



WINTER 2011

HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

# WORKPLACEHEALTH



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I am pleased to introduce myself as the new health promoter in workplace health and the editor of the workplace newsletter. I joined the Health Unit in July and have been familiarizing myself with the area and making connections with workplaces.

On September 20th at my first networking session I was pleased to see the great representation from local workplaces. It was nice to meet those interested in making their workplace/organization a healthier place for their employees and colleagues. Please stay tuned for upcoming networking opportunities in 2012.

You may also notice some changes in the workplace health program in the new year, starting with this newsletter, as I will be combining the employee and workplace newsletters into one. Also the topic area and content of the newsletter will be broader to incorporate more Health Unit information on programs and services.

I want to thank you for your continued support in the workplace health program and I am looking forward to learning more about your workplace and how we can work together to enhance and move forward on workplace health.

Cheers to a healthy and happy 2012!

## New Physical Activity Guidelines - More is better

New research from physical activity experts has lead to a makeover of existing guidelines, reflecting a "more is better" approach. The recently released Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines (2011) recommend a minimum standard to achieve health benefits, acknowledging that more activity provides even greater health benefits.

Adults aged 18 to 64 are recommended to get at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more. Moderate intensity activities, like brisk walking and bike riding, should make you sweat a little and breathe harder. Vigorous intensity activities, like jogging and cross-country skiing, should cause you to sweat and be 'out of breath'. Adding muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week, is also beneficial.

According to the Guidelines, being active for at least 150 minutes per week can help reduce the risk of:

- Premature death
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- High blood pressure
- Certain types of cancer
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Overweight and obesity

Physical activity can also lead to improved fitness, strength and mental health.

This list makes a pretty strong case for why we should be moving more and more often. So why aren't we? Lack of time, work / life balance issues, lack of motivation and access to recreation are common reasons for not getting the exercise we need. It's time to find ways to add activity into our daily lives. The alternative is grim. And frankly, we don't have time not to.

Here's a list of ways to help get started:

- Walk to work or at work on breaks.
- Hike and bike with your family on evenings and weekends.
- Take a dance class.
- Rake your lawn and your neighbour's too.
- Take up a favourite sport again or try a new one.

*Caution: If you are new to physical activity, you should talk to your doctor before getting started.*

To download a copy of the Guidelines visit: [www.csep.ca](http://www.csep.ca) (Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology). Guidelines have also been created for children, youth and older adults. For more tips, visit the Public Health Agency of Canada's website: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/07paap-eng.php>

*Submitted by Michele Crowley, Health Promoter*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

New physical activity guidelines	1
Eating around the holidays	2
Employer & alcohol liability	3
Mocktail recipe	3
Prevent slips, trips and falls in your workplace	4
Winter driving: be prepared, be safe	5
Tips to quit smoking	6
Stress, depression and the holidays: Tips for coping	7
Important dates	8

# Seasonal & Safety Tips

Winter walking and hiking can be a great way to keep moving during these cold months. Here are some tips to keep you safe!

- Dress in layers; replace wet clothes with dry ones.
- Wear appropriate footwear; warm and waterproof with a good tread.
- Keep neck, face and hands covered.
- Wear sunscreen. Sun reflects off snow and ice.
- Keep hydrated.
- Let others know where you are going and / or walk with a friend.
- Wear reflective strips /clothing to be more visible.
- Watch for cars as they may have trouble seeing you because of snow banks and reduced visibility.
- Choose routes that are sheltered from the wind.
- Do your part and keep your side-walks clear of ice and snow.

**There's no such thing as bad weather; just inappropriate clothing!**

# Eating Around the Holidays

Let's face it, the actual holidays only last a few days, but "holiday eating" can last a whole month. This can be a problem when trying to keep health in check and manage your weight. Here are some tips for healthy eating around the holidays at home and at work:

1. Stick to your normal eating routine as much as possible. Even though you may find your schedule jam packed with parties and functions, set aside time to grocery shop and pack lunches.
2. Eat a balanced breakfast every morning. Eating breakfast every day helps keep hunger and cravings at bay during the day, which can help avoid the temptation of treats at work.
3. Bring healthy snacks to work for sharing. There will be enough cookies and chocolates around so make sure there are some healthy options too. Bring fruit, veggies, yogurt or homemade high fibre muffins for a midday snack.
4. Keep the party food at the party. Don't bring home leftovers, especially desserts.
5. Avoid going to parties hungry. Have a small snack before leaving the house so

you'll be able to make sensible choices.

6. Don't fill up on empty calories like eggnog, pop, juice and alcohol.
7. Host a healthy pot luck at work instead of ordering pizza or high fat food. Encourage people to bring dishes that use lower fat recipes or lots of veggies and have a recipe exchange!
8. Beware of mindless snacking. Don't keep treats at your desk or in sight.
9. Indulge in special treats you can only get this time of year like your aunt's famous holiday cake and skip things like the bread before supper, an extra serving of mashed potatoes, chips and other non special treats.
10. Think of creative ways to celebrate the holidays that don't revolve around eating, like having a games tournament or going on a walk to enjoy the outdoor lights.

*Submitted by Michelle Saraiva, Public Health Dietitian*

# Test Your Healthy Holiday Eating IQ:

1. Which food group should cover half your plate? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which holiday beverage can have up to 400 calories per cup? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the unhealthy fat called that is found in foods like cream and cheese? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is a healthy serving of nuts? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the word for "salt" found on nutrition labels? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What should you remove from your turkey before eating? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Which type of "sauce" can you replace oil or butter for in your holiday baking? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What's the best dessert to serve (hint: they are colourful and naturally sweet)? \_\_\_\_\_

A: 1. Veggies/fruit 2. Egg nog 3. Saturated fat 4. 1/4 cup or small handful (not the whole bowl) 5. Sodium 6. The skin 7. Applesauce 8. Fruit

# Employers and Alcohol Liability

Hosting or organizing a social function is a great way to show appreciation and thank employees for the year's achievements. Before your workplace makes alcohol available at social functions this holiday season, it is important to understand the legal responsibilities.

An employer has two major legal concerns when hosting, organizing or sponsoring events involving alcohol. The first is as a provider of alcohol. An employer is considered a provider if the workplace is hosting a function with a special-events permit or if an event is organized and held at a licensed restaurant. As a provider, there must be measures put in place to ensure that alcohol is not served to a person who the provider knows or ought to know is already intoxicated.

The second legal concern is as an occupier. Occupier liability occurs when alcohol-related injuries occur on the property of the employer (or the property the employer rents) even if the employer did not provide the alcohol. The legal concern of occupier's liability deals with injuries or harm that occurs on the property.

It is the responsibility of an employer to ensure the safety of their employees and their guests through preventive measures.

- Plan to monitor the event to ensure that individuals who are already intoxicated are not served alcohol.
- Intervene with guests who are participating in activities that may cause harm to themselves or others.
- Ensure that no person who is visibly intoxicated leaves the premise without the host taking some action to make certain that guests arrive home safely.

The bottom line is that, as an employer, you are making sure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm from occurring as the result of the over consumption of alcohol.

When planning the next employee event, consider the following:

- Ask your insurance agent about party alcohol liability insurance.
- Follow your workplace's alcohol policy.
- Make food available throughout the event. Eating won't prevent a person from becoming impaired, but food will slow the absorption of alcohol in the blood stream.
- Offer an attractive array of alcohol-free beverages.
- Promote the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines
- Stop serving alcohol long before the event is to end to avoid serving people just before they drive or otherwise try to get home.
- Have a plan to be sure that guests who may be intoxicated can be taken home safely.
- Hire bartenders who have taken the Smart Serve Program.
- Consider having a cash bar. If people are paying for themselves, they may limit their alcohol intake.

Consider these suggestions to benefit the health and safety of your employees. Keep the celebrations safe this season!

For more information about employer alcohol liability, visit: [www.madd.ca/english/research/liability\\_employer.pdf](http://www.madd.ca/english/research/liability_employer.pdf)

*Submitted by Lina Hassen, Health Promoter*

## MOCKTAIL RECIPE

### *The Cranberry Collection*

Cranberry juice 3oz

Orange juice 2oz

Lime cordial 1/8oz

Soda water

Frozen cranberries

### Directions

In a cocktail shaker filled with ice, combine cranberry juice, orange juice and lime cordial. Shake sharply and strain into a glass filled with ice. Top with soda water and sprinkle with frozen cranberries.





# Prevent Slips, Trips and Falls in Your Workplace

Nearly 20 percent of all lost time injury claims in Ontario workplaces are related to slips, trips and falls. On average, each fall costs an employer \$2,000 in direct Workplace Safety Insurance Board premiums. From an employer's standpoint, workplace falls are not only costly but they undermine productivity because of absenteeism. Fall injuries produce a lot of pain and suffering amongst employees who fall and sometimes, unfortunately, even death. So, is it any wonder that falls are one of the leading occupational health and safety issues in Ontario workplaces?

Last year, the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit received a number of requests from workplaces looking for training resources on falls prevention. We are happy to report that Slips, Trips and Falls Prevention kits are now available for loan. Each kit includes a trainer's manual, a DVD and self assessment tools to measure learning. Below is a description of each kit:

## Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls

This twelve minute DVD addresses the three most important factors contributing to workplace falls – poor design of the workplace, poor workplace practices and procedures and inappropriate human behaviour. The objectives of this program are to highlight the major hazard areas associated with slips, trips and fall incidents and by doing so, increase awareness of the standards for the worker responsibility in observing and being active in daily safety procedures.

## Ladder Safety

This fourteen minute DVD illustrates the many hazards associated with improper ladder use. Falls represent the largest single cause of accidental death in the workplace. About 40% of all falls are the result of falling from one level to another, many from ladders and scaffolds, insecure base support, overhead obstructions, power sources, falling debris, and general maintenance issues. Each of these factors can be easily controlled by established safety practices illustrated in this DVD. The aim of this safety DVD is to graphically illustrate that correct ladder procedures do not take any more time in setting up for your work task. Correct ladder procedures ensure that the work task is completed safely.

## Falls in the Workplace

This DVD is more suited to an industrial/manufacturing worksite as opposed to an office or service type of business. The aim of this 15 minutes DVD is to improve the participants understanding about the subject of falls in the workplace and to specifically identify control measures that will prevent fall type accidents. At the end of this training DVD, the participant will:

1) be able to state the five different categories of falls in the workplace,

2) be aware of the contributing factors of falls in the workplace and the two basic reasons why falls occur;

3) be able to state how to prevent falls from heights in three steps,

4) be able to explain the five components of the hierarchy of controls,

5) be aware of the range of control measures that can be used to minimize or eliminate the risk of injury when there is a risk of a falling type incident.

To book a kit please contact Lesley Kennedy  
519-426-6170 Ext. 3236 or 905-318-6623 Ext. 3236  
[lesleykennedy@hnhu.org](mailto:lesleykennedy@hnhu.org)

*Submitted by Joanne Alessi, Registered Nurse*



## Did you know?

Snow and ice in the winter months increase the risk of slips, trips or falls dramatically, both outdoors and indoors. Employers should encourage employees to wear proper winter footwear when travelling to and from work.

**Remember:** entrances and walkways around the workplace should be cleared of ice and snow within a half hour of opening and closing.

# Winter Driving: Be Prepared, Be Safe

Stay alert, slow down and stay in control. Drive according to highway and weather conditions. Keep a safe distance between you and the car in front to avoid collision if you have to brake suddenly.

## Suspect every snowflake.

### *Snow can't be trusted. Prepare your vehicle for winter weather*

#### Do you drive as part of your job?

Winter weather is hard on your vehicle and its engine. Here are some tips to help you make sure your ride is up to the challenge:

**1. Install winter tires.** Use four matched winter tires that carry the winter tire logo – even when driving a 4 X 4. Winter tires improve driving safety by providing better traction in snow, slush and icy conditions. Check for wear before installing the tires and check tire air pressure frequently, as it decreases in cold weather.

**2. Get your car winter ready with a maintenance check up.** Preventative maintenance is key. Make sure your battery, brakes, lights and fuses, cooling and heating systems, electrical and exhaust systems, and belts and hoses are in tip-top shape.

**3. Change your wiper blades to winter blades.** They are heavier and push snow and ice more easily.

**4. Clear snow and ice from all windows, lights, mirrors, hood and the roof.** After starting your vehicle, wait for the window

to defrost completely to allow clear visibility all around.

**5. If you have a cell phone, make sure it's charged and bring it with you.** A car charger for the phone is a smart device to have on hand. Cell phone batteries can freeze in very cold weather. Don't leave your phone in the car for extended periods of time.

**6. Make sure your windshield washer reservoir is full, and carry extra washer fluid in your vehicle.**

**7. Be prepared by packing a winter survival kit.** Recommended items include:

- Emergency kit containing non-perishable food, blankets and first aid supplies
- Windshield scraper and snow brush
- Extra windshield washer fluid
- Fuel line antifreeze
- Flares and matches or lighter
- Tire chains and gloves
- Shovel and traction mat, sand or kitty litter
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Battery jumper cables
- Spare tire, wheel wrench and jack
- Extra clothing and footwear
- Sandbags for extra weight

**8. Keep your gas tank topped up.** This will help to avoid condensation and moist air on the inside of the tank, which can cause fuel lines to freeze and other serious issues.

**9. If you get stuck in a storm, don't panic.** Avoid overexertion and exposure. Stay in your vehicle and open your window slightly to make sure you have a supply of fresh air. Use a survival candle for heat. Set out a warning light or flares.

**Remember:** Check the weather and travel conditions before travelling at 1-800-268-4686 [www.mto.gov.on.ca](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca)

*Submitted by Karin Marks, Health Promoter*

This information has been taken from the Shift into Winter campaign from the Worksafe BC organization [www.shiftintowinter.ca](http://www.shiftintowinter.ca)



# Tips to Quit Smoking

With the winter weather well on its way, those days of standing out in the cold to have a cigarette are just around the corner - or are they? Quit smoking today and enjoy the luxury of watching the snowstorm from inside! Here are some tips to help you along the way:

## Write It Down

Write down why you want to quit, and how you plan to do it, then post it somewhere a supportive friend or family member can see it. This will not only show your commitment to quitting, but will remind you that quitting smoking is something you truly want to accomplish.

## Avoid Smoking Triggers

Figure out what situations make you crave a cigarette then avoid or change them.

## Get Moving!

Physical activity is a great way to relax, distract, and improve your health! Anything goes: walking, running, skiing, snowshoeing, and tobogganing - what are you waiting for?

Need extra help? Contact the Smokers Help Line  
www.smokershelpline.ca or 1-877-513-5333.

### References

Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. (2011, March 9). Quitting Smoking - Making the First Move. Retrieved October 24, 2011, from <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/smoke-free/quitting-smoking.asp>

Partnership to Assist with Cessation of Tobacco. (2011, October 6). Online Training. Retrieved October 24, 2011, from <http://www.makeapact.ca/content/health-care/online-training>

Submitted by Haley Caldwell, Health Promoter

## Use the 4 D's to Manage Cravings

- **Delay:** Read a book, listen to music or call a friend - give the craving a chance to wear off.
- **Drink Water:** Quench your craving by drinking at least 6-8 glasses of water a day.
- **Deep Breathe:** Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to escape your craving.
- **Do Something Different:** Eat crunchy vegetables, chew gum, play with silly putty, or do a Sudoku puzzle to eliminate your craving.

For more information regarding quitting smoking, or for a free "Quit Kit", contact Haley Caldwell at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3248 or 905-318-6623 Ext. 3248







**Stress and depression can ruin your holidays and hurt your health. Being realistic, planning ahead and seeking support can help ward off stress and depression.**

The holiday season often brings unwelcome guests — stress and depression. And it's no wonder: The holidays present a dizzying array of demands — parties, shopping, baking, cleaning and entertaining, to name just a few. Don't let the holidays take a toll on your health. With balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holidays in a healthy way. Get help from family and friends when organizing holiday gatherings, as well as for meal preparation and cleanup. Make some time for yourself; even 15 minutes alone without distractions may refresh you enough so you can better handle everything you need to do. Take an evening walk in the fresh air. Listen to soothing music. Whatever it is, find something that reduces your stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm. Don't forget to maintain your "everyday" healthy habits. Continue to get plenty of sleep and make time for physical activity, whether it be dancing to your favourite music or enjoying an outdoor sport. To avoid overindulging on sweets and drinks, eat a healthy snack before social gatherings. Choose fresh fruit as substitute for candy. Another tip is to pick just one or two of your favorites from the array of tempting foods.

*Submitted by Lesley Kennedy, Health Promoter*

*Reference: Health & Safety Report Volume 6, Issue 11 - December 2008*

*<http://www.ccohs.ca/newsletters/hsreport/issues/2008/11/ezine.html#inthenews>*

## Christmas tree safety tips

When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." When selecting a live tree, check for freshness. The needles should be green and hard to pull from branches. The trunk butt should be sticky with resin. Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This fresh cut allows for better water absorption and, along with keeping the stand filled with water, will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard. Turn off the tree lights when you go to bed or leave the house to prevent the lights from "shorting" out and starting a fire. When setting up a tree at home or at work, place it away from fireplaces, radiators or portable heaters and be sure not to block doorways.

# OCTOBER was *Healthy Workplace Month*

The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit would like to congratulate the following organizations in our community for working to improve the health of their employees.

- Annex Business Media
- Zehrs Markets
- Cedarwood Village
- Alzheimer Society Haldimand Norfolk
- West Haldimand General Hospital
- Haldimand Norfolk REACH

A healthy workplace is one which values and cares about its employees, creates a safe environment in which to work, where it is easy for employees to make healthy choices. If you would like more information about workplace health and how to get it started within your business or organization contact Lesley Kennedy, at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3236 or 905-318-6623 Ext. 3236.



## IMPORTANT DATES



### January

- **Alzheimer's' Awareness Month**  
[www.alzhn.ca](http://www.alzhn.ca)
- **National Non-smoking week** - January 15<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>  
[www.nnsw.ca](http://www.nnsw.ca)
- **Family Literacy Day** - January 27<sup>st</sup>  
[www.abclifeliteracy.ca](http://www.abclifeliteracy.ca)

### February

- **Heart Health Month**  
[www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)

### March

- **Nutrition Month**  
[www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

### Questions, comments, contributions?

#### Contact: Lesley Kennedy

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519-426-6170 Ext. 3236 • 905-318-6623 Ext. 3236  
[lesley.kennedy@hnhu.org](mailto:lesley.kennedy@hnhu.org)

Did you hear that the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit is on Facebook??

That's great news! I'll have to check it out!

**[www.facebook.com/hnhealthunit](http://www.facebook.com/hnhealthunit)**