to access any of your EFAP services our Client Services Representatives are ready to speak with you 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in English or French. All calls are completely confidential.

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