



Kingston Gets Active Month Wellness Tips

This KGA Month, make choices for a healthy body and mind. We have divided our wellness tips and challenges into four categories: Active, Healthy, Mindful and Connected. Check out the tips below to lead a healthier April! Don't forget to record your wellness accomplishments on your Wellness Challenge Passport, for your chance to win an iPod Shuffle!

Active: Being physically active can produce short and long term health benefits. People of all ages, shapes, sizes and abilities can benefit from physical activity. Strengthen your muscles and bones by engaging in aerobic, anaerobic, muscle building, balance and flexibility exercises.

- Try to find a new trail to hike! You can be active, enjoy the outdoors, and even connect with friends as you explore new ground.
- Stand more! Sitting has been shown to cause both short and long term negative effects for physical and mental health. Try standing at your desk, stretching, doing squats, or intentionally changing positions once every 15 minutes!
- Try completing express workouts- 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity will leave you feeling accomplished, even on your busiest of days. Bonus: Find a workout partner for the day, allowing you to connect and be social.
- Having trouble leaving the TV? Many fitness facilities have stationary bikes and treadmills with TVs attached to the machine. Work out while you watch Ellen Degeneres!
- Pick a physical activity that you enjoy! Play a team sport, work in the garden, or learn a new dance. You will be more motivated to participate and more likely to continue participating in activities you find enjoyable.
- Leave the car at home. Bike or walk instead!
- Have an active lunch! Take your runners to work and walk around the block over your lunch break. Each minute of physical activity counts!
- Choose free activities! Fitness facilities and recreation organizations sometimes offer discounts to first time users. There are lots of free physical activities too: garden, walk to the park, lift plastic milk bags, go for a bike ride, or do body weight exercises at home.
- High Intensity Interval Training with recovery (HIIT) is a popular trend while being very beneficial. Click this link: www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/14/hiit-workout_n_4426903.html for some HIIT facts and suggestions!

Healthy: Start adopting healthy eating habits now! The choices you make each day affect your health – how you feel today, tomorrow, and in the future.

- Follow Canada's Food Guide to make wise and healthy food choices.

- Drink water regularly. Replace sugary drinks such as pop and sports drinks with water.
- Start your day with a breakfast that is high in fiber and a source of protein. Try whole grain toast with peanut butter and banana slices, a smoothie made with frozen fruit and low fat milk or fortified soy beverage, or oatmeal topped with nuts and berries.
- Canada's Food Guide recommends more servings of vegetables and fruit than any other food group. Make vegetables the star ingredient at your meals.
- Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.
- Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.
- Select lower fat milk and milk alternatives.
- Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu more often.
- Involve your family in planning meals and snacks. Show your children how to plan and make healthy meals.
- Keep your cupboards, fridge and freezer stocked with healthier foods that are lower in fat, sodium and sugar. Keep a grocery list handy and add items as you run out.

Mindful: Living mindfully means living with intention. Take charge of your life.

- Take steps to have a healthier work/life balance.
- Start each day with a smile on your face!
- Take time to consider what makes life meaningful.
- Try something new, if it feels scary!
- Turn off your electronics for a day and see what happens.
- Meditation, when practiced regularly, is good for the mind and body. Meditation improves thinking, energy and the ability to manage stress.
- Try deep breathing for 2 whole minutes, today!
- Make sure you get the sleep you need. Though it varies between individuals, usually the recommended amount of sleep is between 6-7.5 hours per night. Are you sleeping enough?
- Work at a desk? Try changing positions every 15 minutes.
- Take 10 deep breaths before bed. This will help you relax and can improve your sleep patterns.
- Self-motivation is important. Envision your end goals.

Connected: Social connection improves physical health and psychological well-being. Humans are naturally social beings. Social connection can even strengthen our immune system and help us recover from injury faster.

- Technology allows for sharing of ideas, tips, recipes, exercises, music, support and more! Share your ideas and learn from others!
- On a weekly basis, try reaching out to a friend, colleague, family member, or talking to someone new. Better still, connect in person or by phone instead of sending a text or email.
- Have a technology-free meal! Enjoy the company of those around you!
- Grab a friend! Like-minded or goal-oriented individuals can be very motivational and help encourage perseverance on days where your energy is low.
- Your dog counts! Your pet will love being active and be grateful for spending time with you.
- Share the work! Cook, clean or organize with a friend. The work gets done faster when more people are contributing.
- Introduce yourself to a neighbor.

Find a club that interests you! Check out these Kingston clubs: “Kingston Sport and Social Club” or the Seniors’ Association.

We’d love to hear from you! Send your wellness tips and pictures to info@KingstonGetsActive.ca or #KGAMonth on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, or Snapchat.