



CANCER

Healthy Weight—Eat Right

Keeping a healthy weight feels better and reduces your risk of getting cancer, diabetes and heart disease

Traditionally, First Nations people were physically active and ate nutritious food harvested from the land and water. Over the past 50 years, much has changed. Like other Canadians, First Nations people are now much more sedentary and do not always eat well.

As a result, we are less healthy.

What you eat makes a difference

About 2 out of every 3 adults in Canada are overweight or obese. This trend extends to children and teens—there are 3 times as many obese children now than 25 years ago.

First Nations people, especially those living on-reserve, are more likely to be obese than non-Aboriginal people.

Increasingly, “convenience” foods that are higher in fat and lower in nutritional value are being integrated into the First Nations diet, in part because they are less expensive and in part out of necessity because access to traditional food from the land has become more limited.



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Weight as a risk factor

Waist circumference is an indicator of health risk linked to excess fat around the waist. A waist circumference of 40 inches or more in men and 35 inches or more in women, is linked with health problems such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and certain types of cancer.

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on height and weight. If your BMI is 25 or higher (with a couple of exceptions), you are at a greater risk of developing diabetes, heart disease and some types of cancer.

 *You can work out your BMI online using calculators like the one at the Diabetes Canada website diabetes.ca.*

Make a plan—stick to it!

Losing weight is easier with a friend. Find a buddy to share planning meals, shopping and getting active.

Eat well! Our bodies work best with the right fuel. Choose fresh foods and foods high in fibre. Cut out junk food, especially sugary drinks and processed meats.

Get Moving! Physical fitness is part of healthy living and well-being. Include aerobic, strength and flexibility activities in your day.

Living a healthy life can be a challenge, but there are some recommended steps you can take to being healthy and preventing chronic disease.

4 simple steps for preventing chronic disease

- Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables every day
- Decrease time spent in front of a screen (e.g., a computer or TV)
- Get a lot of physical activity
- Avoid sugar-sweetened drinks and processed foods