



# Health & Wellness Guide 2023

**MailMax**





## Do's and don'ts of healthy weight loss

Maintaining a healthy weight promotes long-term health. Being overweight or obese are risk factors for various conditions, including type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The World Health Organization reports that the worldwide obesity rate has tripled since 1975. In 2016, more than 1.9 billion adults were overweight. Of these, more than 650 million were obese.

Health issues related to obesity are largely preventable. Losing weight in a healthy manner is essential for safe and lasting results. Individuals aspiring to lose weight can follow these guidelines on what to do and what not to do.

**DO** add lean protein sources to your diet. Healthline indicates the body burns calories when digesting and metabolizing protein, so a high-protein diet can help to shed

up to 80 to 100 calories per day. Protein also helps you to feel full, reducing the propensity to overeat.

**DON'T** get hung up on numbers early on. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises that even modest weight loss of 5 to 10 percent of your total body weight is bound to produce health benefits, such as improvements in blood sugar levels, cholesterol and blood pressure. Start small and gradually build up.

**DO** eat at least four servings of vegetables and three servings of fruits daily. Produce contains an abundance of vital nutrients and is often fiber-rich and low in calories, which helps you to feel full.

**DON'T** overlook the impact of beverages on weight loss. The calories in sugary beverages, including some all-natural fruit juices, can add up quickly. Stick to water, tea or other unsweetened beverages to help with weight loss.

**DO** get moving more. The Mayo Clinic notes that while it is possible to lose weight without exercise, getting moving can help burn off the excess calories you can't cut through diet alone. Exercise boosts metabolism and benefits mood and strengthens muscles and the cardiovascular system as

well.

**DON'T** go shopping while hungry. If you do, you may make impulse buys that compromise healthy eating plans.

**DO** speak with a doctor if you are vetting diet and exercise plans. A healthcare professional can assist you by indicating if a particular diet or fitness routine is acceptable for your age, goals and current health status.

**DON'T** forget to track eating. Most healthy diets involve some sort of calorie-counting, whether they actually require you to document your intake or use a formula to attribute "points" or another measure

related to what you eat. Writing or tracking the foods and beverages you consume will provide the most honest assessment of habits that could affect weight loss.

**DO** include foods you enjoy. Completely restricting access to occasional treats may cause you to resent healthy eating, which can derail weight loss goals. The principle of moderation can apply to healthy weight loss as long as you account for the more calorie-dense foods.

Losing weight in a healthy manner is achievable when you seek guidance and follow some time-tested techniques.

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# Worried you aren't getting the most from your workouts? Just Breathe



Do you want to learn a simple, effective, and totally awesome tip for optimal wellness? Just breathe.

Yes, it's true. The breathing part is the secret to your best workouts, and if you don't believe me, ask your yoga or Pilates teacher, your personal trainer or even your voice coach.

A full, well-placed inhale fuels your body...cells and all...with lots of nutritious oxygen. As Blandine Calais-Germain, says in her groundbreaking book Anatomy of Breathing, "The cells in the tissues need oxygen to function properly, and it is brought to them from the lungs and the heart."

A long and vigorous exhale triggers your reflexive core connection protecting and stabilizing your organs and spine.

Inhale, we breathe in.

Exhale, we breathe out.

When we breathe in air, our heart takes it and alchemizes it into oxygen (which we need) and carbon dioxide (which we do not need). Then via the blood vessels, the heart sends the oxygen to the body (yea... dinner!) and expels the carbon dioxide with an exhale.

We benefit the most from our inhales if we start by filling the lowest lobes of the lungs. If you think of expanding the bot-

tom edge of your ribcage all around your spine, you will get that air into those lowest lobes. Practice this in the mirror - you should see your low ribcage and belly expand. You should not see your shoulders raised up by your ears.

When we breath out, our insides (muscle and connective tissue) tighten a little around our belly, contracting what Sue Hitzmann, creator of The MELT Method, calls the Reflexive Core. Try taking a nice inhale through your nose, expanding your ribs and belly and now blow the air out through your mouth with a shhhh or ssss sound (it feels like you are pushing air against your teeth). Notice how your belly deflates, your belly button pulls in and your ribs knit down and together. Voila! A little core connection that your body does automatically. According to Sue Hitzmann, "...the reflexive core mechanism's purpose is to support and protect your vital organs and spine."

These two simple, but foundational, breathing exercises give your cells a boost of oxygen and protect and stabilize you in the safest and most efficient way, so you are ready for anything.

There is one final piece of wisdom that we need to respect when it comes to our breathing, and that is that our body breathes for us automatically and it does a good job of it. In Yoga: Fascia, Anatomy and Movement, renowned author and anatomist Joanne Avison reminds us that "...the elastic breath is designed as an exercise to be done consciously for a few minutes...The breathing body is instinctive, and it is not designed for us to think it through the day's activities." In other words, let your body do the breathing for the day, and utilize these breath techniques during workout or mindfulness sessions.

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## How to protect long-term cognitive health

Cognitive health is not something to take for granted. Although a certain level of memory loss can be expected as people age, when the ability to clearly think, learn and remember is compromised, those changes can affect an individual's ability to perform daily activities and should serve as a cause for concern.

Brain health should be a priority for everyone. The National Institute on Aging says brain health is an umbrella term that encompasses a host of factors, including:

- cognitive health, which is how well you think, learn and remember

- motor function, or how you make and control movements

- tactile function, which is how you feel sensations; and

- emotional function, or how emotions are interpreted and responded to.

Individuals can safeguard brain health — particularly cognitive health — by taking these steps.

### Be more health-conscious

Working with doctors, individuals can put their health first. This includes getting routine screenings, managing chronic health problems, limiting or avoiding alcohol and

nicotine products, and getting the recommended amount of sleep each night.

### Manage high blood pressure

All chronic conditions cause long-term repercussions, but the NIA indicates that observational studies show having high blood pressure in mid-life increases the risk of cognitive decline later in life. Lowering blood pres-

sure lowers the risk for mild cognitive impairment and possibly dementia.

### Challenge your brain

Harvard Medical School says nurturing social contacts, engaging in stimulating mental activities like reading and doing puzzles, seeing new places, and learning new things can help keep the brain in top form.

### Manage stress

Stress can take its toll on the body, and there is reason to believe that it may adversely affect cognitive health as well. Make every stride to reduce stress, whether that involves taking vacations, meditating, laughing with friends and family, or engaging in relaxing activities that relieve stress.

### Get enough vitamin D

Vitamin D is linked to a host health benefits, including its potential to promote a healthy brain. Individuals can get more time outdoors to get vitamin D naturally from the

sun and eat foods rich in vitamin D. If doctors find that vitamin D levels are exceptionally low, supplementation can help.

### Pay attention to hearing loss

Certain hearing loss has been linked to cognitive decline, says Healthline. Researchers in Italy concluded that people with central hearing loss had a higher risk of mild cognitive impairment than those with no hearing loss or peripheral hearing loss. Individuals with central hearing loss are urged to speak to their physicians to determine if they can take preventive action to stave off further decline.

Cognitive health should be a priority. Adults can employ various strategies to reduce their risk of cognitive decline as they age.



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# How to use diet to combat age-related bodily changes that can affect your health

The human body is a marvel. How the body transforms over the course of an individual's life is one of its more remarkable qualities, and those changes never cease, even as individuals near retirement age.

The changes associated with aging include physical transformations but also more subtle shifts the naked eye cannot see. For example, metabolism slows as individuals grow older, and aging also can lead to a decrease in bone density and muscle mass. These changes affect how men and women at

or nearing retirement age should approach their diets in recognition of the various ways their nutritional needs change at this point in their lives. Any modifications to a diet should first be discussed with a physician, but the following are some ways aging adults can use diet to combat age-related changes to their bodies.

- **Prioritize protein.** The authors of a 2010 study published in the journal *Current Opinion in Nutrition and Metabolic Care* recommended that older adults consume

between 25 and 30 grams of protein with each meal. The researchers behind the study concluded that such consumption could limit inactivity-mediated losses of muscle mass and function.

- **Overcome reduced production of vitamin D.** WebMD notes that people over 65 typically experience a decrease in natural production of vitamin D. Vitamin D is not naturally found in many foods, so aging men and women may need to rely on supplementation to ensure their bodies get enough of it. Vitamin D helps with anti-inflammation, immune system support and muscle function, among other benefits. So it's vital that aging men and women find ways to get sufficient vitamin D.

- **Consume ample dietary fiber.** The National Resource Center on Nutrition & Aging notes that fiber plays an important role in the health of older adults. Fiber has been linked with heart health, healthy digestion, feeling full, and preventing constipation, which the online medical resource Healthline notes is a common health problem among the elderly. Though the NRCNA notes that older adults need slightly less fiber than their younger counterparts, it's still a vital component of

a nutritious diet. The feeling of fullness that fiber consumption can provide also is significant, as it can ensure adults who aren't burning as many calories as they used to aren't overeating in order to feel satisfied. That can make it easier for such adults to maintain a healthy weight.

- **Monitor intake of vitamin B12.** The NRCNA notes that vitamin B12 is involved in a host of important functions in the body, including nerve function and the formation of red blood cells. Vitamin B12 is most easily found in animal products, which many aging men and women must largely avoid due to other health concerns. In such instances, men and women can discuss supplementation with their physicians as well as alternative food sources of B12, such as fortified cereals, salmon and other items.

Bodily changes related to aging increase the likelihood that men and women will need to alter their diets in order to maintain their overall health.



The following are some ways aging adults can use diet to combat age-related changes to their bodies.



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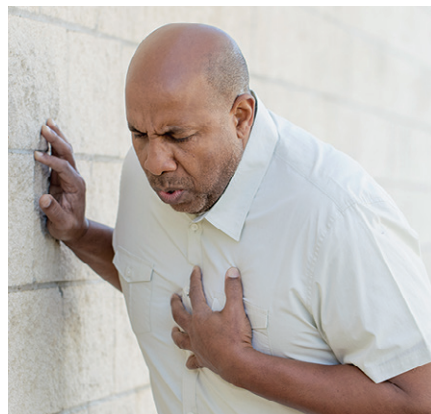


## Early warning signs for heart disease

Cardiovascular disease claims more lives across the globe every year than any other disease or condition, and many of those fatalities are credited to heart disease. Though the terms “cardiovascular disease” and “heart disease” are often used interchangeably, the National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute notes that, while all heart diseases are cardiovascular diseases, not all cardiovascular diseases are heart diseases. This is an important distinction, especially as adults discuss heart and cardiovascular health with their physicians.

The NHLBI reports that more than one in 10 American adults have been diagnosed with heart disease, which underscores the serious threat posed by the various conditions that fall under the umbrella of the condition. Though NHLBI data indicates around 630,000 Americans die from heart diseases each year, many of those deaths are preventable. The same goes for Canada, where data from the Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System indicates that every hour roughly 14 Canadian adults age 20 and over with diagnosed heart disease lose their lives. Education is one of the ways in which deaths due to heart disease can be prevented. That’s especially true when individuals learn to recognize warning signs of the disease and take prompt action once such indicators appear.

• **Chest pain:** Discomfort between the neck and upper abdomen is characterized as chest pain, which does not necessarily indicate the presence of heart disease. However, the experts at Mount Sinai indicate that chest pain is the most common symptom of poor blood



flow to the heart or a heart attack. Chest pain may occur because the heart isn’t getting enough oxygen or blood. It’s important that individuals recognize that the intensity of pain in the chest does not indicate the severity of the problem. That means that even mild discomfort in the chest should be brought to the attention of a physician immediately.

• **Shortness of breath:** Shortness of breath can occur because the heart isn’t pumping blood as well as it should, thus causing blood to back up in the veins that go from the lungs to the heart. Mount Sinai notes that this results in fluid leaking into the lungs, thus producing shortness of breath. Shortness of breath can occur at any time, including when individuals are active or at rest.

• **Coughing or wheezing:** Another indicator of fluid buildup in the lungs related to the heart is persistent coughing or wheezing. When coughing, individuals may spit up a pink or bloody mucus.

• **Swelling in the lower legs:** Mount Sinai notes that swelling in the legs, ankles or feet is another indicator of heart troubles. One of the byproducts of a poorly functioning heart is slower blood flow, and that reduction in flow can cause a backup in the veins of the legs. That backup can cause fluid to build up in the tissues, which leads to swelling.

Heart disease is a significant threat to public health. Learning to recognize signs of the disease can save an untold number of lives.

## Get the skinny on triglycerides

People who see their doctors for routine wellness exams typically undergo certain blood tests during that process. In addition to a complete blood count (CBC), doctors frequently request lipid panels that indicate cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

While cholesterol is a familiar term, triglycerides may be more of a mystery to the average Joe.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, triglycerides are lipids (waxy fats) that provide energy to the body. The body produces triglycerides and also gets them through food. Triglycerides are actual fats, while cholesterol is a waxy, odorless substance made by the liver. Since cholesterol cannot mix or dissolve in the blood, the liver puts cholesterol together with triglycerides to move the fatty mixture (lipoproteins) throughout the body. When a person eats, any extra calories not used for energy are converted into triglycerides, which are stored in fat cells. Later, hormones release these triglycerides as energy between meals. Individuals who regularly eat more calories than they burn, particularly from high-carbohydrate foods, may have high triglycerides.

According to the Mayo Clinic, high triglyceride levels may contribute to a hardening or thickening of the arteries, which is a condition known as arteriosclerosis.

For healthy adults, normal triglyceride levels should be under 150 mg/dL. Values of 151 to 200 mg/dL are considered borderline high, and anything over 201 is high or very high. In addition to arteriosclerosis, high tri-

glyceride levels can raise the risk of cardiovascular disease and pancreatitis.

Overeating, having a family history of high cholesterol, drinking alcohol to excess, being overweight or obese, and having unmanaged diabetes can contribute to high cholesterol levels. Smoking, the presence of thyroid disease and certain medications, like diuretics and hormones, also may raise the risk of developing high triglyceride levels.

Lifestyle changes similar to those recommended to manage high cholesterol can help people lower their triglyceride levels. These include eating a nutritious diet, doing aerobic exercises regularly and maintaining a moderate weight. Individuals should avoid simple carbohydrates, such as those made with white flour, fructose, trans fats, and hydrogenated oils or fats.

Low triglyceride levels are not typically a cause for concern. But in these instances malnutrition or malabsorption could be the culprit.

Individuals should undergo routine health screenings to determine if high triglycerides are part of their lipid panels.



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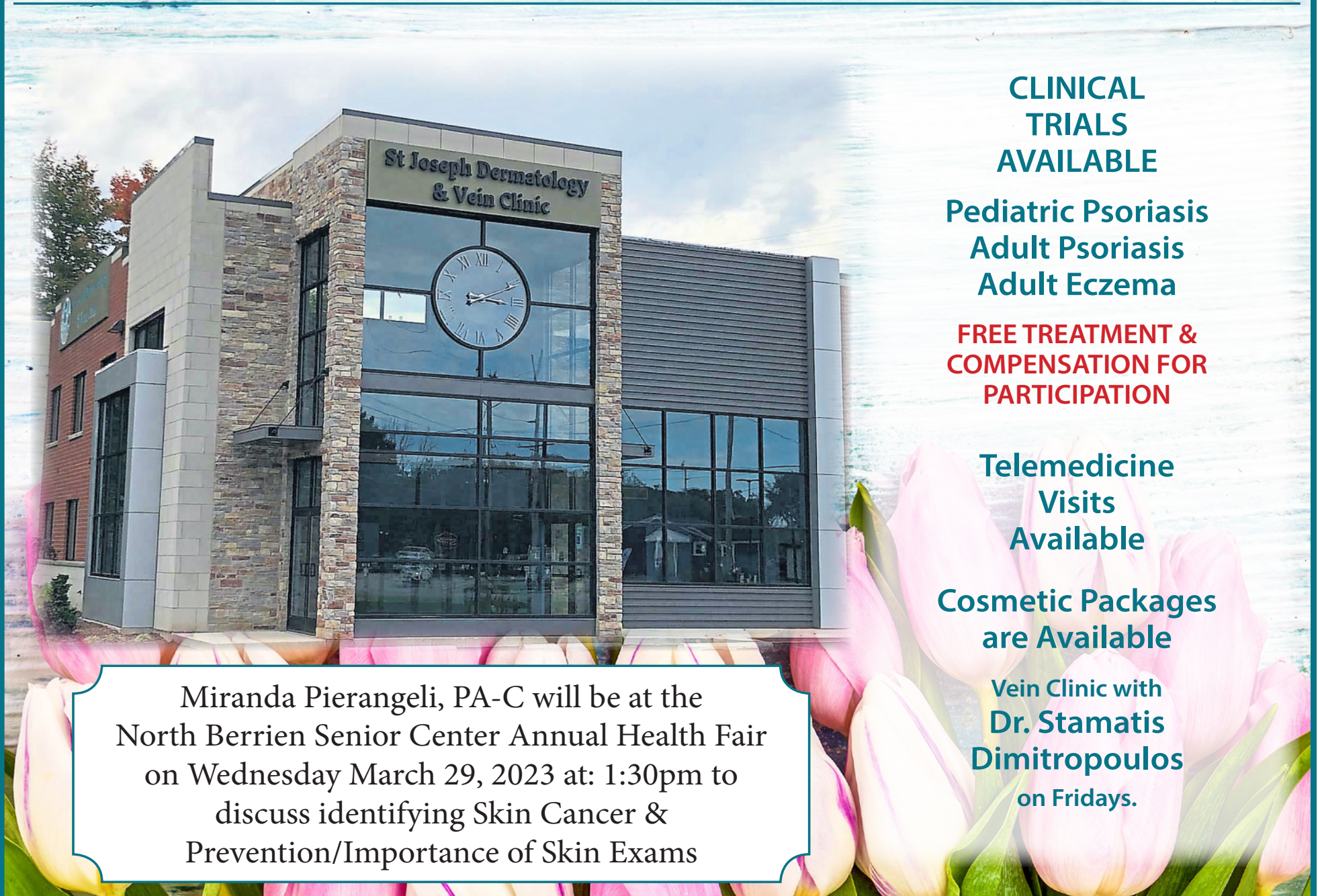




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