



MEDIA RELEASE

Top 10 New Year's health care resolutions and tips for keeping them

TORONTO (December 15, 2009) – With rates of obesity and inactivity at alarming levels in Canada there has never been a more urgent time for our country's citizens to take control of their health. Members of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) are calling on Canadians and their families to make 2010 the year they make meaningful and long lasting changes to their physical care and fitness habits. Here are 10 resolutions and rules for helping ensure a healthy, happy New Year and many more in the future.

1. **Get yourself moving.** Develop and practice an exercise regimen that includes activities to improve cardiovascular health, strengthen muscles, increase bone density, keep you mobile, and eliminate stress.
2. **Get your kids moving.** Inactivity and obesity are among the greatest threats to the health of today's youth and children. They need 90 minutes of physical activity a day. At least 30 minutes should be continuous aerobic conditioning. Set an example and exercise with your children.
3. **Play safely and avoid injury.** Ensure that you and your children have the right equipment, and adequate nutrition and hydration before participating in vigorous activity. Helmets are a must when biking, skiing, and snowboarding or doing any other sport that carries a risk of head injury. Warm up before exercising and cool down afterwards to avoid injury.
4. **Work safely and avoid injury.** Reduce your chances of a repetitive strain injury from computer overuse by maintaining proper posture, and ensuring your work station is ergonomically correct. Get up from your chair regularly and take short walks around the office. If your work involves heavy activity, use equipment such as a mechanical lift or a dolly to help reduce the amount of force required to transport or lift heavy items.
5. **Be realistic when setting goals.** Change one behaviour at a time. If you expect to reach your goals too quickly you are setting yourself up for failure.
6. **Start slowly.** If you haven't exercised for a long time pace yourself; doing too much too soon could cause injury.
7. **Choose an activity you enjoy.** You'll be more likely to stick with it for longer.
8. **Engage the support of family, friends, and health professionals.** They will give you the extra push you need to meet your goals.
9. **Keep a record of your progress and achievements.** This will help you stay motivated.
10. **Reward yourself!** Treat yourself to something special when you meet your goals. You've earned it.

While many Canadians are capable of setting and attaining their health goals, others can't because of long sedentary periods and pre-existing health conditions. This is where physiotherapists can make a big difference. Physiotherapists are experts in aerobic conditioning and body mechanics and skilled in assessing and treating a wide range of physical conditions. They can help put together a personalized program that will take into account your limitations and safely help you improve your physical health. Physiotherapists are primary health care practitioners, readily accessible in private clinics and public practice to support Canadians seeking optimal mobility, physical health and wellness over the entire life span.

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