



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

# WORKPLACE HEALTH

## Staying Safe in the SUN!

Summer is a great time of year to be outside and enjoying the warm, sunny days. However, the sun can be very dangerous if you do not take the proper precautions. Canadians today have a one in seven chance of developing skin cancer in their lifetimes from exposure to ultraviolet radiation. Melanoma, the most fatal form of skin cancer, is the second most common type of cancer in Ontarians aged 15 to 34 years, and yet it is preventable.

The Canadian Cancer Society recommends the following tips on how to stay safe in the sun.

- **Stay out of the sun**, particularly between the hours of 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun's rays are at their strongest or anytime when the UV Index is three or more.
- **Don't forget your hat!** Most skin cancers happen on the face and neck. These areas need extra protection. Wear a hat with a wide brim that covers your head, face, ears and neck. Hats like baseball caps won't give you enough protection.
- **Wear sunscreen.** When purchasing sunscreen, look for "broad spectrum" on the label. This means the sunscreen offers protection against both UVA and UVB ultraviolet rays.
  - » Apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outdoors.

- » Use a sunscreen with an SPF 15 or higher and SPF 30 if you work or will be outside for most of the day.
- » Reapply every two hours or more often if you've been swimming or perspiring or it has rubbed off.

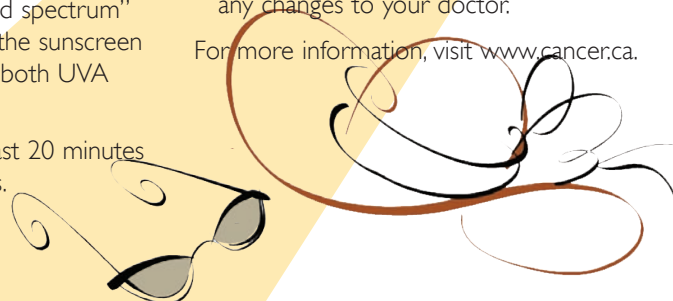
- **Wear your sunglasses.** Sunglasses can help prevent damage to your eyes by blocking a large amount of ultraviolet rays.

Choose sunglasses with:

- » Even shading.
- » Medium to dark lenses (black, grey, brown or green tint).
- » UVA and UVB protection.

- **Avoid using indoor tanning equipment.** Just like the sun, tanning lights and sun lamps emit ultraviolet rays that can cause sunburn, damage skin and increase the risk of skin cancer.
- **Cover your skin** to protect it from the sun. Choose clothing that is loose fitting, tightly woven and lightweight.
- **Check your skin regularly.** No one is completely safe from the sun. Over time, exposure to UV rays can cause skin cancer. Get to know the skin you're in and report any changes to your doctor.

For more information, visit [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca).




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# Shift Work

## What's on the Line: Nutrition

Need healthy eating tips to cope with shift work? Here are some examples of tips that can be used:

- Maintain regular eating patterns.
- Plan on having three meals every day.
- Time meals carefully. If you are working afternoon shift, have your main meal in the middle of the day rather than in the middle of the work shift. Evening shift workers are encouraged to have their main meals in the late afternoon or early evening. Then they should eat lightly during their night shift and have a moderate breakfast in the morning.
- Drink plenty of water, rather than beverages containing caffeine and a lot of sugar.
- Eat a balanced meal, including food from the four food groups found in Canada's Food Guide.
- Emphasize foods high in fibre, low-fat food and dairy choices, lean meats and alternatives, and fruits and vegetables.
- Reduce the amount of high-calorie and high-fat foods and snacks, as these can lead to weight gain.
- Limit fat, salt, alcohol and caffeine that may cause distress to your digestive tract.

For many of us there is not enough time in a day to accomplish all that needs to be done. Fast food and frozen entrees are fast and convenient but are high in calories and fat, which can lead to weight gain and increased risk for cardiovascular diseases. Here are some tips you can use to help manage your time and have healthy balanced meals for you and your family:

- Plan ahead for meals eaten at home by making a daily or weekly meal plan.
- Make a grocery list. Pre-washed salads, frozen fruit and vegetables are a great way to have fruit and vegetables as part of your meal and are not very time consuming to prepare.



- Make dishes such as soup, chilli and stews that can be made in batches and pre-portioned into serving sizes that meet your individual family needs.
- For meals at work, pack it instead. This will help you control the amount of fat, salt and calories you will be eating at work. Try to decrease your reliance on fast food and vending machines.
- Use quick and easy cooking methods such as a grill, barbecue, microwave, non-stick pans or wok, which will help in preparing quick and nutritious meals.

For more information contact 519-426-6170 Ext. 3237.

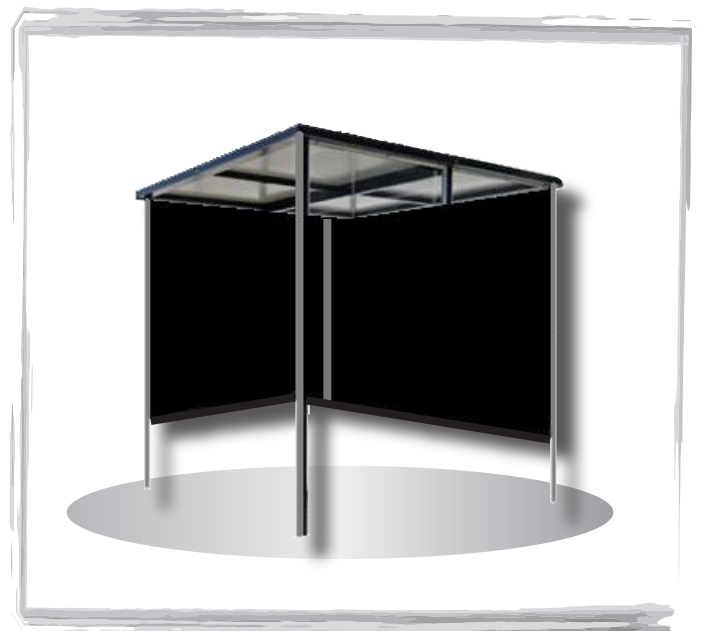


## Smoking Shelter

Workplaces are not required to provide outdoor smoking shelters, but may choose to construct one provided it has no more than two walls and a roof.

It is important to note that a building located in close proximity to the shelter may be considered a wall. The shelter must be located away from cafeterias and lunchrooms. The Smoke-Free Ontario Act requires that the shelter not be worked in or used by employees during the course of their employment. Smoking shelters are not permitted on bar or restaurant property.

If you are interested in building a smoking shelter, or have any questions, please contact the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 Ext.3202.



# Work-Family Balance

We all want a good balance between our work life and our home life. It makes a big difference in our quality of life when our jobs are not interfering with our family time and when our family life is not creating problems with our jobs. Trying to balance all of this takes a toll on us and it results in higher absenteeism, reduced employee commitment, declining job satisfaction, lower workplace morale and reduced satisfaction with family life.

## How balanced is your life?

Those who have balance are satisfied with their work and home lives. They are able to fulfill their multiple responsibilities at home, work and in the community without guilt or regret. They are healthy physically, emotionally and socially. They have a sense of control over their lives and feel that the decisions they make are informed choices rather than forced sacrifices.

Those who are imbalanced are constantly tired, feeling like they are running uphill all the time and getting nowhere. They feel like they have no choices or control and can think of more things that aren't getting done than are getting done. They see more negative things in life than positive ones.

## Is it time for you to get back to balance?

On the journey to achieving the work life, family life and personal life we want, there are five phases that people typically go through.

- 1 The first stage is the **struggle stage**. You might not even know and understand what it is that you're missing. You just know that you feel out of control.
- 2 The second stage is the **juggle stage**. You begin to understand what is missing and try to develop tricks and techniques that allow you to create a sense of control in your life. This stage tends to be very precarious, and the skills that allow you to juggle two balls might fail as soon as a third ball is added to juggle.
- 3 The third stage is **work-life balance**. You actually begin to fulfill your multiple responsibilities; you have a sense of equilibrium, a sense of control, but you focus all your energies on today and getting through the day-to-day, and you really don't have enough energy, resources or time to look in the future.
- 4 The fourth stage is **work-life integration**. You're not only able to fulfill all your work responsibilities but you also have energy and resources that you can put towards career planning, career development, personal growth and development. You have a sense of where you're going as well as where you are.
- 5 The fifth and final stage is **work-life harmony**. You've got a sense of control over all aspects of your life. You are managing your physical well-being, your career, your household, your finances, your relationships. As well, you have the energy and resources to harmonize your community involvement, your sense of spirituality and your sense of well-being, at home and in the community.

The first step in getting back to balance is to recognize what stage you are in and make your goals realistic and achievable. Second, you need to recognize that you can't progress between these stages on your own. You need to depend on your family or personal supports for help, you need to make use of community supports and you need to exist in a supportive environment at work, or know how to help create it if you don't have it. The more that's there, the faster and further you'll be able to move along the continuum.

For more information or ideas on work/family balance, visit [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org) or call the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3236.



BALANCE

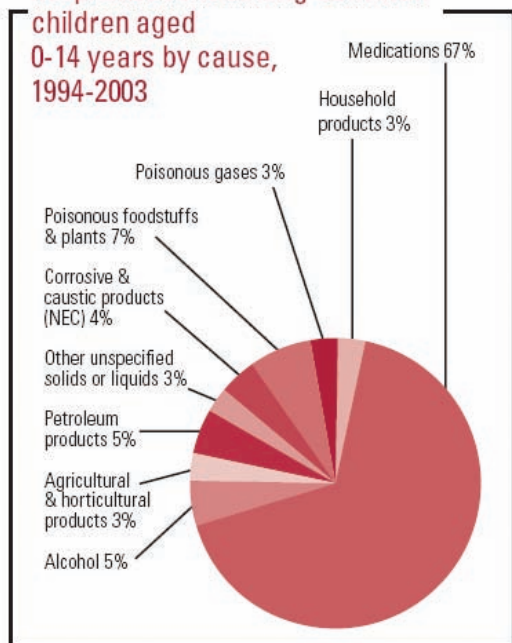
# Medicine Clean Out

## What's in your medicine cabinet?

Often we keep medications, both prescription and over-the-counter remedies, long after they have expired or are no longer being used. Our medicine cabinets can become overcrowded and potentially dangerous. Keeping expired medication greatly increases the risk of unintentional poisoning, especially among younger children.

When we use medication properly it can help us feel better; but if it is taken incorrectly it can cause us serious harm. According to Safe Kids Canada (2006) nearly two-thirds of all poisonings in children aged 0-14 years are caused by medications.

**Unintentional poisoning hospitalizations among Canadian children aged 0-14 years by cause, 1994-2003**



Source: Safe Kids Canada, 2006.

Take the time to clean out your medicine cabinet. Remember, **DO NOT throw medications in the garbage or flush them down the toilet.** When medications are discarded in this manner, chemicals seep into the soil and water supply, potentially contaminating the environment and harming human health if they end up in drinking water sources.

### How to safely clean out your medicine cabinet:

- At least once a year, remove any expired and unlabelled medicines, as well as medications you no longer use.
- Take all medications you need to dispose to a pharmacy for safe and free disposal.
- Lock up remaining medications in a cool, dark place away from children. Be sure the original labels are intact.
- Never store medicine with food or household products.



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