

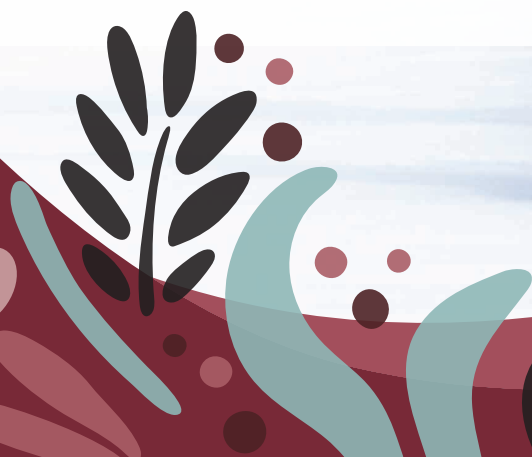
HEALTHY AGING:

Physical activity and exercise

A practical guide to lifelong well-being for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis adults (18-49 years) and older adults (50+ years) in Canada

IN THIS ISSUE:

- » Staying physically active
- » Getting enough physical activity and exercise
- » Preventing frailty
- » Strengthening brain activity



How this resource was developed



This resource is one of a series of six healthy aging booklets for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis adults (aged 18 to 49 years) and older adults (aged 50+ years) in Canada. It was developed in response to expressed interest from Indigenous families and community partners for useful, culturally appropriate information to improve and protect the health and well-being of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people throughout the aging process.

The healthy aging booklets in this resource series include:

- **Healthy aging: Physical activity and exercise**
- **Healthy aging: Food, diet and nutrition**
- **Healthy aging: Preventative health behaviours**
- **Healthy aging: Mental and emotional health**
- **Healthy aging: Life stages and wellness**
- **Healthy aging: Financial wellness**

The resources were developed using information from print and digital publications, webinars, conferences, and online forums. A number of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people from across Canada helped with the development of the healthy aging booklets by sharing their knowledge, insights, ideas, stories, health tips, and feedback to improve the quality and value of the resources.

We want to thank the following people for assisting with the editing of our healthy aging booklets:

- **April Tucker**, Cayuga Nation
Member of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, ON
- **Belinda Vandenbroeck**, Ininiw
Grandmother, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, MB
- **Clayton Sandy**, Sioux Knowledge
Keeper, Sioux Valley Dakota First
Nation, MB
- **Dawn Cardinal**, Cree, Whitefish
Lake #128 (Good Fish Lake/Saddle
Lake First Nation), AB
- **Franny Alec**, Stati'mc Knowledge
Keeper, Xaxli'p First Nation, BC
- **Gloria Cochrane**, Cree Grandmother,
Fisher River Cree Nation, MB
- **Jack Mercredi**, Cree Métis, Fond du
Lac Denesuline Nation, SK
- **Jolyne Knockwood**, Mi'kmaq,
Amlamgog First Nation, NB
- **Julie Carmichael**, Red River Métis, MB
- **Karyn Davis**, Anishinaabe, Ebb and
Flow First Nation, MB
- **Kathleen (Kathy) Mallett**,
Anishinaabe-Cree Grandmother,
Fisher River Cree Nation, MB
- **Levinia Brown**, Inuk Elder, Rankin
Inlet, NU
- **Linda Nobiss Campbell**, Red River
Métis Grandmother, MB
- **Myrtle Beaulieu**, Métis Cree, AB
- **Roselyn (Fern) Bear**, Dakota
Grandmother, Standing Buffalo First
Nation, SK



Table of contents

Introduction..... 4

About this booklet..... 4

Acknowledging diversity 6

What is healthy aging? 7

Physical activity and exercise..... 8

Staying physically active 8

Getting enough physical activity
and exercise.....14

Choosing the right physical activities.....16

Preventing frailty.....22

Strengthening brain activity24

Keeping a healthy body weight.....27

How you can learn more30



National Collaborating Centre
for Indigenous Health
Centre de collaboration nationale
de la santé autochtone

© 2026 National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH). This publication was funded by the NCCIH and made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of PHAC.

ISBN (print): 978-1-77368-762-9

ISBN (online): 978-1-77368-763-6





Introduction

About this booklet

Historically, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people led highly active lives. They migrated seasonally, following traditional food sources and the natural cycles of the plants and animals. The daily physical labour required for hunting, fishing, gathering, and seasonal travel promoted strong cardiovascular health and overall fitness. Today, however, Indigenous people lead

very different lives. Because of the processes of colonization — including forced relocations, land evictions, restrictions on movement, and assimilation efforts such as residential schools — many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people have inactive lifestyles, which has resulted in overly high rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

Our women were very busy back in the day. We didn't have to go to the store to get canned salmon. The people went to the river. That in itself is very different. Even the food that we ate back then compared to now is very different and that plays a role in our aging because food is so processed now. It's not the same anymore. It really is hard to get moose meat and duck. ... Even just the eating, the exercise, you know? Women and kids would go berry picking all day long. We were moving. We were doing things. It's very different now because I can get really lazy and not have to leave my house for anything if I don't feel like it.

— First Nations advisor





This booklet is intended to promote healthy lifestyle habits to improve and protect the health and well-being of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis adults (aged 18 to 49 years) and older adults (aged 50+ years) in Canada. Learning how to take care of your mind, body, and spirit through physical activity and exercise will boost your whole health and overall quality of life. This includes learning about the importance of staying physically active and getting enough physical activity. It also involves choosing the right physical activities, particularly for preventing frailty, strengthening

brain activity, and keeping a healthy body weight. These topics are discussed in this booklet.

Throughout this booklet, you will find external links to additional knowledge resources that you can check out for more information. You can also refer to the list of national organizations at the end of this booklet for culturally appropriate services, links to local programs, and online knowledge resources to support your best health, well-being, and quality of life through healthy aging.



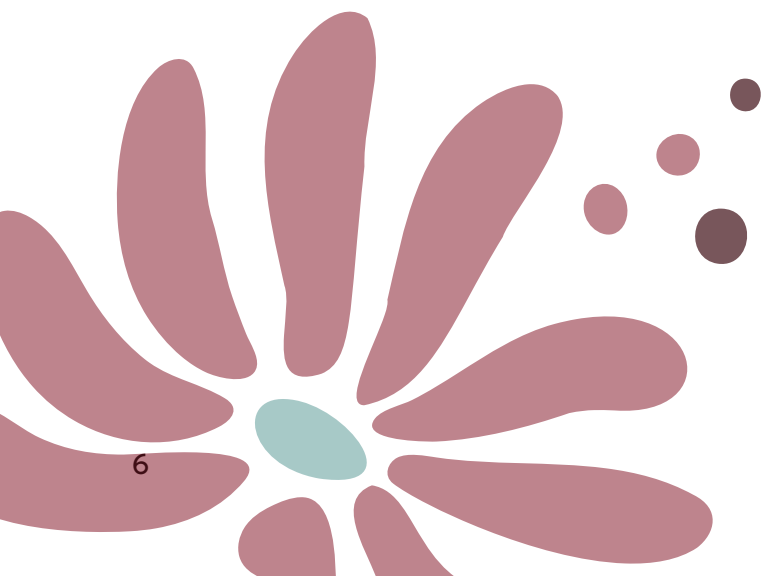
Acknowledging diversity

Indigenous people across Canada are not all the same. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people comprise three completely distinct cultural groups with their own unique histories, languages, cultural heritages, and spiritual beliefs. They have different worldviews, ambitions, and lived realities. There are also differences within each First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultural group, depending on regional geography, constitutional rights and entitlements, and whether residing in urban centres, rural or remote areas, on reserve, or in Inuit Nunangat.

Many factors shape the aging processes of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people and their ability to age

well. Experiences of colonization and ongoing colonialism, political and economic structures, proximity to healthcare services and specialized care, connections to community and family, connections to the lands and waters, and even sex and gender identities all play a role in the lived realities of healthy aging. For example, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis adults and older adults in rural communities face a very different reality than Indigenous people living in cities, especially if they are trying to manage chronic health conditions, struggle with physical disabilities or accessibility limitations, or have lost their ability to drive.

All First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people have different health realities and mental and physical capabilities. The information in this booklet provides a foundation for healthy aging and well-being in later life. You are encouraged to adapt these guidelines to fit your own needs, physical abilities, and personal circumstances.



What is healthy aging?

Aging is a natural part of our life cycle. It begins at conception and continues until death. Still, we usually do not start thinking about the health aspects of aging until we are in our 40s or 50s and changes in our bodies, health, and functional abilities become more apparent.

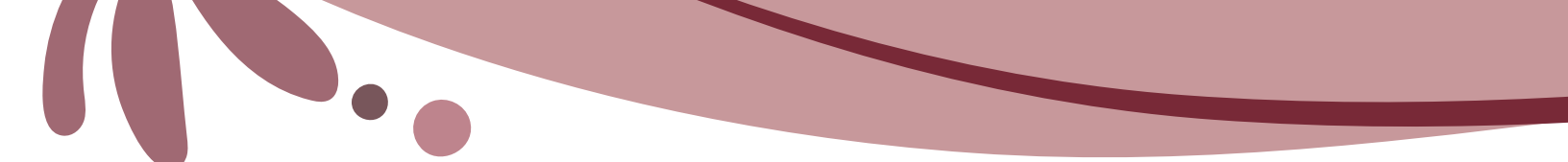
I just turned 61 in March and I can feel the difference. ... For example, sitting on a chair or your bed with your legs crossed. You can't sit in that position very long, whereas when I was younger, I could do it longer. ... I can sure feel a difference when I got older.

— **First Nations advisor**

Healthy aging is about aging well, actively and successfully, by living well, staying positive and productive, and keeping good physical, mental, and social functioning. It focuses on what matters for your overall health and well-being in older age, like lowering your risk of chronic diseases and age-related disabilities and building a strong sense of life satisfaction and happiness. Healthy aging is about shifting the narrative, where growing older is not about decline, loss, and insignificance but rather, about dignity, connection, and purpose. It is about gaining wisdom, strengthening your social connections, and finding new and meaningful ways to not only extend your lifespan (to live longer), but also enhance your healthspan (to live longer in good health).

Healthy aging is a lifelong process that can start at any age. You are never too old — or too young — to start taking care of your mind, body, and spirit. This booklet is the first in a six-part series of guides to healthy aging.





Physical activity and exercise

Staying physically active

One of the best things you can do for your overall health and well-being in your older years is to stay physically active. As it is often said, “You don’t stop moving because you grow old; you grow old because you stop moving.” This idea of “use it or lose it” suggests that you must stay physically active to minimize the functional decline that typically

comes with aging. For instance, you might think sore muscles, stiff joints, and increasing forgetfulness are unavoidable consequences of getting older but, to some extent, they may simply be the result of idleness and inactivity. Staying physically active helps you to not only live longer, but also to feel better, look better, and live better.

If you sit around and do nothing, your sanity starts to slowly leave you. We need to be active. I don’t have diabetes. I do have arthritis and I’m taking a medication for it. It’s been 26 years that I’ve had this disease. It affects other parts of your body, like your eyes. I have to get my eyes checked every six months because of the medication I’m taking. The one thing I find that really works is walking. You got to move. If you don’t move, it’s going to become so painful. Even waking up in the morning, I have to get up right away to start moving around to relieve the pain. ... I used to take pain medication for it, but ... I stopped taking it. I find that there’s certain foods, like sardines really eases the joint pain and the muscle pain.

— Métis advisor

Physical activity refers to any movement of the body that works your muscles and requires energy or effort. This includes everything from household chores and gardening to more intense activities like trail walking and playing oldtimers hockey. Exercise is a subset of

physical activity. It is different from physical activity because it is planned, structured, repetitive, and intentional. Different types of exercise have different benefits for your body. Four types of exercise that target different areas of health and fitness are described below.

Key categories of exercise



AEROBIC (CARDIO)

Exercises that use your arms and legs in a continuous, rhythmic way to boost your lung function and improve your heart health

Examples: Walking, running, swimming, cycling, elliptical/cross-trainer, rowing, stairclimbing, Zumba/dance fitness, aerobics, aquafit/water aerobics



STRENGTHENING

Exercises that use weight and resistance to build bones, build and tone your muscles, and improve your bone and muscle strength

Examples: Weight training (dumbbells, kettlebells, barbells), resistance band exercises, bodyweight/gravity (no equipment) exercises



STRETCHING

Exercises that target your muscles and joints to improve your flexibility and range of motion

Examples: Yoga, pilates, Tai Chi, static stretching, dynamic stretching



BALANCING

Exercises that improve your balance, coordination, and stability on your feet

Examples: Aquafit/water aerobics, Tai Chi, yoga, dancing, bodyweight/gravity (no equipment) exercises

My physiotherapist says, 'motion is the lotion.' It is so true. I find if I don't exercise, like if I'm lazy for a week or something, I do get sore. I get stiff.

— Métis advisor

Exercising regularly and continuously helps improve your:

- strength, endurance, and joint mobility
- circulation, skin health, bone health, and heart health
- mood, brain health, and mental health
- body weight and posture
- sleep quality, social connections, and functional independence
- lifespan and healthspan





My grandma was in her 70s but she would walk back and forth to keep herself active. She had a long house and there was a little set of stairs and she would go up and down there. But she would move things or she'd be sweeping to try and make sure that she was staying active.

— **First Nations advisor**

There are other practical activities you can do besides exercising to improve your overall health and fitness. Many of these daily movements involve walking, bending, reaching, pulling, pushing, and carrying, which help build strength, flexibility, and mobility, as well as burn calories. The next page lists some of these non-exercise physical activities.

Examples of non-exercise physical activities



GENERAL HOUSEHOLD TASKS

Vacuuming, washing dishes, scrubbing, mopping, dusting, doing laundry, organizing, cooking, carrying groceries, making bannock, walking to the store or post office/post box, walking the dog

.....



GENERAL YARD WORK

Cutting grass, digging, shovelling, raking, weeding, chopping wood, clearing brush, burning spring grass, planting flowers

.....



GENERAL HOME REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Cutting, drilling, building, sanding, painting, washing walls and windows, cleaning gutters, moving furniture

.....



LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES

Gardening, foraging for foods and medicines from nature (e.g., berries, maple sap, edible greens, medicinal herbs, tundra plants), fishing, hunting, trapping, hide tanning, whole-animal harvesting

.....



OUTDOOR RECREATION

Hiking, trail walking, trekking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, archery, canoeing, tobogganing, skating, camping, horseshoe pitching

.....



RECREATIONAL SPORTS

Oldtimers hockey, lacrosse, baseball, relay races, long distance running

.....



TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Powwow dancing, square dancing, jigging, drum dancing, traditional Indigenous games (e.g., moccasin game, Arctic winter sports, Dene games)

Even small changes to your daily routine can make a big difference in improving your overall health and fitness. For example, you can:

- start each day with 10 minutes of gentle stretching
- keep a set of small hand weights near your TV or in the kitchen and do bicep curls during commercials or while waiting for your water to boil
- park farther away from store entrances
- make multiple, lighter trips carrying groceries into your home
- stand briefly on one leg, then the other leg when brushing or cleaning your teeth
- get up from your chair and walk around for a few minutes every few hours
- take a brisk, 10-minute walk after each meal
- go for a longer, more relaxed walk with your grandchildren after supper

My grandkids keep me active. They always have something for me to do. ... My weekends were always full of running all over the place but I love doing that.

— **First Nations**
advisor





There are many ways to stay physically active. Start slowly and begin with physical activities that you can handle. Gradually increase the intensity, duration, and frequency of your physical activities and exercises according to how you feel. Pay attention to your body and know when to rest. Going too big too quickly will only discourage you from staying physically active in the long term.



The rural route to active aging: A guide for people who want to stay active as they age
bit.ly/HA01-UAAlberta-active-aging

Getting enough physical activity and exercise

The amount of energy and effort you put into physical activity and exercise can be measured by your breathing, heart rate, and ability to speak. These are key signs that you are working your heart, lungs, and blood vessels. Checking how hard you are working your heart and lungs when doing physical activities and exercises helps determine if you are getting enough cardio exercise to meet your health and fitness goals. The next page describes the different levels of aerobic activity intensity.



Everybody moves resource hub
bit.ly/HA01-everybody-moves



Get active
bit.ly/HA01-participaction-active



Safe: Senior adult fitness exercises
bit.ly/HA01-safe-seniors-exercise





Levels of aerobic activity intensity

LIGHT-INTENSITY

Your breathing is faster than it is when you are resting but you can still talk with ease.

MODERATE-INTENSITY

Your breathing and heart rate are faster, you feel warmer, and you can talk but not sing.

VIGOROUS-INTENSITY

Your breathing is hard, your heart rate is fast, your body temperature feels hot, and you can only say a few words before needing to catch your breath.

If we aren't strength training or consistently keeping our muscle mass, this can be a factor in our frailty and, oftentimes, there are fatalities because of the lack of strength and muscle in our bodies as we age. And that doesn't mean, as we're in our 70s or 80s, necessarily having to be lifting heavy weights. It is just a matter of just continuously working on strength and strength training to maintain that muscle mass that we need to keep us strong and not frail.

— First Nations advisor

The recommended minimum for noticeable health benefits is at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity each week. Adding a mix of strengthening, stretching, and balancing exercises to your weekly physical activities — at least two days per week — is also recommended for healthy aging. Even 10-minute bursts of movement periodically throughout the day can improve your strength, endurance, and joint mobility, making daily tasks more manageable.

Choosing the right physical activities

The best physical activities and exercises to improve your overall health and fitness depend heavily on your personal preferences, individual health profile, physical capabilities, and lifestyle. Other important considerations for choosing the right physical activities include:

- where you live and your physical environment
- your access to facilities and internet
- distinct seasonal changes in the weather
- your transportation needs
- whether you need someone to help you when you do your physical activities



I'm very lucky I live outside of the city. I get to walk down to the lake every morning. And then I find having a routine, like, I go for my walk. I come home and then I do my weights. I had both my shoulders replaced in 2024, so I have to do that now. I have no choice, right? But it's definitely helped me along, being healthier and having a routine and exercising every day.

— Métis advisor

Many physical activities and exercises can be done entirely on your own or in a group setting, at home or elsewhere. Walking is a good example. Walking is one of the most accessible and beneficial forms of exercise for all-around health and fitness. It can be modified to fit almost any age or physical capability and can be done just about anywhere. Tai Chi

— or “Tai Chi walking” — is another highly accessible practice that offers well-rounded health benefits and does not require specialized equipment. It involves low-impact, slow-motion movements that put minimal stress on your muscles and joints, making it an ideal option for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis adults and older adults with joint issues, arthritis, or back pain.



Freshfield fitness: TAI
CHI ACTIVE
[bit.ly/HA01-fresh
field-taichi](https://bit.ly/HA01-fresh-field-taichi)



Walking: The activity of
a lifetime
[bit.ly/HA01-halton-
walking](https://bit.ly/HA01-halton-walking)



We're all on limited budgets. I don't go to gyms or anything like that. I don't have any extra funds for that stuff, but I do use this program on YouTube. ... They do all kinds of exercising; cardio, balancing. They also talk about diet. They talk about when one retires and what sorts of issues people are dealing with when you're retired. It's a good program.

— First Nations advisor

You can find many free health and fitness resources on the internet. YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and Pinterest are reliable social media platforms for finding guided workout videos and age-appropriate exercises that require minimal space

and equipment. Your local library and health centre also offer free fitness content. Other sources for low-cost fitness guides, workout videos, and exercise equipment include second-hand stores and online marketplaces.



Active at home videos
bit.ly/HA01-western-activevids



FitNation workout series
bit.ly/HA01-fitnation-workouts



yes2next: Fitness and joy at any age
bit.ly/HA01-yes2next-fitness



Limited space, invasion of privacy, constant interruptions, and lack of interest or motivation can make it tough to exercise at home. Asking a friend or family member to be your “workout buddy” can help keep you motivated and make exercising more fun and enjoyable. Socially engaging in physical fitness can also make your workouts feel easier and helps build stronger relationships. You can work out or attend fitness classes at your local sportsplex, health and fitness centre, friendship centre, community recreation centre, senior centre, or, in some cases, the gym at your local high school or shopping centre. Participating in alternative sports such as snowshoeing, canoeing, horseshoe pitching, and hiking are also good options for improving your overall health and fitness, particularly if you are looking for a fresh approach to staying active.



I keep myself active. I still dance powwow and work out at the gym quite often. ... My doctor always warns me I'm borderline diabetic. ... My big problem is eating all the time. I love to eat. So, I've been curbing that and trying to stay away from having diabetes.

— First Nations advisor





Getting physically active does not mean you have to invest in costly exercise equipment, hefty membership fees, or special workout wear, although activity-specific clothing and footwear is important for comfort, injury prevention, and regulating your body temperature. Before you start any new fitness regimen, talk with

your doctor or local healthcare provider about your exercise plans, especially if you are over 40 years of age, have underlying health conditions, or have not exercised in a long time. This will help you choose the right physical activities to meet your health and fitness goals.



Preventing frailty

Frailty is a health condition where your body becomes weakened, leaving you prone to illness and injury, and making your recovery harder. It is measured on a spectrum ranging from “very fit” to “terminally ill.” Your doctor or local healthcare provider has standardized tests to diagnose frailty and determine its severity, but you can also spot the warning signs of frailty. These include:

- losing 10 lbs or more without making any changes to your diet or physical activities
- experiencing muscle weakness and loss of strength in your legs and grip
- feeling tired and having no energy most of the time, even after resting
- walking more slowly and finding it harder to move around and do everyday tasks
- having poor balance and one or more falls in the past little while, or a growing fear of falling
- losing your appetite and having no desire to eat
- increasing forgetfulness, confusion, and thinking problems
- feeling sad or depressed and withdrawing from social activities



Frailty is a leading cause of falls and fall-related injuries, especially among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis older adults. Even minor stressors — such as a mild infection, a new prescription medication, or a basic surgical procedure — that would typically have little effect on a healthy person can have devastating consequences for someone who is frail. For example, frailty can result in:

- loss of mobility and independence
- hospitalization and longer hospital stays
- admission to long-term care homes
- reduced quality of life
- illness and death

My Mom was living by herself and right after COVID, she fell and she broke her ankle. And because she wouldn't do the physiotherapy, she got put in this hospital out here. And she wouldn't do the physio so now she's in a nursing home in a wheelchair. ... Maybe if she had been more active previous to her doing that, maybe she wouldn't have ended up in a wheelchair in a nursing home. Like, her brain's perfectly fine. But I think just the pressure of having to do all those exercises at her age and stuff and never having to exercise just compounded it all and it just made the situation even worse.

— Métis advisor



Frailty can be prevented — and even reversed — through regular exercise, improved nutrition, and medication management. Talk with your doctor or local healthcare provider if you are experiencing any signs of frailty or think you are at risk of becoming frail.



Avoid frailty – Eat well
bit.ly/HA01-canfrailty-eatwell



Clinical frailty scale
bit.ly/HA01-UToronto-frailtyscale



You CAN prevent falls!
bit.ly/HA01-GovCan-preventfalls

Strengthening brain activity

Keeping your brain active and healthy plays a big part in your mobility and ability to remain steady on your feet. Many hospitalizations involving fracture-related injuries are because of falls. As you get older, your bones weaken, your muscles shrink, and your brain activity slows down. This, in turn, affects your balance, coordination, and reaction time, and puts you at risk for falls and fall-related fractures. The changes in your brain activity also increase your chances of cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease, and dementia.



Doing physical activities and exercises that challenge your strength, flexibility, coordination, and focus is a good way to not only boost your brain health but also lower your risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. For example, walking and talking is good for you because it requires physical movement and thinking. Other activities you can do to strengthen your brain activity include:



gathering and harvesting traditional foods and medicines (e.g., berries, edible greens, medicinal herbs, tundra plants)

.....



playing bingo, board games (e.g., chess, checkers, Yahtzee, scrabble), card games (e.g., cribbage, uno, bridge), and games that require physical and mental skill (e.g., pick-up sticks, Jenga)

.....



doing puzzles (e.g., jigsaw, Sudoku, crossword, Rubik's Cube)

.....



playing mobile brain games (i.e., Easy Word, Mahjong, Hidden Objects)

.....



playing pool and shuffleboard

.....



exploring a new hobby and learning a new skill (e.g., language, musical instrument, painting, quilting, crocheting, beading, regalia making, moccasin making, sewing, photography, cooking, woodworking)

.....



reading, journalling, and other creative writing (e.g., poetry, song lyrics, short stories)

Keeping your brain active does not cure or completely prevent Alzheimer's disease and dementia, but it helps build cognitive resilience to delay the onset of noticeable symptoms and allow the brain to function normally for much longer, even when the disease is present.



Huberman lab
bit.ly/HA01-hubermanlab

(a podcast about improving brain function, enhancing mood and energy, optimizing physical health and performance, and developing new skills and behaviors)



Living better and aging well: David Suzuki takes us on a journey to learn how
bit.ly/HA01-suzuki-agingwell



Preventing dementia in Indigenous Peoples by aging well: Advice from older Indigenous Peoples
bit.ly/HA01-icaare-preventingdementia





Keeping a healthy body weight

Keeping a healthy body weight is crucial for your overall health, well-being, and quality of life. Being overweight or underweight affects nearly every system in your body and leads to many serious health concerns, including:

- high blood pressure and high cholesterol
- obesity and diabetes
- heart disease and stroke
- cancer
- kidney disease
- digestive and breathing problems
- arthritis and osteoarthritis
- chronic fatigue and soreness
- mental health issues



I had arthritis on my right hip which was quite bad. ... I was going to have surgery. ... The surgeon decided to just do a little bit of check. ... He noticed I had improved a lot so the surgery was cancelled. ... I had lost a lot of weight. Today, I have no more pain, after all that suffering. ... I connect this to healthy aging. ... We can recover if we really believe in ourselves and look after our health and our diet.

— Inuk advisor

Regular physical activity and exercise plays an important role in keeping a healthy body weight and good health. It helps your body build energy and stay energized. It also boosts your body's ability to burn calories. When combined with nutritious eating habits, regular physical activity and exercise can help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight in the long-term. Other things you can do to keep a healthy body weight include moving more and sitting less, getting enough good-quality sleep, and minimizing the amount of alcohol you drink, especially since alcohol is high in calories, stops your body from burning fat, and often leads to cravings for salty and greasy

foods. See the **Healthy aging: Food, diet, and nutrition booklet** and **Healthy aging: Preventative health behaviours** booklet in this resource series for more information about these topics.



Be less sedentary and move more throughout the day
bit.ly/HA01-cancancer-movemore



How to follow the Canadian 24-hour movement guidelines for adults
bit.ly/HA01-participation-moveguidelines

Talk with your doctor or local healthcare provider to learn more about your body weight, related health risks, and the most effective way to safely and realistically manage your weight, based on your individual medical profile, health needs, physical capabilities, and lifestyle factors.



How you can learn more

Several national organizations in Canada offer culturally appropriate services, links to local programs, and online knowledge resources to help you maintain your best health, well-being, and quality of life. Some of these organizations are listed below.



211 at United Way Centraide Canada is a primary source for provincial/territorial government and community-based health and social services. Resources for older adults include programs and services related to housing, food, housekeeping, mental health supports, and much more.

Phone: 211
211.ca/#find



Active Aging Canada offers online knowledge resources, videos, links to local programs, and public education sessions to support active living and healthy aging for adults and older adults.

Phone: 519-925-1676
Toll free: 800-549-9799
activeagingcanada.ca



Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction provides guidance, tools, and knowledge resources to help people learn about substance use and make informed decisions about addictions-related harms.

Phone: 613-235-4048
Toll free: 833-235-4048
ccsa.ca/en



Canadian Disability Participation Project offers evidence-based research articles, infographics, playbooks, videos, posters, guidelines, and toolkits for people experiencing physical disabilities.

cdpp2.ca



Canadian Frailty Network offers online resources to support people with frailty, their families, and caregivers, including Indigenous resources, impact stories, webinars, journal articles, and tips for navigating the healthcare system.

Phone: 613-483-9399
cfn-nce.ca



Diabetes Canada offers a collection of tools and resources, as well as virtual learning opportunities, to help people with diabetes live healthy lives.

Toll free: 1-800-226-8464
diabetes.ca



First Nations Health Authority offers a variety of tips, guides, and knowledge resources to support healthy aging, quality of life, Elder wellness, and end-of-life care for First Nations people.

Phone: 604-693-6500
Toll free: 866-913-0033
fnha.ca



Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada offers the latest articles, health tips, podcasts, and digital stories to inform, educate, and raise awareness about heart disease and stroke prevention. Online resources include healthy recipes, lifestyle tips, and whole approaches to Indigenous health.

Toll free: 888-473-4636
heartandstroke.ca



McMaster Optimal Aging Portal provides direct and easy access to a vast array of evidence-based information, videos, and e-learning resources to help older adults, their families, and caregivers stay healthy, active and engaged.

Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 22121
mcmasteroptimalaging.org/age-well



National Association of Friendship Centres provides a link to over 100 Friendship Centres and Provincial/Territorial Associations offering culturally appropriate programs and access to vital health, education, and social services for Indigenous people in urban settings across Canada.

Phone: 613-563-4844
Toll free: 877-563-4844
nafc.ca/friendship-centres



National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health is a source for many reliable, current, and culturally appropriate health-related knowledge resources to support the best health and well-being of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people.

Phone: 250-960-5250
nccih.ca



ParticipAction offers many science-backed videos and online knowledge resources to help people of all ages and abilities get healthy by getting active.

participation.com



Public Health Agency of Canada offers a range of programs, services, and knowledge resources to promote and support the health and socio-economic well-being of Indigenous Peoples and communities.

Toll free: 844-280-5020
canada.ca/en/services/indigenous-peoples.html



SCI Action Canada Lab provides physical activity, active living, and sport resources for people living with spinal cord injuries.

Phone: 250-807-8000
sciactioncanada.ok.ubc.ca

.....

© Credit: (Front cover) iStockPhoto.com, ID 1200997855; (p. 5) USAY, 2025; (p. 10-11) iStockPhoto.com, ID 2158938972; (p. 13) iStockPhoto.com, ID 1360260063; (p. 16) iStockPhoto.com, ID 2228595085; (p. 18) iStockPhoto.com, ID 2215428013; (p. 20-21) iStockPhoto.com, ID 182518378; (p. 22-23) iStockPhoto.com, ID 1187049954; (p. 24) iStockPhoto.com, ID 2211889971; (p. 26-27) iStockPhoto.com, ID 2170482484; (p. 28-29) iStockPhoto.com, ID 2284430073.

The booklets in this series include:



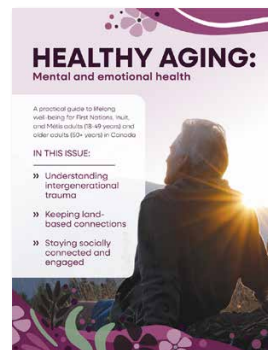
Healthy aging: Physical activity and exercise



Healthy aging: Food, diet and nutrition



Healthy aging: Preventative health behaviours



Healthy aging: Mental and emotional health



Healthy aging: Life stages and wellness



Healthy aging: Financial wellness

You can view all of the English booklets online at nccih.ca.

Aussi disponibles en français: ccnsa.ca.

For more information:



National Collaborating Centre
for Indigenous Health

Centre de collaboration nationale
de la santé autochtone

3333 University Way
Prince George, BC, V2N 4Z9

250-960-5250
nccih@unbc.ca
nccih.ca



nccih.ca/485/Launch-healthy-aging.nccih?id=624