

Communications Office

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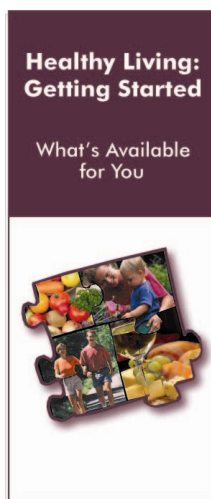


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Peterborough County-City Health Unit Launches New Guide to Help Residents Prevent Chronic Disease

Community Health Survey Shows High Risk Factors Still Prevalent for Many

Wednesday, September 9, 2009, Peterborough



In response to the prevalence of high risk factors for chronic disease in our community, the Peterborough County-City Health Unit (PCCHU) has developed a new resource entitled *Healthy Living: Getting Started* to help those who are ready to improve their lifestyles.

"Small lifestyle changes can make a big difference in preventing and managing chronic disease," said Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health of the PCCHU.

"This resource is designed for those thinking about taking steps to a healthier lifestyle and need to know where to start, whether it's building more activity into everyday life, eating a healthier diet, giving up smoking or reducing alcohol use."

Healthy Living: Getting Started is an easy-to-read, comprehensive listing of available local services and resources organized around the four key health behaviours that help prevent chronic diseases: eating a healthy diet, being active, limiting alcohol use and living smoke free. Even small changes in these four areas can help reduce the chances of developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and other conditions.

Dr. Pellizzari stressed how important it is for people to give their health care providers as much information as possible about what they eat, how active they are, and their tobacco and alcohol use. "Providing the whole picture will help you achieve your own goals for healthy living," she said.

Results of the 2007 Canadian Community Health Survey show residents of Peterborough County and City follow similar trends to the rest of Ontario and Canada for lifestyle risk factors, for example, 21% are current smokers, 24% are binge drinking (defined as five or more drinks on one occasion) at least once a month in the past year, 41% are not engaging in moderately active physical activities, 31% report being overweight, and 18% report being obese.

The 2003 Canadian Community Health Survey found that almost 80% of Ontarians over the age of 45 have a chronic condition, and of those, about 70% suffer from two or more chronic conditions.

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According to the World Health Organization, 90% of type 2 diabetes, 80% of coronary heart disease, and over one-third of cancers could be avoided by changing health behaviours.

Healthy Living: Getting Started will be shared with health care providers and distributed through local community agencies and organizations throughout September, and a free copy will be arriving in the mail to local residents this week. For a quick web link to this resource, visit <http://www.pcchu.ca/healthyliving>.

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