



Toronto Western
Family Health Team
*Garrison Creek
Bathurst*

TW FHT Newsletter

December 2024

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Clinic Updates & Reminders

Holiday Schedule



Please note the following changes to our clinic schedule during the holidays:

- Tuesday, December 24, 2024: [OPEN 9:00 am to 5:00 pm](#)

- Wednesday, December 25, 2024: **CLOSED**

- Thursday, December 26, 2024: **CLOSED**

&

- Tuesday, December 31, 2024: [OPEN 9:00 am to 5:00 pm](#)

- Wednesday, January 1st, 2025: **CLOSED**

[Click here](#) to see up-to-date hours of operation.

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Health Promotion: Health Topics

Maintaining Good Health During the Holidays

Maintaining good health during the holidays can be challenging with the hustle and bustle of the season, but it's essential for enjoying this special time of year.

Balancing festive activities with healthy habits can help you stay well and energized. This includes managing stress, making mindful food choices, staying active, and taking steps to prevent illness. By prioritizing your well-being, you can fully embrace the joy and warmth of the holidays while keeping your health in check.

Here are some ways you can manage your health this holiday season:

- [Managing Stress and Mental Health](#)
- [Healthy Eating and Food Storage](#)
- [Staying Active](#)
- [Preventing Illness](#)

The words "MENTAL" and "HEALTH" are spelled out using light-colored wooden blocks with black letters. The word "MENTAL" is on the top row and "HEALTH" is on the bottom row. To the right of the "MENTAL" blocks is a small green leaf with several serrated leaves on a stem. The background is a light, neutral color with a subtle circular shadow behind the blocks.

MENTAL

HEALTH

Manage Stress and Mental Health

The holiday season can bring on stress, anxiety and feelings of loneliness. Factors such as stress from holiday preparations, financial pressures, family dynamics, loneliness, and the anniversary of the loss of loved ones can contribute to overall mental strain.

Tips to help you:

- Practice relaxation techniques like: mindfulness/meditation, yoga, deep breathing, or go for a massage.
- Insight Timer offers a variety of free guided meditations, [click here to view now.](#)
- Reframe problems by restructuring your thoughts for a more positive or balanced perspective.
- Set limits and boundaries for yourself so you don't over extend yourself.
- Avoid using negative coping strategies like using drugs, alcohol, smoking, overeating or avoiding friends/family.
- Practice gratitude for the positive aspects of your life and focus on the things you can control.
- Be kind and compassionate with yourself and others.

Mental Health Supports:

ConnexOntario: can help you find mental health, gambling and addiction support services.

- this service is free and available 24/7
- Tel: 1-866-531-2600
- Website: <https://connexontario.ca/>

Distress phone lines:

- Suicide Crisis Helpline: Call or text 988
- Toronto Distress Centres: 416 408 4357 or 408 HELP
- Gerstein Centre: 416 929 5200
- Assaulted Women's Helpline: 416 863-0511 or Toll-free: 1 866 863 0511
- Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline: 1 833 900 1010
- Kids Help Phone: 1 800 668 6868
- First Nations Crisis Line 1 855 242 3310
- Trans Lifeline: 1 877 330 6366

Edited by Social Worker Lina Amaral.

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Healthy Eating and Food Safety

The holiday season is a wonderful time for enjoying delicious meals with loved ones, but it's also important to maintain healthy eating habits and ensure food safety. Here are some tips to help you navigate the holidays:

Healthy Eating Tips

Balance Your Plate

- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Try a variety of colours and types to get a range of nutrients.
- Include lean proteins like turkey, chicken, fish, beans, or tofu.
- Choose whole grains such as brown rice, quinoa, or whole wheat bread.
- Want to learn more? [The Balanced Food Plate](#)

Healthy Substitutions

- Use healthier ingredients in your recipes, such as Greek yogurt instead of sour cream, or applesauce instead of butter in baking.
- Reduce sugar and salt where possible, and use herbs and spices to enhance flavor.
- Want to learn more? [Smart Substitutions to Improve Nutrition](#)

Stay Hydrated

- Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Sometimes thirst can be mistaken for hunger.
- Limit sugary drinks and alcohol. If you do drink alcohol, do so in moderation.

Mindful Eating

- Eat slowly and savor each bite. This can help you enjoy your food more and recognize when you're full.
- Avoid eating in front of the TV or while distracted to prevent overeating.
- Attend our Mindful Eating workshop in February. [Click here](#) to register or learn more about this workshop.

Food Safety Tips

Cleanliness

- Wash your hands, utensils, and surfaces often. This helps prevent the spread of bacteria.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water before eating or cooking.

Separate foods

- Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from other foods to avoid cross-contamination.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and other foods.

Cook Thoroughly

- Cook foods to the right temperature to kill harmful bacteria. Use a food thermometer to check.
- For example, cook turkey to an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C).
- [Click here](#) to view a [Cooking Temperatures Chart](#)

Chill Properly

- Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours of cooking or purchasing. This helps prevent bacterial growth.

- Store leftovers in shallow containers to cool quickly and evenly.
- [Click here](#) to view a table with recommended fridge and freezer storage times.

Safe Leftovers

- Reheat leftovers to at least 165°F (74°C) before eating.
- Consume leftovers within 3-4 days, or freeze them for longer storage.

Additional Resources:

- [Canada's Food Guide](#)
- [General Food Safety Tips](#)

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Staying Active

Staying active during the holidays can be challenging with all the festivities, but it's definitely possible with a bit of planning and creativity. Here are some tips to help you stay active and enjoy the holiday season:

Family Activities

- **Group Walks:** Organize family walks after meals. It's a great way to bond and get some exercise.
- **Active Games:** Play games like charades, dance-offs, or even a friendly game of football or soccer.

Incorporate Movement into Daily Routines

- **Shopping:** Walk a few laps around the mall or shopping center before you start shopping. Park farther away to get in some extra steps.
- **Housework:** Cleaning the house can be a good workout. Put on some music and make it fun!

Exercise at Home

- **Home Workouts:** Use online workout videos or apps to do quick workouts at home. Even 10-15 minutes can make a difference.
- **Stretching:** Incorporate stretching or yoga into your routine to stay flexible and reduce stress.

Plan Ahead

- **Schedule Workouts:** Plan your workouts like any other appointment. This helps ensure you make time for them.
- **Schedule a weekly walk:** Schedule a weekly walk with a friend. This helps keep you motivated and accountable to each other.

Additional Resources

- [Canada's Physical Activity Guide](#)
- [Physical Activity Tips for Adults 18 to 64](#)
- [Physical Activity Tips for Older Adults \(65 and older\)](#)



Preventing Illness

Preventing illness during the holidays is important to ensure you and your loved ones can enjoy the festive season. Here are some tips to help you stay healthy:

Get Vaccinated

Ensure you're up to date with your flu, COVID-19, and RSV vaccines. These vaccines help reduce the risk of severe illness.

Practice Good Hygiene

- Hand Washing: Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover Coughs and Sneezes: Use a tissue or your elbow to cover your mouth and nose.

Get Enough Sleep

- Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night to help your body recover and stay healthy.
- To learn more about sleeping well, attend our Sleep Therapy Workshop in January. [Click here](#) for more information.

Additional Resources:

[How to Protect Yourself and Others from Respiratory Viruses](#)

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Upcoming Health Education Workshops

Staying Secure Online

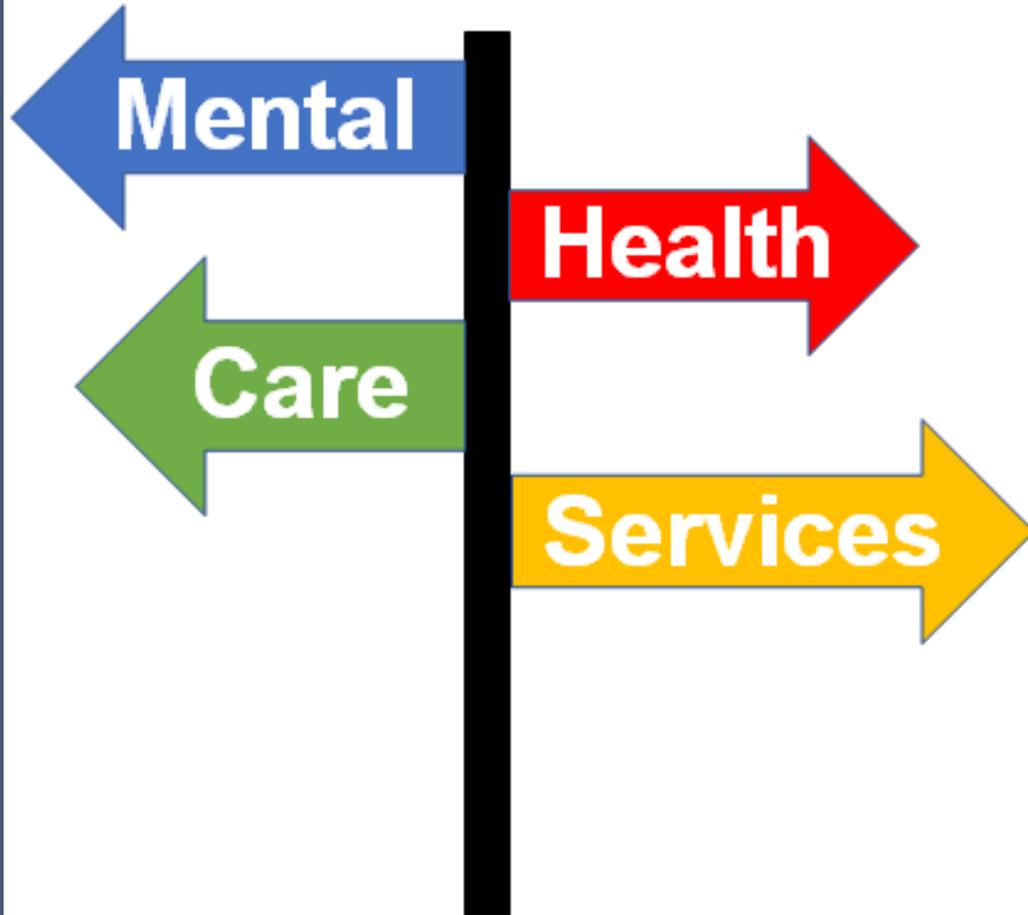


Learn about the potential risks of your online activities and how you can stay safe when you are connected. Join us for tips for using the internet and staying secure online..

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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Learning About Mental Health Care Services in Ontario



Are you struggling with your mental health or living with someone who has mental health problems and don't know where to find help? The mental health care system in Ontario is complex and can be challenging to find what you need.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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This House Has Good Bones **Osteoporosis**

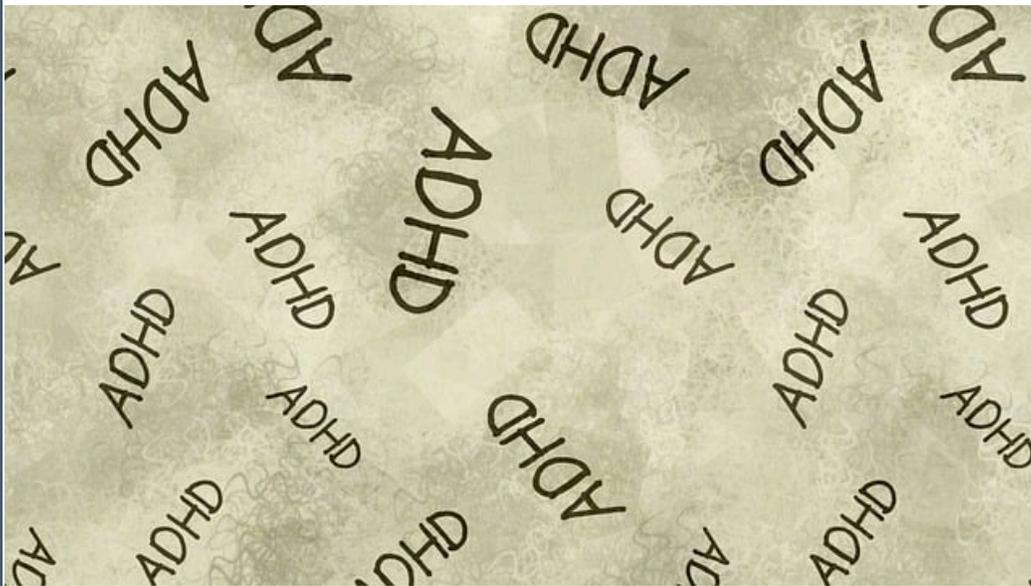


Are you an older adult or caregiver that wants to learn about osteoporosis? Do you want to learn why maintaining good bone health is important? This online workshop will review strategies like exercise and nutrition to help you maintain good bone health.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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All About ADHD



Join this workshop to get an overview of ADHD (Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder) including signs and symptoms, historical changes, current controversies, and management strategies.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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up-to-date health information

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