Healthy Living Challenge: Email Blurbs

**Week 1:**

Welcome to the first week of our Fall Healthy Living Challenge! To recap, the goal of this challenge is to accumulate as many exercise minutes as well as “bonus” minutes (ex. drinking 5 glasses of water, eating fruits and veggies, etc). **A daily exercise maximum of 60 minutes is also set**, to encourage participants of all athletic abilities. Refer back to the Instruction sheet for a detailed list of ways to get points.

To kick off the challenge, this week is about exercise. We have heard exercise is so great for you, but why?! Exercise helps control weight, reduces stress, relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety, increases energy, improves sleep, gives stronger muscles and bones, prevents diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis and cancer to name a few (Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, 2011)!

**Five ideas to get you moving this week!**

1. Add 10 minutes of movement into your morning routine. Wake up earlier and see how reenergized you will be to start your day off!
2. Park the car further or get off the bus earlier from where you’re going.
3. Dance to your favourite music for 10 minutes.
4. Go for a brisk walk with your spouse after dinner.
5. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

Source: <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/>

**Week 2:**

Excellent job on completing the first week! How did you do? Make sure you take the time to fill out the bottom of your scorecard on what you can improve on and make sure you actually do it this week!

This week is on the importance of drinking enough water. Here are some reasons you may not have known before on why you should drink water (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). Water is good for:

* Keeping your temperature normal
* Lubricating and cushioning joints
* Protecting your spinal cord and other sensitive tissues
* Ridding wastes through urination, perspiration, and bowel movements

Since your body is made up of 60% fluid, you need to make sure you are keeping this homeostasis for your body. If you find that you’re going to the bathroom more, that’s a good sign! Your urine should be a pale yellow colour.

**Tips for this week:** carry a water bottle with you at ALL times (purse, desk, car, bag), choose water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages (ex. pop, juice), choose water when eating out, add a lemon or lime wedge to spruce up your water.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov>

**Week 3:**

Half way to go! Keep it up and make sure you keep maintaining these activities day-by-day so it becomes habitual. See if you can increase your total points this week!

This week is on eating fruits and vegetables. Top vegetables (aka superfood) include broccoli, spinach, tomatoes, and garlic. Veggies have potassium which help maintain healthy blood pressure and fiber that help reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower risk of heart disease. It also contains folate which forms red blood cells, especially important for women.

Fruits are also an excellent source of vitamins and minerals, vitamin C and vitamin A. Aim for these fruits for added benefits: blueberries, citrus fruit, cranberries, strawberries (Dairy Council, 2014).

**DOUBLE WHAMMY:** Attached are a couple of recipes where you can get points for trying an EWSNetwork recipe AND eating 5-7 servings of fruits and vegetables!

Source: <http://www.healthyeating.org/>

**Week 4:**

Almost there folks – one more week to go! The final week is on a relatively new and hot topic in health research – the importance of sitting less.

Have you thought of how much you sit? Eating breakfast, driving to work, sitting at your desk at work, driving home, eating dinner, watching TV or using the computer in the evening...

Research has shown that adults who sit less have a lower risk of early death, especially from cardiovascular disease. The real kicker is what’s known as the “active couch potato.” Even if you meet the recommended 30 minutes of exercise per day and sit for the rest of the day, you are still at risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity and type II diabetes (National Heart Foundation of Australia, 2011).

**Take a workstation break!**

Get points by getting off your seat at work. Try doing the following:

* Set an alarm every hour and take a stretch and stand break away from your desk
* Stand to greet visitors when they come in
* Stand during phone calls
* Walk to your colleague’s desk rather than sending an email or calling
* Eat your lunch away from your desk
* Drink more water so that you have to get up and use the washroom!

Source: <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/>