

*Toronto Western*  
**Family Health Team**

# TW FHT Newsletter

May 2026

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## Clinic Updates & Reminders

### Dynacare Laboratory Services at TW FHT

The logo for Dynacare, featuring the word "Dynacare" in a sans-serif font. "Dyna" is in dark grey, "care" is in green, and there is a registered trademark symbol (®) to the right.

Dynacare Laboratory and Health Services is an on-site specimen collection for TW FHT patients at our Bathurst and Garrison Creek locations. This convenient service is available exclusively to TW FHT patients and is not open to the general public.

**Why this is helpful for TW FHT patients**

Having Dynacare on-site makes getting lab work easier and faster. Test results are typically available within **24 to 48 hours** and are shared directly with your health care team.

Patients can also view their results online through the [\*\*myUHN\*\*](#) using Ontario Lab Results (OLIS).

### **What to bring:**

Please remember to bring:

- Your **paper lab requisition**
- Your **Ontario health card**

Dynacare operates as a **walk-in, first-come, first-served service** at both sites. Hours vary by location and day of the week, [Dynacare Laboratory & Health Services](#). Please note, Dynacare is closed on Wednesday mornings.

### **TW FHT Dynacare Locations**

#### **Bathurst Site:**

440 Bathurst Street, 3rd Floor

(Registration desk near the main elevators, beside the Artists' Health Centre reception)

#### **Garrison Creek Site:**

928 St. Clair Avenue West, 2nd Floor

(Please proceed directly to the second floor and sign in)

### **Viewing your lab results**

Patients can securely access their Dynacare lab results online through the [\*\*myUHN\*\*](#) via Ontario Lab Results (OLIS).

Step-by-step instructions are available on our website to help you get started:

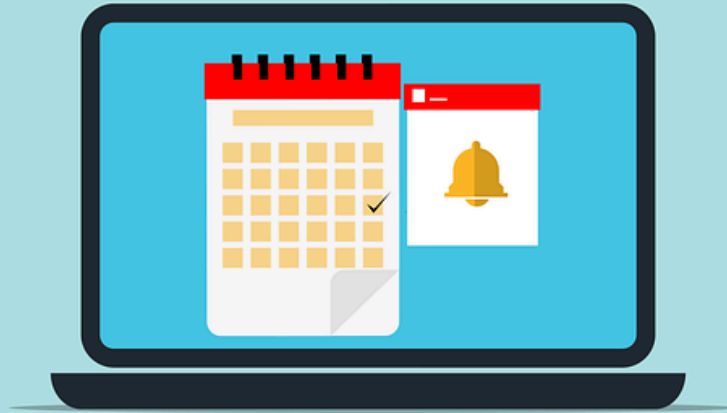
- [Dynacare Laboratory & Health Services](#)

- [Ontario Lab Results and Dynacare.pdf](#)

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## Booking Appointments Online



TW FHT offers convenient online booking for appointments with your primary care provider, nursing services, and other healthcare professionals.

To book an online appointment with your primary care provider or nursing, please follow these steps:

1. Go to [twfht.ca](http://twfht.ca)
2. Click on your site tab at the top of the webpage, or scroll down to your site and select "Book an Appointment Now"
3. Choose "Book an appointment with your primary care provider" or "Book an appointment with nursing"
4. Have your valid health card ready, as it is required to book an appointment online

To book an appointment online now, select your TW FHT site:

- [Bathurst](#)
- [Garrison Creek](#)

To book an appointment with other healthcare professionals who offer online booking, please use the appropriate online booking link provided to you by email. Remember you will need to copy and paste the online booking link onto a new browser to get started.

### **Additional Resources:**

[How to Book an Appointment Online](#)

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## **Health Promotion: Health Topics**

### **A Guide to Nicotine Pouches**



Nicotine pouches are becoming more common, especially among teens and young adults. Many people are not sure what they are. Nicotine pouches are small, flavoured pouches that sit between the lip and gum and release nicotine without producing any smoke or vapour. Because they are easy to hide and do not smell, they can be used without drawing much attention.

### **What are nicotine pouches?**

Nicotine pouches are small tea-bag-like pouches that contain nicotine, similar to the concept of chewing tobacco without

spitting. The concentrations of nicotine can vary, with a legal maximum of 4 mg per pouch in Canada. They contain the same additive chemicals found in cigarettes and vapes, and are often flavoured.

Currently the only Health Canada authorized pouch brand is ZONNIC, sold behind the counter in pharmacies. The United States has several nicotine pouch brands, with ZYN being the most popular and widely recognized.

## **How do they work?**

The small bags of nicotine sit against the lip, between the cheek and gums, where the nicotine is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream through the gums and oral lining.

- One pouch can release nicotine for up to an hour.
- They are fast-acting and start working within 2-5 minutes.
- There is no combustion, smoking or tobacco involved.

## **How come I haven't heard about them?**

Since they do not produce odour, vapour or smoke, when nicotine pouches are placed near the gums, they are discreet and barely visible.

Because nicotine pouches are fairly new and often promoted toward younger audiences, many people are not familiar with them yet.

## **Are they regulated?**

Originally, ZONNIC pouches were approved under *Canada's Natural Health Products Regulations*, which had no legal minimum age for purchase.

In August 2024 the following Canadian regulations took effect:

- Keeping the sale of nicotine pouches behind pharmacy counters
- Allowing maximal doses of 4 mg per pouch
- Restricting its sale to those aged 18 and over
- Allowing only the retail of mint and methanol flavors.

This was done as an attempt to keep the product out of the hands of minors.

Despite these regulations, nicotine pouches on social media are frequently marketed to youth with attractive colorful packaging and numerous flavours. Unfortunately, youth are able to buy nicotine pouches with much higher concentrations online.

### **Are they addictive or risky?**

- Nicotine itself, regardless of the form, is highly addictive, and using nicotine in excess can lead to acute poisoning.
- Although the pouches are a safer alternative to cigarettes and free of tobacco, the body can still develop addiction to the product.
- Children and adolescents with developing brains are more susceptible to their addictive properties.
- As nicotine pouches themselves are relatively new on the market, long-term impacts of their use are not known yet.

### **But what if I would like to quit smoking?**

Nicotine pouches have not been thoroughly studied as a smoking cessation aid. There are many other approaches to quit smoking ranging from smoking cessation medications to behavioural change to support groups. There are many other nicotine replacement products, such as nicotine gums, inhalers, lozenges, and sprays.

Please consider booking an appointment with our smoking cessation counsellors to discuss options that are best for you to reduce or quit nicotine. You may also reach out to your primary care provider. **[Smoking Cessation Program - Toronto Western Family Health Team.](#)**

Please consider booking an appointment with our smoking cessation counsellors to discuss options that are best for you to reduce or quit nicotine, or reach our to your health care provider. (then provide link here)

### **Online Resources:**

- [What to Know About Nicotine Pouches](#)
- [Nicotine Pouches A Guide for Pharmacists E](#)
- [Nicotine Pouches | Smoking and Tobacco Use | CDC](#)
- [New Kid on the Block - Canadian Lung Association](#)
- [Program: Smoking Cessation Program - Toronto Western Family Health Team](#)

Written by Nursing Student Lauren Mastrotto. Reviewed by Pharmacist Jadie Lo.

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## **This Pollen Season: Tips for People Living with Asthma & Hay Fever**



(Adapted from Asthma.ca)

Pollen season is here. If you have asthma and hay fever, managing your allergy symptoms can help reduce asthma flare-ups and keep you breathing easier throughout the season.

### **Tips for this season and minimizing triggers:**

- **Check the pollen forecast:** Monitor daily pollen levels in your area and limit outdoor activities on high pollen days, especially in the early morning.
- **Protect the air in your home:** Keep windows closed, use an air purifier with a HEPA filter, and clean surfaces regularly to reduce indoor pollen exposure.
- **Shower and change clothes after being outside:** Pollen can stick to skin, hair, and clothing, prolonging exposure.
- **Avoid drying laundry outside:** Outdoor clothes and bedding can collect pollen.
- **Wear sunglasses outdoors:** Sunglasses help reduce pollen exposure to the eyes.
- **Take medications as prescribed:** Use your preventer inhalers and allergy medications regularly.

- **Carry your reliever inhaler:** Always have a reliever inhaler on hand in case your asthma symptoms flare-up due to pollen exposure.
- **Review your Asthma Action Plan:** Make sure your plan is up to date, understand your triggers, and know what steps to take if your asthma worsens during pollen season.

### Online Resources:

- [Stay Safe This Pollen Season: What People with Asthma and Hay Fever Need to Know](#)
- [Allergies and Asthma - Asthma Canada](#)
- [Asthma and Hayfever Tips](#)

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## Mental Health Series: Managing Stress Amid the Current News Cycle



Have you been finding yourself feeling overwhelmed by the constantly distressing news cycle? If you are feeling anxious, on edge, or emotionally drained, you are not alone. These reactions are a normal response to an abnormal amount of uncertainty and exposure to global stressors.

While it is a positive sign of empathy and engagement to be aware of what is happening in the world, below are some tips to stay informed about current events without becoming emotionally overwhelmed:

### **1. Set boundaries with your news consumption**

Agree on specific times during the day to check updates rather than scrolling continuously. When we repeatedly see alarming headlines, our nervous system can remain in a state of alert. Limiting exposure helps your mind and body return to a calmer baseline.

- Phone apps like [One Sec](#), [Opal](#) and [Freedom](#) can assist with managing screen time.

### **2. Set an intention to reconnect with the present moment**

Anxiety often takes us into catastrophic thinking about the future. Mindfulness techniques such as [slow breathing](#), or [focusing on physical sensations](#) can return us to the here and now.

- Even small daily routines, like having a morning coffee or going for a walk can provide a sense of stability.

### **3. Connect with others**

Talking with someone you trust about how you are feeling can reduce the sense of isolation that anxiety creates. You do not have to carry these emotions alone.

- If your stress feels particularly intense, reaching out to a [mental health professional](#) can provide additional support and coping tools.

### **4. You might consider channeling your concern into action**

For some people, engaging in community efforts, advocacy, or volunteering can create a sense of purpose and agency. Taking action, even in small ways, can counter feelings of helplessness.

- You could reach out to [Volunteer Toronto](#), for instance, as a first step in getting connected a local cause that needs your support.

## **5. Practice self-compassion**

You may notice moments where you feel guilty for stepping away from the news or for not “doing enough.” Remind yourself that caring for your mental health is not avoidance, it is necessary. You are better able to support others and engage with the world when you are grounded and calm.

## **6. Pay attention to your body’s signals**

Sleep disturbances, irritability, or difficulty concentrating can be signs that you need to slow down and prioritize rest.

Navigating today’s world is challenging, but with intentional boundaries, supportive connections, and gentle self-care, it is possible to stay informed while protecting your emotional well-being.

Written by Social Worker Madeleine Adamson

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## **Upcoming Health Education Workshops**

**May 2026**

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### **Nutrition for Healthy Heart**

Online on MS Teams



Have you been diagnosed with high cholesterol or high blood pressure and want to learn about nutritional management?

Join us for our virtual workshop to get heart healthy!

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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**Gut Health 101:  
Nutrition Workshop for Digestive Health**  
Online on MS Teams



Gut Health 101 is all about understanding and taking care of your digestive system!

In this workshop, we will discuss common digestive issues and share tips for keeping your digestive system running smoothly.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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## **Migraines: A Survival Guide**

Online on MS Teams



Are you an adult that suffers from migraines? Do you want to learn more about migraine headaches and the different treatment options available?

Join this workshop to understand migraine symptoms and potential causes. And learn what lifestyle changes you can make and how you can improve your quality of life with migraines.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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Do you have ideas about other health topics?



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