



In this newsletter, we will learn more about the changes that one can make to help manage their weight and improve their overall health, as well as provide tips on how to get started.

# Behavioural modifications

Making dietary changes, increasing physical activity, and recognizing and changing unhealthy habits are important first steps for weight management.

## Dietary changes<sup>1</sup>

Having a healthy diet and practising healthier eating habits is essential to weight management. It is common for people to want to lose weight quickly through extreme and unrealistic diets—but making steady changes that one can maintain while still enjoying life is the safest, most effective, and most recommended way to lose weight and keep it off long-term. There is no “ideal” weight-loss diet that will work for everyone. Instead, the focus should be on making dietary changes, such as choosing healthy foods and developing good eating habits that work for you.

### Here are 3 tips that can help you to start making simple changes to your diet:



Meal prepping is a great way to improve your diet, since planning your meals ahead of time helps you eat healthier and avoid take-out or fast food. Just remember to try to choose foods that are:<sup>2</sup>

- Low in sugar and low in fat (avoid sweets and fried foods)
- Contain plant-based protein or lean animal proteins (such as beans, nuts, chicken, and fish)
- High in fibre (such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes)



Bring a water bottle to work. Drinking more water throughout the day helps boost your metabolism and energy levels.<sup>3</sup> Drinking water can also help you avoid sugary drinks. Try adding lemon slices to your water for extra flavour!



Reduce snacking throughout the day by scheduling your meal times. Not only will it help to reduce the calories you consume, it can help your body better control blood sugar levels.<sup>2</sup>

## Physical activity<sup>1</sup>

Physical activity is any activity that causes your body to burn calories. While exercise alone may not lead to substantial weight loss, it is important as it promotes overall health and wellness. Physical activity does not have to be just going to the gym! It is important to incorporate activities you enjoy, such as joining a recreational sports team, a dance class, or speed walking. In addition to the physical benefits, being more active promotes blood flow, which can help improve your mental clarity and reduce sleepiness, while also helping you manage your weight.<sup>4,5</sup>

### Here are 3 tips that can help you move more throughout the work day:<sup>4</sup>



Get off public transport a few blocks away from work or park your car further away, to increase the number of steps you take in the day.

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Try to stand up and stretch every half hour at work or when watching TV to avoid sitting down for long periods of time.

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Take the stairs instead of the elevator. This is a great way to burn calories and use different muscle groups.

### Hear from a physician that specializes in treating obesity

*"We usually start out managing obesity with behavioural interventions. That is the*  
*manage expectations, and help people living with obesity create changes in their d*

## Recognizing and changing unhealthy eating habits

People sometimes eat when they're not actually hungry, leading them to eat more than they need or want. Food can also be used as a distraction; for example, some people may eat because they feel upset or bored, out of habit (always eating popcorn while watching TV at home), or due to stress they experience at work or in their personal lives.<sup>6</sup>

### Here are 3 tips that can help reduce stress in your day-to-day life:



Try keeping an organized and clutter-free home and work space. It has been shown to help promote more structured lifestyles, better behaviours, and even healthier food choices.<sup>7</sup>

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Prioritize sleep! Making sure that you get enough sleep each night can help you stay alert and improve your work performance. It has also been found that getting enough sleep can lead to feeling less hungry throughout the day.<sup>8</sup>

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When you feel overwhelmed at work, take a few minutes to step away from the task you are working on, and go for a walk to help clear your mind. This can help you return to your task with a fresh perspective.

In some individuals, a more structured approach is needed to address unhealthy behaviours, such as eating for reasons other than being hungry. Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) is used to identify the specific thoughts and feelings that may lead to unhealthy eating habits and can help people think about them in a different way.<sup>1,6</sup>

*...e base of an approach for the medical management of obesity. We need to educate, diet and behaviour that they will be able to maintain long-term."*

Taking small steps to make behavioural changes can result in a wide range of benefits in your health and workplace performance. The tips in this newsletter are a great way to start with weight management. While it may seem challenging at first, with time it becomes easier as these new activities become habits. Remember, there are many resources to help you along the way!

If you want to get started, remember to speak with your doctor to discuss whether these changes and other options that are available are right for you.<sup>1</sup>

### Want to learn more?

For additional information about these behavioural changes and how they can help you or someone you care about:



Visit Obesity Canada



Speak with your  
healthcare professional



Contact your human  
resources department



We want to hear from you!

Email us at [NNCICustomerCare@novonordisk.com](mailto:NNCICustomerCare@novonordisk.com)  
to share your ideas and comments.

In the next newsletter, we will discuss how you can start the conversation about weight management with your doctor.

**References:** **1.** Lau DCW, et al. 2006 Canadian clinical practice guidelines on the management and prevention of obesity in adults and children. *CMAJ*. 2007;176(8):1-117. **2.** Diabetes Canada. Just the basics. 2018. Available at: <https://www.diabetes.ca/diabetescanadawebsite/media/managing-my-diabetes/tools%20and%20resources/just-the-basics.pdf?ext=.pdf>. Retrieved September 30, 2019. **3.** Boschmann M, et al. Water-induced thermogenesis. *J Clin Endocrinol Metab*. 2003;88(12):6015-6019. **4.** Diabetes Canada. Benefits of physical activity. 2019. Available at: <https://www.diabetes.ca/DiabetesCanadaWebsite/media/Managing-My-Diabetes/Tools%20and%20Resources/benefits-of-physical-activity.pdf?ext=.pdf>. Retrieved September 27, 2019. **5.** Obesity Canada. 5As of obesity management. Available at: [www.obesitycanada.ca](http://www.obesitycanada.ca). Retrieved November 2018. **6.** Health Link BC. Emotional eating. 2018. Available at: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/aa145852>. Retrieved September 27, 2019. **7.** Vohs KD, et al. Physical order produces healthy choices, generosity, and conventionality, whereas disorder produces creativity. *Psychol. Sci*. 2013;24(9):1860-1867. **8.** Beccuti G, et al. Sleep and obesity. *Curr Opin Clin Nutr Metab Care*. 2011;14(4):402.