

MAKING YOUR NEW YEAR'S
RESOLUTIONS STICK

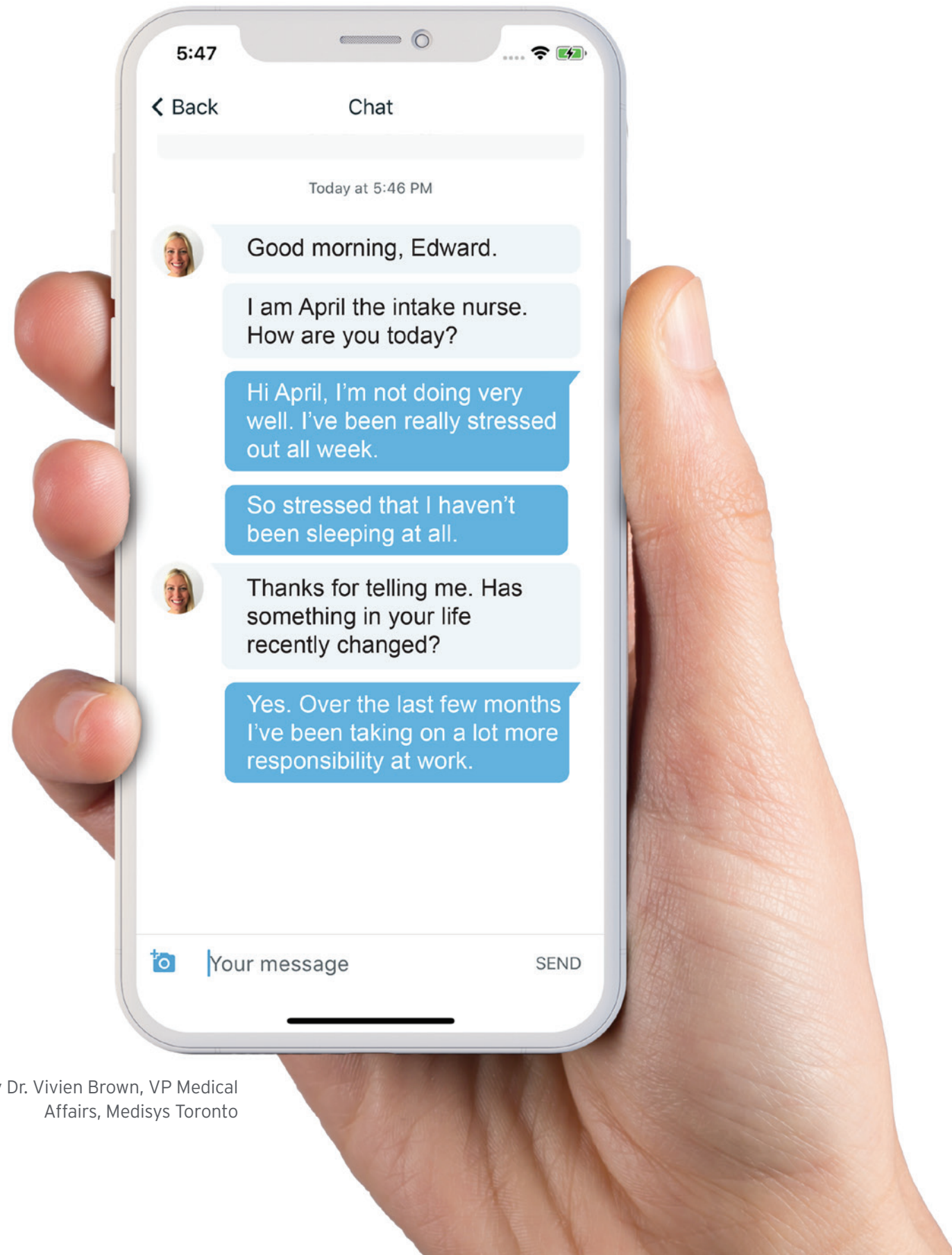
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PREVENTIVE HEALTH

Health. Lifestyle. Business.

- MAKE EMPLOYEE HEALTH A PRIORITY WITH VIRTUAL CARE
- READY TO EXERCISE MORE? TRY TIME SAVING WORKOUTS
- WANT TO EAT HEALTHIER THIS YEAR? MIND THE PORTIONS!
- HEALTHY SNACK: PUMPKIN SPICE BANANA MUFFINS

MAKE EMPLOYEE HEALTH A PRIORITY WITH VIRTUAL CARE



By Dr. Vivien Brown, VP Medical Affairs, Medisys Toronto

In today's competitive talent pool, understanding employees' motivations and expectations is critical to workplace productivity optimization and business success. Research shows that employees are looking for customizable, prevention-focused benefits programs that save time, achieve work-life balance and provide quick access to healthcare for their families.

Canada has seen a significant shift in the role that health and wellness plays in the employee experience over the past decade; the Society for Human Resource Management reports that 80% of Canadian mid to large size employers now offer some level of employee wellness services or information. Other reports suggest that over 90% of Canadian employers with more than 200 employees offer some level of employee wellness programming – yet only 30% of companies measure how these programs impact their employees' health and wellness.

With mounting pressures on decision makers to prove the business impact of their investments, employee health programs that deliver measurable results and meet the changing expectations and priorities of employees will rise to the top.

WHY VIRTUAL CARE IS CHANGING THE GAME

With average smart phone screen time increasing by 60% over the past three years¹ it's no surprise that more and more Canadians are demanding healthcare at their fingertips and supplementing traditional doctor's office visits with virtual, app-based consults. Virtual healthcare apps like Medisys On-Demand let individuals connect directly and instantly with nurse practitioners, physicians, and other allied health professionals through secure text and video chat – anytime and anywhere. Another indication of consumer appetite for virtual healthcare is that over 72% of smart phone users currently monitor their health through their phones².

But it's not just employees who stand to benefit from virtual healthcare. Responsible companies also provide health benefits to protect the bottom line: with people taking 2-6 days³ off per year for physician-related visits, and each five-minute visit taking approximately two hours of time from the workplace, the financial benefits of virtual healthcare equate to thousands of dollars in savings per employee annually, thanks solely to reduced absenteeism.

With this innovation in healthcare delivery also comes a shift in employee attitudes and expectations about employer-funded health benefits. New research suggests that employees are not only willing to adopt virtual healthcare but are willing to trade off some of the health services within their current benefits plans in exchange for better access to virtual healthcare.

2 IN 3 CANADIANS WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF VIRTUAL CARE

A 2018 survey commissioned by Medisys Health Group (n = 1501), found that only 9% of Canadian employers today offer virtual care as part of their health benefits packages, yet two out of three Canadian employees would use virtual care if it was provided in their employee benefit plan, and nearly three out of four (71%) are willing to trade some of their current health benefits for technology-supported services like virtual care.

A third (31%) of employees surveyed indicated that they would pay more (co-pay) for access to virtual care services if offered as part of their health benefits program, and two in five Canadian employees surveyed (39%) indicated that they would pay more for access to additional health services including mental health, wellness programs and virtual care combined. Millennials were the most willing (49%) to pay more for additional health services. Not surprisingly, Millennials were among the highest prospective users of virtual care services, with 67% surveyed saying they would use employer-sponsored virtual care today.

The AON Consumer Mindset Survey 2017 also reported that 33% of consumers want their employers to provide online access to healthcare providers (chat, video conference, etc.⁴)

A REMEDY FOR HEALTHCARE SUPPLY AND DEMAND CHALLENGES

Canada is likely to follow the USA's virtual healthcare trend – which doubled in usage between 2016 and 2017 – as healthcare organizations and governments face a growing imbalance of supply and demand⁵.

According to Statistics Canada, about 4.5 million Canadian residents do not have a family doctor⁶, and those who do have one cannot always get an appointment when needed. A 2016 Canadian Institute for Health Information survey revealed that 20% of Canadians reported waiting seven days or longer for an appointment to see their family doctor⁷, while 61% of family doctors surveyed reported not being able to accommodate same-day or next-day appointments for urgent needs. As a result, simple health matters such as prescription renewals often result in visits to crowded walk-in clinics, long waits in emergency rooms (nearly 40,000 Canadians visit an ER every year just to renew prescriptions, and typically wait over four hours to see a physician) or even the decision to forgo medical care altogether. It is estimated that up to 70% of visits to ERs or clinics can be replaced by online consultations without any impact on the quality of care⁸.

In a recent survey conducted by IPSOS, Canada's leading provider of public opinion research, 68% of Canadians surveyed reported having skipped a scheduled doctor's appointment or avoided seeing a doctor when they were sick because of long wait times, the inability to book appointments outside of normal work hours and other barriers⁹. That same percentage (69%) of Canadians surveyed said they would use virtual healthcare for their appointments.

It is clear that common access barriers lead many Canadians to delay or avoid seeking medical care, which can be especially dangerous for patients suffering from serious or chronic conditions and for those living in remote communities where access to specialists can be limited to begin with. Virtual care, however, has been shown to reduce wait times to see a specialist by 30% to 50%.

THE EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

The Medisys virtual health survey determined that the majority of Canadian employees would use virtual care if they had access to it. This appetite to engage in healthcare on one's own terms translates to greater employee attention to personal health – and we know that improved health literacy has been shown to reduce the direct cost of healthcare by as much as 17%¹⁰.

Desjardins Group, Canada's largest financial cooperative, recently launched a virtual care pilot project to about 4,000 of its 46,000 employees.

"We are currently piloting virtual health and we're getting some very positive comments from our employees," says Josée Dixon, Senior Vice-President of Group and Business Insurance at Desjardins Insurance. "They're especially pleased at how easy it is to get in touch with a medical professional, even late at night, to take care of a medical issue - whether it's for themselves, their spouse or their children. Employees have been able to renew their prescriptions without having to waste hours in a walk-in clinic. It's been very positive so far."

Canadian companies are increasingly considering the economic benefits of adding virtual care solutions like Medisys On-Demand to their health benefits packages, and 71% of Canadian employees surveyed indicated that they are willing to trade existing benefits for improved access to healthcare professionals via technology-supported services like virtual care. It's a win-win scenario for both workers and their companies, and proof of this: the old adage that health isn't valued until it's lost may not hold true with the advent of virtual healthcare.

THE MENTAL HEALTH ADVANTAGE

Access to healthcare professionals through virtual care provides more peace of mind for employees and reduces potential stress related to their health; with stress contributing to an estimated 60% of work-related absenteeism, this is a relevant concern³. And as workplace stigmas around stress and mental health finally start to dissipate, organizations are recognizing the true impact of mental and emotional health on their workforce.

Still, The Consumer Health Mindset[®] Study 2017 reported that out-of-pocket costs along with stigma, lack of time and flexibility make it difficult for consumers to prioritize mental and emotional health⁵. Even with employee assistance programs or mental health professionals available to employees through benefits plans, many face challenges with scheduling and insecurities around the perceived stigma of seeking mental health support.

Mental health challenges can be isolating, often without the peer support others may receive when battling cancer. Sufferers often face their conditions alone and, in some cases, avoid treatment altogether due to fear of others knowing about their condition. Virtual mental healthcare can alleviate that fear with convenient and private access to mental health professionals, which may encourage more employees to seek help.

Medisys Health Group offers virtual healthcare to Canadian organization through its Medisys On-Demand service, which delivers 24/7 medical support to Canadians wherever they are. [Click here](#) to request a free trial of Medisys On-Demand.

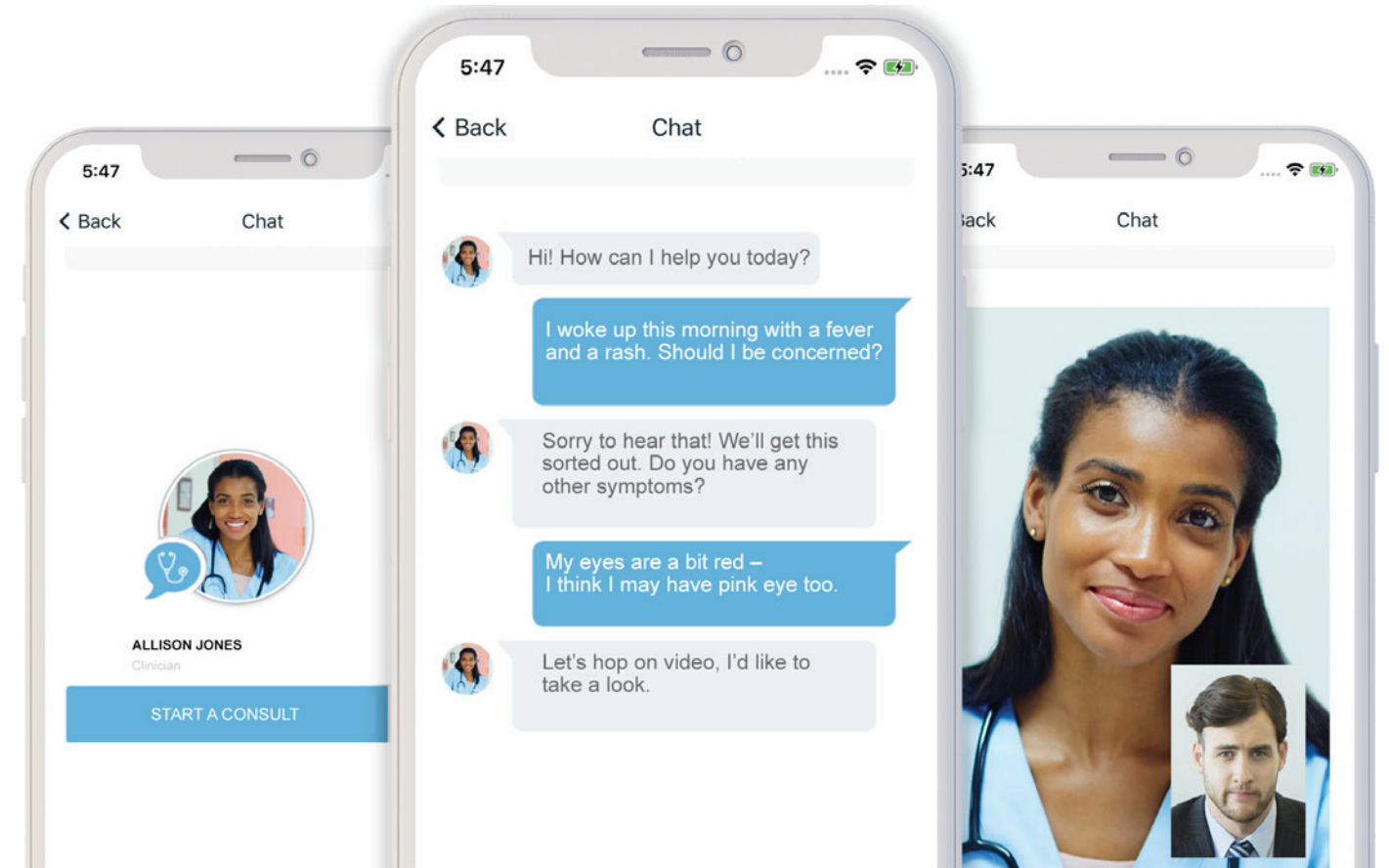
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- 2 Ramani, M., Rupesh B., Abrar K., Blythe H. (2018), Deloitte Insights 2018, retrieved from www.deloitte.com
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medisys on-demand

Your year round, On-Demand employee healthcare solution

With Medisys On-Demand, 24/7 virtual health consultations and episodic care services are available for all employees and their family members, keeping your employees healthy, happy, and productive.



The Medisys On-Demand service includes:

- 24/7 text and video chat support from a team of healthcare practitioners
- Virtual prescription renewals, specialist referrals, and lab requisitions
- Complete and instant access to health records for consults over the app
- On-Demand virtual healthcare for your employees and their family members

For more information, email us at corporatehealth@medisys.ca



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TIME SAVING WORKOUTS

By Jonathan Low, Exercise Physiologist, Medisys St. John's and Andrea Stokes, Registered Dietician, Definitions St. John's

Health is one of our most precious assets, and one of the areas where many of us vow to make lifestyle changes and improvements in the New Year. Unfortunately, few of us succeed in making those necessary changes until our health truly starts deteriorating.

Most of us want to make our health a priority but with our busy schedules, it can be a challenge to squeeze in a good workout. However, how much of your leisure time do

you spend staring at a screen, mindlessly flipping through channels or scrolling through social media posts?

No more excuses! This year, opt for quick and fun workouts that you can complete anywhere when you have a few spare moments! These workouts will burn off extra calories, strengthen your muscles and cardiovascular system, and help you manage stress!

TRIM-YOUR-TREE TABATA WORKOUT

This fast-paced workout can be done in about 25 minutes. Complete each circuit, rest for about a minute, then move on to the next. Tip: download a free Tabata timer app to guide you through the circuits.

WARM-UP: 1 MINUTE JOG IN PLACE

Circuit 1: Repeat 8 times		Circuit 2: Repeat 8 times		Circuit 3: Repeat 8 times	
Jump rope (or jumping jacks)	20 seconds fast	Bicycle crunches	20 seconds	Pushups	20 seconds
Rest	10 seconds	Rest	10 seconds	Rest	10 seconds
Circuit 4: Repeat 8 times		Optional Burn-Out Circuit: As many reps as you can (only one round, so push yourself!)			
Squat jumps	20 seconds	Mountain Climbers	Supermans		
Rest	10 seconds	Tricep Dips	Side plank rotations		





COOL-DOWN: LIGHT STRETCHING FOR A FEW MINUTES

DECK THE HALLS WORKOUT

Grab a deck of playing cards, place it face down in your workout space and turn on some upbeat music! Flip up a card and perform the exercise assigned to that suit for as many repetitions as the card number. Flip up the next card for your next exercise. There is no rest in this workout, but you are allowed to 'sit out' one card from each suit. If you have time, try to get through the whole deck. Otherwise, set a timer to get the most out of your workout.

WARM-UP: 2 MINUTES OF JUMPING JACKS

CARD SUITS:

-  Body Weight Squats
-  Bicycle Crunches
-  Mountain Climbers
-  Reverse Lunges (alternating legs)

COOL-DOWN:

2 minutes of jump rope or jumping jacks.

HOLIDAY TURKEY-TROUNCER WORKOUT

Perform each move in the list below as many times as you can for 50 seconds and then rest for 10 seconds. Move to the next exercise in the list. Do the exercises in the order outlined; that is one round. Rest for 1-2 minutes. Complete 3-5 rounds for extreme sweat and muscle building!

WORKOUT: REPEAT 3-4 TIMES

1. Jumping Jacks
2. Bridge-Ups (Hip thrust)
3. Reverse Lunge- Left leg
4. Reverse Lunge- Right leg
5. Bicycle Crunches
6. Supermans
7. Single-Leg Squats- Left leg
8. Single-Leg Squats- Right leg
9. Pushups
10. Plank

For more information on these and other exercise, email us at info@definitionsonline.com.

OVEREATING: MIND THE PORTIONS



By the team of registered dietitians, Medisys Vancouver

DID YOU FIND YOURSELF OVER INDULGING DURING THE HOLIDAYS?

Don't feel badly about it; you now have time to get back on track. Maintaining a healthy diet is not only about what you eat, but also about how much you eat. A research from York University suggests most Canadians underestimate what constitutes one serving of meat, grains and fruits and

vegetables when using the Canada Food Guide. The Canada Food Guide can be used as a reference, but the quantity of food an individual should eat differs from one person to the next and depends on characteristics such as gender, size, age, level of activity, metabolism and more.

Supersized meal portions are heavily marketed particularly in North American culture. Serving sizes in restaurants and grocery stores have grown, and many people think that the amount of food in front of them is the right quantity. According to "Portion Size Me: Downsizing Our Consumption Norms," a study by Brian Wansink and Koert van Ittersum published in The Journal of the American Dietetic Association, large-sized offerings in supermarkets have increased 10-fold between 1970 and 2000, and the surface area of the average dinner plate has increased by 36% since 1960.

HERE ARE 8 STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU ADJUST YOUR PORTION SIZES AND AVOID SUCCUMBING TO THE TEMPTATION OF REFILLING YOUR PLATE:

- Leave the table as soon as eating is done.
- Eat enough throughout the day, including breakfast. 4 in 10 Canadians report not eating breakfast every day, and many people struggle with portions and choices at supper or in the evening because they haven't eaten enough throughout the day and feel deprived.
- Eat until you're no longer hungry rather than full (full = over-eaten). Another way to look at it is eat until you feel 80% full. Remember it takes about 20 minutes for you to feel "full". Give your body time.
- Take a portion of food from the container and place in bowl, then before eating it, put the container away. It's too easy to keep re-filling the bowl!
- Keep a food journal - this can be extremely insightful, even if done only for a few days (either on paper or online at Eatracker.ca, myfitnesspal.com, etc.). Focus on variety and balanced nutrition instead of counting calories.
- When eating with a group of people, serve yourself last. This way you're not done first, and tempted to keep eating while waiting for others.
- Learn to say no thank you. Love it or leave it!
- Make eating a single task activity. Eat sitting down at one designated place and turn off the TV, computer, phone and focus on enjoying your food. As often as possible, avoid multitasking with food and instead concentrate on enjoying your meal with focused attention.

Maintaining a healthy diet is all about awareness. Don't let your environment or marketing strategies influence you.

CHECK OUT THESE PROVOCATIVE FINDINGS ABOUT PORTION CONTROL OUTLINED IN RESEARCH FROM CORNELL UNIVERSITY'S BRIAN WANSINK AND HIS TEAM:

- Big servings. People who were given a big bucket of (stale) popcorn ate 34% more than people who got a smaller bucket.
- Fancy names. Cafeteria sales jumped by 27% when foods were given descriptive names like "Succulent Italian Seafood Filet" (instead of "Seafood Filet") or "Belgian Black Forest Cake" (instead of "Chocolate Cake").
- More variety, more calories. People ate about 40% more if they had a choice of candy that came in six different colors than if the candy came in four colors.
- Plate-ware matters. When people were served a brownie on a Wedgwood china plate, they rated its taste higher than when the brownie was served on a paper plate or napkin.
- Food on the table. Men ate about 29% more - and women about 10% more - if the serving dish was left on the table (rather than the counter).
- Who sets the pace? People ate more when they sat at a table with someone who ate quickly than with someone who ate slowly.
- How much did I eat? People ate fewer chicken wings if they could see the bones of the wings they'd already eaten than if the bones were whisked away.
- Healthy restaurant? People who believed that Subway meals were healthy underestimated the calories in Subway meals more than the calories in McDonald's meals.
- Health halo. If a bag of M&M's or trail mix was labeled "low-fat", people ate more than if the label didn't say "low-fat".

Change is tough, but with the right support, knowledge and confidence, you can make healthy lifestyle choices and look forward to remarkable results this year and for years to come. Our registered dietitians are available to help you reach your goals: weight management, lower cholesterol or blood pressure, emotional eating, etc. They can develop personalized strategies adapted to your lifestyle. [Click here](#) to learn more about our nutrition services or to book an appointment.



PUMPKIN SPICE BANANA MUFFINS



By the team of registered dietitians, Medisys Vancouver

These muffins freeze very well in a Ziplock and will last for about 3 months. Take them out as you need them. Pair with some raw veggie sticks and protein, such as a Greek yogurt cup or some cheese, to make a balanced lunch.

Makes: 12 muffins

Ingredients

- 2 bananas, mashed
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/3 cup canola oil (or other light tasting oil)
- 1 1/3 cup pumpkin puree (you can use canned)
- 1 cup maple syrup
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 cup pumpkin seeds

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F
2. In a large bowl, combine bananas, eggs, oil, pumpkin and maple syrup
3. In another bowl combine flour, baking soda and powder, salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice
4. Pour the flour mixture into the pumpkin mixture and stir until just combined
5. Scoop the batter into a muffin tray and sprinkle with pumpkin seeds
6. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean

Looking for more healthy recipes? [Click here](#) to download our free recipe guide, created by our team of registered dietitians.

Trouble settling back into your daily desk routine?

2019 DESK STRETCHING CALENDAR

JANUARY

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JULY

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DECEMBER

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TRY THESE SIMPLE STRETCHES:

NECK STRETCH
Gently bring your chin over your shoulder (as if you were looking behind you).
2x per side, hold for 20 seconds

TRAP STRETCH
With arms at your side, take turns dropping each of your ears to your shoulders. Try to smile while you do it; it will make it easier.
2x per side, hold for 30 seconds

LATS & SHOULDER STRETCH
Place feet shoulder-width apart behind a chair. At an arm's length, rest your hands on the top of the chair. Slide your arms further away from you as you slowly shift your hips back.
3x, hold for 20 seconds

WRIST EXTENSION STRETCH
Hold arms out in front of you. With help from your non-stretched hand, flex your wrist downwards towards the floor, and hold stretch. Then, with help from your non-stretched hand, extend wrist up towards the ceiling, and hold stretch.
3x per hand, hold for 30 seconds

QUAD STRETCH
With your hand, bring your heel to your distal muscle, gently pull. Use a desk or chair for balance.
2x per leg, hold for 30 seconds

ABDUCTOR AND GLUTE STRETCH
Keep your back straight and ab right, place your foot on the opposite knee. Bend forward and lightly push your knee to the ground, keeping your back straight.
1-2x per leg, hold for 20-30 seconds

THORACIC ROTATION STRETCH
Interlock your fingers in front of you with your arms bent and your elbows raised in the air at chest height. Lead with your elbow and rotate your torso to one side, trying to bring your elbow as far behind you as possible.
2x per side, hold for 20 seconds

HAMSTRING STRETCH
With one leg straight, lean forward to reach the front foot, keeping the back straight.
1-2x per leg, hold for 20-30 seconds

BENEFITS OF DESK STRETCHES:

- Increases Muscle Balance and Posture
- Improves Muscle Coordination

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Please note: The information provided by Medisys is educational in nature and not prescriptive. Medisys does not accept liability for any health condition as a result of its educational material. It is the individuals responsibility to make educated decisions and create their own course of action

Investing in your health with simple daily stretches can increase your range of motion, decrease chances of injury, and improve your health and overall productivity.

Download the Medisys Desk Stretches Calendar for your work station!



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