



# Newsletter

January – February 2024

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Happy New Year

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# Upcoming Health Education Workshops



Toronto Western  
Family Health Team

Garrison Creek  
Bathurst

## **TW Family Health Team** **Winter 2024 Health Education** FREE workshops & easy online registration

**Feb**

**7**

**5:30 pm**

### ***Sleep Therapy: Part I***

Techniques to improve your sleep. Are you having trouble sleeping, such as falling or staying asleep? This 2-part workshop is for patients and caregivers interested in learning about strategies to improve their sleep without medications.

Presented by Jadie (Pharmacist) & Laurel (Social Worker).  
Online Workshop: [click here to register](#)

**Jan**

**16**

**6 pm**

### ***Let's Quit Smoking Together***

Have you thought about quitting smoking, but don't know where to start? Do you want to learn how to reduce or quit smoking? Join this online session to help you get started.

Presented by Lillian (Respiratory Therapist) and Patty (Registered Nurse). Online Workshop: [click here to register](#)

**Jan**

**22**

**2 pm**

### ***Learning Technology: Tech Tips***

Do you want to learn some simple technology skills related to our family health team clinic? Join this in-person workshop to learn tech tips about how to book appointments online at the TW FHT and how to access myUHN lab results.

Presented by Lillian (Health Education Specialist) and Olivia (Registered Nurse). In-person Workshop: [click here to register](#)

**Jan**

**24**

**12 pm**

### ***Managing Your Child's Cold & Flu Symptoms***

Do you have a young child and want to feel prepared to deal with their cold and flu symptoms? Join this 1-hour virtual workshop to learn about homecare measures for common cold and flu symptoms and understand when to seek medical care.

Presented by Natasha (Registered Nurse).  
Online Workshop: [click here to register](#)

Visit our website for more information and take a closer look at our Health Education Workshops Calendar

[www.twfht.ca](http://www.twfht.ca)



# Seniors Health & Wellness Programs

## Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario

This guide is your resource for programs and services available to Ontario's seniors that can help them stay safe and healthy, active and engaged

## Free and Lower Cost Recreation Options

These are the City of Toronto's recreation options that are free drop-in programs, free centres, subsidies and has older adult discounts.

## Older Adult Centres

The City of Toronto runs Older Adult Centres that offer recreational, social and educational programs for seniors. Activities can include cards, crafts, day trips, fitness programs and guest speakers. Locations include:

- [Fairfield Seniors' Centre](#)
- [Horner Avenue Seniors Centre](#)
- [New Toronto Seniors' Centre](#)
- [Stephen Leacock Seniors Community Centre](#)
- [Thistletown Seniors' Centre](#)
- [West Acres Senior Centre](#)

## Toronto Seniors Helpline

This is a single point of access for seniors and caregivers to receive information and access to community, home, and crisis services.

## Senior Toronto

This is a wide range of senior-friendly, affordable resources and activities in Toronto.

## Toronto Public Library (TPL) Programs

The TPL offers a number of different [programs for seniors](#) including speaker's series, courses to improve digital literacy and much more. For more information call the Toronto Public Library Answerline at 416-393-7131.

## Unison Seniors Programs

Unison Health and Community Services provides programs and services to people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. Services are free, confidential and non-judgemental.

## Seniors Active Living Winter Fair



# Depression: Seasonal Affective Disorder

Clinical depression is the experience of a sad and hopeless mood that persists over 2 weeks. It can impact someone's work or school, their daily activities and relationships.

Depression can sometimes come under unique situations, such as **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**. SAD is a type of depression that reoccurs with seasonal changes and is most commonly associated with the fall and winter months. As the season progresses, people experience some of the following symptoms:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood most of the day, nearly every day, for at least 2 weeks
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of irritability, frustration, or restlessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Decreased energy, fatigue, or feeling slowed down
- Changes in sleep or appetite or unplanned weight changes

## What can I do to care for myself when I am feeling depressed?

Whether you're experiencing SAD or another form of depression, you should always speak to your primary care provider first.

- Adapted from UHN Foundation, CAMH, Ontario Shores, and National Institute of Mental Health.

SAD is not “holiday blues” or related to external stressors that can occur at this time of year. SAD is a pattern of depression related to someone's circadian rhythm, changes in daylight hours, serotonin levels, and melatonin levels.



If you're experiencing any of the above symptoms, it is important to talk to your primary care provider now.

## Self-help Tips\*

- Eat nutritious meals
- Take vitamin D & get some sunshine
- Move and exercise
- Socialize
- Sleep
- Practice mindfulness

*\*Read next page for details*

Talk to your primary care provider first, if you are feeling any *seasonal affective disorder (SAD)* symptoms.

# Mental Health Crisis 9-8-8

## How 9-8-8 works

'9-8-8 is a Suicide Crisis Helpline and follows a network model.

When you call or text 9-8-8, you will reach a responder at one of nearly 40 local, provincial and territorial, and national crisis lines, who co-deliver the service.'

[www.988.ca/about-us](http://www.988.ca/about-us)

## Help when you need it most

'If you are feeling like you have lost hope and are struggling to cope, if you are dealing with thoughts of suicide, or if you are worried about someone else, 9-8-8 is here for you. When you reach out, a trained responder will listen without judgement, provide support and understanding, and can tell you about resources that will help.

9-8-8 is here to provide moments of connection that create hope, support recovery and save lives. We help people connect to their strengths and find new ways to cope, live and thrive. Our vision is a Canada where suicide is prevented because everyone can access help when they need it the most.' – [www.988.ca/about-us](http://www.988.ca/about-us)

## Talking about suicide

It's important to talk about suicide. You might find that when you raise awareness about 9-8-8 in your community, this opens up the conversation. Please visit these pages on our website for more advice about talking about suicide and supporting people who are struggling:

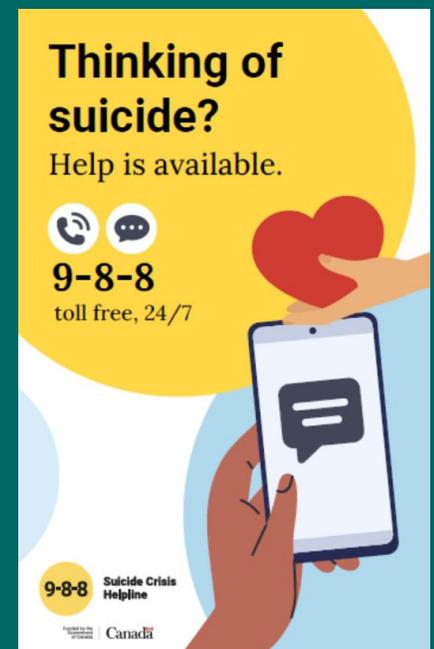
[How to get help for someone else](#)

[Talk to someone you are worried about](#)

[Suicide-safe language](#)

If you need help for yourself or for someone else, you can always reach out: call or text 9-8-8 any time.

If you have called 9-8-8 or thought about calling, please reach out to your [primary care provider](#) for [help](#).



## Nutritious Meals

Hearty well-balanced meals packed with protein and vegetables supports our emotional wellbeing. It gives us the energy we need to think clearly, attend to our needs, and engage in other wellness activities fully. During the winter it is more difficult to afford or find fresh produce – use frozen fruits and vegetables, snack on nuts, and plan ahead. Attend our [Balanced Eating Basics](#) workshop to learn more.

## Vitamin D and Sunshine

Most Canadians do not get enough vitamin D. In addition to your diet, adding vitamin D supplements can help. Before taking any supplements, talk with your primary care provider or pharmacist. You can also increase your vitamin D with a short walk or stretch outside. Dress warmly and spend a few minutes each day in the winter sunshine.

## Movement

When we struggle with depression, we will often become sedentary, stationary and still. Taking a 2-3 minutes to stretch can bring some relief. Try various movements or exercise as is accessible to you: stretching, yoga, walks, and sports.

## Socialize

Often people struggling with depression will isolate and pull away from their loved ones. However, connecting with others can help boost your mood and stimulate your mind. Spend time with your pets, neighbors, friends, or family.

## Sleep Hygiene

Similar to nutrition, quality sleep improves our mental health and ability to engage in self-care. Establish a relaxing and consistent nightly routine to prioritize your sleep. Simple routines can start with maintaining consistent wake and sleep times and limiting screen time before bed. Check out our [Sleep Therapy](#) workshop to learn more.

## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is an umbrella term for various activities that aid us in attending to the present moment. Consistent mindfulness routines have shown to reduce depressive symptoms. You can start a mindfulness routine by taking a moment every day to count 3-5 mindful breathes. You can explore more through guided meditations online. If you're new to mindfulness and interested in learning more, check out our [Mindfulness Training for Emotional Resilience](#) workshop.

## Light Therapy

Light therapy has been a common treatment for SAD since the 1980s. It aims to supplement the diminished daylight with very bright light, 20x brighter than our typical indoor lighting. People sit by a light box for 20-45 minutes first thing in the morning. If you think this would be helpful, you can explore this with your primary care provider.

*- Adapted from UHN Foundation, CAMH, Ontario Shores, and National Institute of Mental Health.*

# Winter Shoes & Boots

The best winter footwear varies based on your specific needs and the weather conditions you'll be facing. Try to include most of the properties listed below when picking an ideal shoe.

## When picking winter footwear, consider the following:

1. Insulation: look for boots with insulation
  - i.e. Thinsulate or synthetic materials for warmth without bulk.
2. Waterproofing: ensure they are waterproof or water-resistant to keep your feet dry in snow or slush.
  - i.e. Hiking boots with Gore-Tex lining
3. Traction: opt for boots with a good tread pattern or outsoles designed for winter conditions to prevent slipping on ice.
  - i.e. Vibram traction lug soles
4. Material: leather, synthetic materials, or rubber are common choices. Pick materials that suit your needs and climate. Choose a light weight material if possible.
5. Fit: ensure a proper fit to accommodate thicker socks while providing comfort and support for your feet.
  - Important tip: shop later in the day to compensate for swelling



6. Purpose: consider your activities; casual wear might differ from hiking or extreme weather conditions.
  - i.e. Trail running lightweight shoes with Gore-Tex lining for light activities vs heavy duty hiking boots for rough/uneven terrain.
7. Style: choose a style that matches your preferences and fashion sense while meeting functional requirements.
  - i.e. Dress shoes with rubber soles or tread, instead of leather soles.

***Our chiropodists (foot specialists) can help you with your foot care needs. A referral from your primary care provider is needed.***

# CanTreatCOVID

Canadian Adaptive Platform Trial of Treatments  
for COVID in Community Settings



## HAVE YOU TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID?

Help us find effective, safe, and  
affordable medications for COVID-19

18+

Who can  
participate

Open to Canadian residents 50+ years of age or  
18-49 years old with one or more chronic  
condition(s) who tested positive for COVID with  
symptoms starting within the last five days



What will  
you do

During the research project, you...

- May receive a study drug for mild to moderate COVID-19 or usual care
- Will receive personalized care
- Will complete a daily online diary for 14 days and a survey at baseline, 21, 28 and 90 days, and 36 weeks
- Will receive an honorarium of \$30 per follow up

To learn more,

- Call 1-888-888-3308
- Visit [CanTreatCOVID.org](https://CanTreatCOVID.org)  
or scan the QR Code



 **CIHR**  
**IRSC** | Canadian Institutes of  
Health Research  
Instituts de recherche  
en santé du Canada

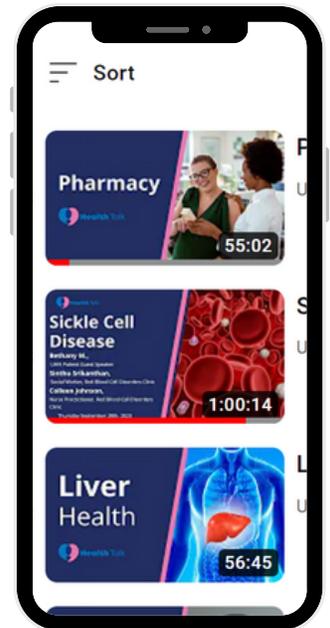
 **UHN** | Toronto General  
Toronto Western  
Princess Margaret  
Toronto Rehab  
**COURAGE LIVES HERE**

Version 4.0; Date: February 9, 2023

Learn more about your health through

# UHN Health Talks

- New Talk released monthly on YouTube
- Watch anytime, anywhere for free
- Wide range of popular health topics
- Presented by experts from UHN and beyond
- UHN Patient Partners and caregivers bring their lived experience and perspective to each Talk



## How to participate:



Watch new and past Health Talks at [bit.ly/UHNHealthTalksPlaylist](https://bit.ly/UHNHealthTalksPlaylist) or scan the QR code using your smartphone camera or a QR code scanner app



**Submit your questions** about upcoming topics to [slido.com/UHNHealthTalk](https://slido.com/UHNHealthTalk)

For more information, email [pfep@uhn.ca](mailto:pfep@uhn.ca) or call 416 603 6290



# Unison Health & Community Services

Unison Health and Community Services is one of our trusted community partners. Unison Health and Community Services provides programs and services to people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. Their services are free, confidential and non-judgemental. [Click here](#) to access a list of their programs and services.



Unison Health and Community Services presents

## SENIORS FITNESS CLASSES

Join facilitator Shruti Patel as she guides you through a number of low impact exercises that aim to improve your overall well-being!

**Held Virtually**  
**January 9th - February 27th 2024**  
**Tuesdays 10am - 11am**

To register you can call or email Isolda:  
416-645-7575 ext 2028  
[isolda.gallego@unisonhcs.org](mailto:isolda.gallego@unisonhcs.org)



# MIND BODY AND YOGA

Facilitated by:  
**Shruti Patel**

Therapeutic fitness group  
combing mindfulness and yoga!

**January 4th - February 22nd**  
**Thursdays @ 10am**  
**Virtual Zoom Group**

Call or email Isolda @  
416-645-7575 ext.2028  
[isolda.gallego@unisonhcs.org](mailto:isolda.gallego@unisonhcs.org)  
to register



# Breath Work

Breathwork refers to breathing exercises or techniques to improve mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. Practice in breathwork can:

- aid positive self-development
- boost immunity
- process emotions, heal emotional pain and trauma
- develop life skills

With  
instructor  
**Shruti Patel**



Being held virtually  
**January 9th - February 27th 2024**  
**Tuesdays 11am - 12 pm**

For registration call or email Isolda at:

416-645-7575 ext.2028  
[isolda.gallego@unisonhcs.org](mailto:isolda.gallego@unisonhcs.org)



## Contact Us



Phone: 416 603 5888



Website: twfht.ca



### Location

Bathurst Site: 440 Bathurst Street



Do you have feedback about our newsletter?

Do you want to learn more about other health education topics?

If so, [click here](#) to give us your feedback