



Welcome to 2018 and happy New Year!

There are two types of people - those who make New Year's resolutions and those who do not. For those who make resolutions, the first page on a new calendar symbolizes a fresh change in their life. Those who do not make resolutions may see every day as the first day of the rest of their life and another opportunity to make a healthy change. Whichever you follow, making healthy lifestyle changes is always good.

One of the most common is to quit smoking. Reducing tobacco use is one of the best things you can do for you and your family, and our first story includes some helpful tips.

Have you set goals around improved fitness? Being active is a great way to stay healthy and improve your mood during the dark days of winter. We have information about how to include your little ones in the fun!

January is a common time to embark on diets, and we have some words of caution and advice for those considering weight loss as a goal.

And for those who are looking to eat better in 2018, we have information about good nutrition that will benefit the whole family.

## JANUARY 2018

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## BREAK FREE FROM SMOKING

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your children. Many parents who quit smoking during pregnancy are tempted to start smoking again once the baby is born. Sound familiar? They often feel that smoking is less harmful once the child is born but the truth is second-hand smoke can be very harmful to children. You and your children deserve the health and energy that comes along with a smoke-free life.



Here are some tips to help you avoid the temptation to smoke:

Find Support: Contact QuitNow services at 1-877-455-2233 or visit [www.quitnow.ca](http://www.quitnow.ca) or text QUITNOW to 654321 - It's that simple!

Talk to your health-care provider: If cravings are hard to handle talk to your doctor or pharmacist about medications that may help.

Be aware of your triggers and avoid them. Find other healthy ways to avoid stress; walk, spend time with non-smokers, get support. Remember to use the 4Ds:

- Delay
- Deep breathe
- Drink some water
- Do something else

Break free of electronic cigarettes too. There is no evidence that e-cigarettes are helpful in quitting smoking. Check out [Healthlinkbc](http://Healthlinkbc) for more information.

New dads who are interested in being smoke-free and healthy for their kids should check out the great new resources at [Dads In Gear](http://Dads In Gear).

For more information on the harmful effects of second-hand smoke visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca).

## WORKING OUT WITH BABY

Working out doesn't have to mean finding a gym with childcare or trying to squeeze it in at home while your baby naps. There are many ways you can get a good workout while also spending quality time with your child.

Let your baby watch you work out. Put your favourite exercise video on and keep baby nearby. Just make sure she's secure in a baby seat, high chair or playpen where there is no danger of tripping over her. Chances are she'll get a kick out of watching you bounce around!



Exercise with your baby. There are a number of ways you can use your baby's weight to enhance your workout. There are many DVDs and videos on the market that show you how to do this safely and effectively.

Join a class together. Check with your local fitness centres and community centres for baby and me fitness classes.

Bring baby along on a walk or jog. Once it warms up and the snow and ice are cleared from the sidewalks, try going out for a walk or jog with your baby in a front pack or jogging stroller.

If you recently gave birth and are wondering about when to resume being active, check out page 47 of [Baby's Best Chance](http://Baby's Best Chance) for some helpful tips.

For more information visit [www.babycenter.ca](http://www.babycenter.ca).

## YOUR BEST HEALTH - BEYOND THE SCALE

Weight loss is a common goal this time of year; however, losing weight doesn't always equal a happier, healthier life. In fact, fad diets and quick weight loss schemes can be unhealthy and result in preoccupation with weight and body image.

It's important to set goals with your best health in mind. Eating right and being more active can help you have more energy and lower your risk for disease regardless of body size.

Diets, which often promise fast and easy weight loss, do not work 95% of the time. Most diets restrict many foods and this makes it hard to stick to them - the dieter often ends up gaining back the weight within 2 years. And some diets limit foods that are very nutritious, which can mean you do not get all the nutrients your body needs in order to be healthy.

Regularly engaging in healthy eating and enjoyable physical activity are lifestyle habits that will help you feel great for the long term. Healthy eating not only includes choosing less processed food but also finding joy in eating, respecting your body's cues and flexibility.

Body diversity should be celebrated; people come in different shapes, sizes, ethnicities, and genders. There is no "one size fits all".

All children grow at different rates and, like adults, they come in all shapes and sizes. If you have questions about your child's weight, consult your health-care provider.



## HEALTHY EATING

If you are planning to eat healthier in 2018 here are a few tips to help you.

- Do a check-in: Ask yourself what factors are making it hard for you to choose healthy foods. Without identifying and addressing these, healthy changes can be challenging. For example, if you lack time to prepare healthy foods consider purchasing vegetables and fruit that are already chopped and ready to be prepared. Frozen fruits and vegetables are another healthy option that can save on time.
- Look for ways to include food you like with healthier options. If you like pizza, try one with whole grain crust, lots of extra vegetables, and chicken or shrimp rather than deli sausages. Try a smaller size pizza and add a ready-made green salad or a hearty vegetable soup to complement the meal.
- Set a S.M.A.R.T. goal. S.M.A.R.T. stands for specific, measureable, attainable, realistic and timely. Rephrase your goals from "lose weight" to "increase my vegetable and fruit intake to at least seven servings per day by the end of January." This S.M.A.R.T. goal is positive, measureable and focuses on what you can do.
- Check in with a professional. Call 8-1-1 to speak to a Registered Dietitian. Registered Dietitians are qualified specialists who can help ensure your meal plan is balanced and fits your lifestyle. Be cautious of meal plans that avoid food groups or are too low in calories. They are hard to stick to and can result in "yo-yo dieting" (taking off and regaining weight over and over again) which is detrimental to good health.
- Find a support person. Find someone who knows your goals and is willing to listen and encourage you with words and actions. A good support person can help you reach your goals.



Remember, our habits form over months, if not years, and expecting to overcome them quickly is not realistic. Change takes time. Making healthy lifestyle changes takes practice and trial and error but it can be done and you can do it!

## NEWS YOU CAN USE



### Did you know?

Flu season typically run from December through April. If you and your family have not received a flu shot, there is still time to benefit from being immunized. See your community pharmacist, physician or public health unit to inquire about receiving a flu shot. Visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca) for more information.

## Sources and where to get more info

[HealthLinkBC](#)  
[Dads In Gear](#)  
[Immunize BC](#)  
[Baby's Best Chance](#)  
[Baby Center](#)

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This e-newsletter is an Interior Health project to provide quick and easy health tips for new parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2 years. Your comments and topic suggestions are welcome! Simply email us at: [healthmatters@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:healthmatters@interiorhealth.ca).

For more info or to attend a free child health clinic, contact your local Public Health Centre. You can find contact info online at: [www.interiorhealth.ca](http://www.interiorhealth.ca) or look it up under Interior Health in the blue pages of your local phone book.

Sincerely,  
Interior Health Authority

