

Do healthier lifestyle changes overwhelm you?

We can help!

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Do you want a healthier lifestyle but feel overwhelmed at the thought of trying to make changes? Here are some helpful hints to start making a healthy impact on your lifestyle:

- **Set a realistic goal and be patient.** Think of how long you have been living an unhealthy lifestyle and don't expect a miracle in a short time. Give yourself a reasonable time frame to achieve your particular goal so you can set yourself up for success.

- **Try to avoid making too many major lifestyle changes all at once.** Decide what you feel is most detrimental to your health or most important in your lifestyle and begin there.



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If you have any questions or concerns for Sarah, please contact her directly at sarah.miller@humanperformancecentre.ca.

If you want to start an exercise routine, quit smoking, quit eating after 7pm in the evening and give up sugar, don't try to start all of these challenges at the same time. Pick one or two and get them going successfully before tackling the next goal.

- **Choose activities you enjoy as often as you can.** You will be far more motivated to be active if you are participating in activities you enjoy. If you like social groups, maybe a group fitness class or running club is for you. If you like pushing yourself on your own, a running program or individual sport may be for you. Try something new, buy a pedal bike or start swimming laps. Find what motivates you and run with it.

- **Make one small goal each week and stick to it.** If your eating habits are a problem, your first goal might be to increase how much water you are drinking by two glasses per day.

If exercise is a goal, then begin with a 15 minute walk right after supper two days per week. Once you have this small goal becoming a habit (usually 7-10 days) then add the next small step.

Remember: small steps will make it seem possible.

- **Make yourself accountable.** Tell somebody what your weekly goals are and write down your successes and slip-ups so you can see your progress and your weak areas. If you don't feel comfortable with a friend or family member, see a health professional in your area and they can assist you with your goal setting and accountability.

- **Find a lifestyle friend and work together to improve both of your lives.** You can support one another when

making difficult decisions and motivate one another to stick with the goals and keep moving forward. Everything is always easier when you have a partner for support.

- **Reward yourself.** When you have achieved a success, reward yourself in some way. You may want to choose rewards that will inspire or encourage you along the right path. For example, a new exercise shirt, a new food scale to assist with portion sizes, a new water bottle, etc.

- **Invest in help.** If you find you are struggling or falling off of your path, invest in a kinesiologist, personal trainer, dietician or lifestyle coach to help you get back on track and moving forward again.



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