

QUIKRISK™

## Prediabetes - Are you at risk?

**T**he Canadian Diabetes Association defines prediabetes as a fasting blood sugar level of 6.1 to 6.9 mmol/L. This level is higher than normal but not high enough for a type 2 diabetes diagnosis (i.e., fasting blood sugar level of 7.0 mmol/L).

Pre-diabetes often has no symptoms so the only sure way to know if you have it is to get your blood glucose tested.

However, this quick risk assessment can help you determine whether pre-diabetes could be a problem for you. Check the appropriate response next to each statement and see how you score.



**Testing:** If you have checked any of the pre-diabetes risk factors listed at left, talk to your health care provider about getting tested. A fasting blood sugar test is recommended by age 40 for everyone, or younger if at risk.

**The good news:** Research shows that people who have pre-diabetes can delay or prevent developing type 2 diabetes by making lifestyle changes. These include losing excess weight, eating a balanced diet, managing conditions such as unhealthy cholesterol and high blood pressure and exercising regularly.

Losing just 5% to 10% of your weight and exercising moderately 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week can significantly reduce your risk. You can count on it!

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Excess weight (especially around the waist)
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	High blood pressure
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unhealthy cholesterol
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Age 40 or older
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Lack of exercise
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Family history of diabetes
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Ethnic background - Aboriginal, African, Hispanic, Asian, or South Asian
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	History of diabetes during pregnancy (women)

◆ **When do you feel most at ease and inspired?** Find ways to work those aspects into your current job. If you love to plan parties, help plan workplace events. If you're good at conflict resolution, volunteer to deal with customers. If you love spending time alone, find a project that requires self-motivated effort. Play to your strengths and work will feel more rewarding.

◆ **Exercise may relieve or prevent migraine headache.** Swedish researchers recruited migraine sufferers to participate in a 12-week exercise program that involved 40-minute indoor cycling 3 times a week; they tracked their workouts and migraine frequency and pain intensity. Results: Participants reported fewer migraines, less migraine pain, less need for pain medication, and improvement in overall quality of life; aerobic fitness also improved. *Note:* While the workouts were well tolerated by study participants, be sure to clear increased activity with your health care provider.

◆ **November is Osteoporosis Month - are you getting enough vitamin D?** Along with calcium, vitamin D is essential to reducing your risk of developing osteoporosis. Osteoporosis Canada issued new guidelines this summer for the sunshine vitamin. For adults under age 50 without osteoporosis or conditions affecting vitamin D absorption: daily supplements of 400 to 1000 IU. For adults over 50: daily supplements of between 800 and 2000 IU. If you are not sure how much supplemental vitamin D you need, ask your health care provider.



## REGAIN YOUR BALANCE

### Do you often run short on time to do what needs doing?

Would you like to find more time for fun, exercise and personal care? Too many “must-dos” can lead to fatigue, stress and unhappiness. To get your life back in balance, try these timely tips.

#### Add more time to your day:

- ▶ Record the time spent on each task in your schedule for a week. Look for time-wasters to cut or tasks to delegate.
- ▶ Combine errands to save driving; break big chores into smaller daily tasks to free up weekend time.
- ▶ Avoid “multitasking” – it can reduce your productivity.
- ▶ Limit email, texting and online social networking.
- ▶ Turn off phones and laptops to have uninterrupted time with friends or family.

#### Add more life to your time:

- ▶ Make a list of the top 6 activities you value and make them priorities.
- ▶ Take a vacation and focus on what makes you happy.

**Final thoughts:** Keep a clear boundary between work and home, and give your full attention to each – leave work behind when you go home, if possible. With some practice you can learn to maintain a healthy balance in your life.

# Getting Ski-Ready

**S**now means time to pull out the skis! But before you hit the slopes, get ski-ready with these pre-conditioning tips (get your health care provider’s okay first):

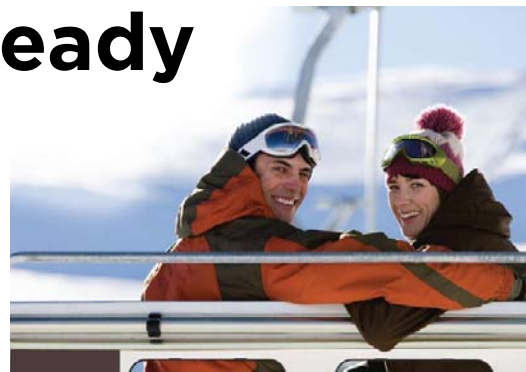
**Loosen up.** Do stretching workouts that keep you limber. Before you hit the slopes, warm up your muscles with 5 to 10 minutes of exercise and then stretch. Don't forget to stretch after skiing, too.

**Improve your balance.** Use a balance board or exercise ball for balance training. Or try one-legged squats or standing on one foot with eyes closed.

**Increase your speed and endurance.** Raise your heart rate for 40 to 60 minutes a day – try walking, running, or biking. Pick something you enjoy to stay motivated.

#### Strengthen your entire body:

**Core** – Do crunches or try a Pilates



workout. Use proper form to prevent back injuries.

**Legs** – Try squats, lunges, stairs, walking hills for thighs and walk, jog, bike or swim for strong calves.

**Arms and shoulders** – Your pole plant technique can make or break your run through bumps or short turns. Include your lats, triceps and upper back muscles.

With a little pre-conditioning this season you may find yourself advancing to more challenging runs. And best of all, those post-skiing aches and pains will be a thing of the past!

## Lifestyles of the Slim and Active



**Y**ou may envy them, but people who have a healthy weight can be good role models when it comes to weight control. Just watch them. You’ll probably see they move more – around the house or at work, they are likely to stay busy with chores, watch less TV, stand instead of sit, or just fidget a lot.

Of course the more active you are the more calories you burn. In general, slim people often practice positive eating and exercise habits without much thought

or planning, according to weight management expert Lavinia Rodriguez, Ph.D. She says people who maintain a healthy weight tend to:

- ▶ Eat a wide variety of healthful foods.
- ▶ Eat slowly and savour their food.
- ▶ Eat when they are hungry and stop when they feel satisfied.
- ▶ Avoid letting other people or situations determine when they eat and how much they eat.
- ▶ Eat smaller, more frequent meals rather than skipping meals or going long periods of time without eating.
- ▶ Be more active than chronic dieters, and not just with scheduled exercise.

**Best Goal:** Focus less on weight and more on lifestyle – stay aware of diet and exercise choices that affect your overall health and well-being. These are steps that will help you stay slim for life.

# Choosing a Sleep Aid



**R**unning short on zzz's? It's a common problem in today's hectic world. Ongoing sleep deprivation contributes to many serious disorders as well as reduced quality of life. Ongoing sleep deprivation contributes to poor health and reduces your quality of life.

What can you do to improve your sleep? Relax before bedtime, limit caffeine, alcohol and naps, exercise regularly and, most important, follow the same sleep schedule.

When self-care measures fail, ask your health care provider about treatment. Following is a brief summary of current drug options.

## Over-the-Counter Options

**Antihistamines.** Diphenhydramine and doxylamine are antihistamine-based medicines that may aid sleep for a short time, but should not be used for more than a few weeks. They can cause drowsiness, impaired performance and driving, and urinary retention.



**Valerian.** This herbal supplement may help improve sleep, but the long-term safety and best dose are unknown.

**Melatonin.** This hormone supplement may aid some patients with insomnia, but the long-term safety is unknown.

## Prescription Medications

Prescription sleeping pills can be helpful for occasional, short-term use, such as during bereavement or brief periods of high stress. However, these medicines can have adverse side effects and may interact with other drugs. Wake-time sedation, decreased alertness, and motor impairment can occur; never take them with alcohol or sedatives.

**Bottom line:** If you're running short on zzz's seek help from your provider. Use prescription and OTC sleep medications cautiously – and always with your provider's guidance.

## Q: Third-hand tobacco smoke harmful?

**A:** Third-hand smoke is nicotine residue from tobacco smoke that clings to hair, clothes, carpets, furniture and other objects indoors. It lingers for weeks or months and is considered a health hazard.

Inhalation or ingestion of and skin contact with the residue exposes people to tobacco smoke's 250 toxins, which include arsenic, cyanide and lead.

A recent study led by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (U.S.) showed that nicotine in the residue

reacts with the common indoor air pollutant nitrous acid to form tobacco-specific nitrosamines. These potent chemicals raise the cancer risk in anyone who inhales the substances or comes into contact with them.

Indoor ventilation does not eliminate third-hand smoke, nor does smoking outside. The residue clings to smokers and is spread when they go indoors, researchers say. If you smoke, quit. Avoid tobacco smoke whenever you can.

– Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

## Staying Well by Plane and Sea

**Don't let discomfort ruin your trip.** Take these measures for safe and healthy travels:



- Limit alcohol use; never drive, swim or go boating after or while drinking.
- Stay active year round. Walk, snowshoe, swim, or play beach ball.
- Get all required vaccinations before travelling.
- Pack medicines and copies of your prescriptions.
- When boating, wear a floatation device.
- Wear sun protection – sunglasses, light, loose clothing and sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30.
- Eat a variety of foods, including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat or nonfat dairy.
- Drink water regularly to stay hydrated.

## Do you get motion sickness?

It can occur when riding on trains, airplanes and boats, as well as car or amusement park rides. Common symptoms include nausea, cold sweats, vomiting, dizziness, headache and fatigue.

To prevent motion sickness: Sit in the front seat and keep your eyes on the horizon. Don't read. Rest your head against the seat back. Turn air vents toward your face. Don't smoke. Avoid heavy meals and alcohol the night before your trip; instead, eat light meals or snacks within 24 hours before travel.

If these steps don't work, ask your health care provider about preventive medications.



## STAY IN TOUCH

### Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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# DESKTOP DINING

If you type on a crumb-filled keyboard, you are probably a desktop diner. In fact, almost 80% of Canadians say that they eat while engaged in another activity, such as working. You may save time, but is desktop dining a healthy practice?

**Is your waistline growing?** Our time-starved lifestyles make multitasking inevitable, but desktop diners run the risk of weight gain if they're prone to mindless munching and unbalanced food choices.

Eating while distracted makes it easy to ignore your fullness cues and overeat, which can add pounds over time. Plus, in a time crunch, you may grab a bag of chips or a giant muffin for a fast meal.

These poor nutritional choices wreak havoc on energy levels, nutrient intake and your waistline. If you must work through lunch:

- Bag a lunch from home. Are you really too busy to munch on nutritious foods and avoid the unhealthy options?
- Control your portions. Bring food in single-serve containers so you won't overindulge if you are distracted.



- Take at least 10 minutes and really *taste* your food. Even if you are at your desk, take a break from your phone and email.

**Is your desk dirty?** When was the last time you *really* cleaned your desk or your phone receiver? A University of Arizona (U.S.) study found that the average workplace desk harbours 400 times more bacteria than the average toilet seat. The researchers also found that phones, desktops and keyboards have the most germs, in that order.

Bacteria can potentially cause illness, so use disinfectant or a sanitizer in your work space to reduce bacteria levels. It's also important to wash your hands frequently with warm water and plain soap.

**Don't forget, you deserve a break.** Get up and away from work for a bit, take a walk or do some stretching after eating. This gives your body and mind a much-needed break. You'll also burn calories and return to your desk refreshed and re-energized.

## Hearty Barley Soup

Serve a crowd or save some in your freezer.

- 1 cup/250 ml pearl barley, pre-soaked
- ½ lb/225g ground beef (80% lean)
- 1 tsp/5 ml minced garlic
- 1-2 pinches red pepper flakes
- 6 cups/1.5 litres vegetable broth, low-sodium
- 1 14.5-oz/411g can unsalted whole tomatoes, chopped
- 1 8-oz/225g package frozen mixed vegetables
- 2 tbsp/25 ml fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp/15 ml fresh thyme, chopped

- 1 To pre-soak pearl barley: Boil 4 cups/1 litre of water in a medium pot, add barley and cook for 2 minutes; remove from heat and rest for 1 hour, or until barley plumps.
- 2 In a large pot, brown meat; stir in garlic and red pepper flakes. Drain off excess fat.
- 3 Stir in barley, broth and tomatoes. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cover. Simmer 15 minutes.
- 4 Add frozen vegetables, lemon juice and thyme. Simmer 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add extra water if soup is too thick.

Garnish suggestions: chopped scallions and crumbled feta cheese; salt and pepper to taste.

### Nutrition Facts

MAKES 12 CUPS/3 LITRES - 8 (1½ CUP/375 ml) SERVINGS.

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 176	
<b>Total Fat</b>	3.8g
Saturated Fat	1.3g
<b>Cholesterol</b>	2mg
<b>Sodium</b>	150mg
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b>	28g
Dietary Fibre	4.7g
Sugars	4g
<b>Protein</b>	7.8g

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