



WALK FOR WELLNESS CHALLENGE

WORKPLACE PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S MANUAL

THE HOW-TO GUIDE FOR ORGANIZING
A WORKPLACE WALKING CHALLENGE FOR EMPLOYEES

SEPTEMBER 2011

Acknowledgements

The Physical Activity Advisors program encourages Niagara residents of all ages, abilities and incomes to make healthier lifestyle and active living choices by providing accurate and consistent education about physical activity and its benefits through the use of a trained and supported volunteer base.

Physical Activity Advisors provide accurate and consistent information about physical activities and its benefits to communities through presentations and displays in a variety of settings including workplaces, community centres and community organizations.

The Physical Activity Advisor program would like to provide a special thank you to Winnipeg *in motion* for the ability to reference these materials. For additional information on Winnipeg *in motion*, please visit www.winnipeginmotion.ca.

Manual Overview

We welcome suggestions on how to improve the challenge or its resources. Please send your comments and suggestions to nrphvolunteers@niagararegion.ca.

The Coordinator's Manual provides information and step-by-step instruction to help workplaces develop and implement a successful **Walk for Wellness Challenge**. The manual can be modified and adapted to best suit your workplace. The tools in this manual combined with the additional tools and resources found on the Niagara Region Workplace Health website and the Physical Activity Advisor presentations, will contribute to the success of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** within your workplace. The framework provided may also be used to help develop other workplace initiatives. For more information on the workplace health program at the Niagara Region Public Health, please visit www.niagararegion.ca search workplace health or call 905.688.8248 extension 7362.

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The Physical Activity Advisor Program is a Niagara-region wide program that supports volunteers to assist individuals across Niagara to be physically active for health benefits.

The vision for the Physical Activity Advisor program is to provide educational opportunities that encourage the residents of Niagara to be more informed on how they can include physical activity in their daily lives for health, well-being and enjoyment.

The Physical Activity Advisor program works to support the creation of healthy individuals in the workplace and community setting by identifying opportunities and barriers to being physically active. Through the use of supported and trained volunteers, physical activity promotion strategies around healthy living are offered within community groups and workplaces.

For additional information on the Physical Activity Advisor program, visit our website at www.niagararegion.ca search Physical Activity Advisor or call the Niagara Region Public Health at 905.688.3762.

Walk for Wellness Challenge

The **Walk for Wellness Challenge** is a fun and easy way to promote healthy living in your workplace. The challenge is a pedometer-based active living program and can be run for five to twelve weeks. The challenge incorporates two important facts:

1. Most adults spend over half of their waking hours at work, and
2. Walking is the number one activity among Canadians.

The challenge focuses on physical activity promotion and includes lots of great ways to incorporate physical activity into the employee's workday and leisure time. The challenge also includes a nutritional component where participants record the amount of fruit and vegetables eaten every day. The challenge is set up so ALL employees, regardless of previous fitness levels or abilities can participate and be successful!

This challenge is easy to coordinate. Once a start date and length of challenge has been selected, encourage employees to participate.

Simple steps to get the participation include:

- Encouraging employees to participate individually or as a team (up to 4 participants)
- Record how many steps are taken every day. Employees may choose to wear a pedometer or convert the amount of time spent being physically active into steps (sample chart can be found in the back of manual)
- Record the number of fruits and vegetable eaten every day
- Teams are awarded points for maintaining a base amount of physical activity and bonuses for making 10% increases every week
- A similar point system is set up for fruits and vegetables

Tools and resources such as posters, registration forms, templates, tips and ideas, tracking sheets have been created to minimize time commitment required to run the challenge and can be found in the Appendix section of the Challenge Coordinator Manual.

Coordinators Role

Thank you for your interest in coordinating the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** at your worksite.

This challenge has been designed to be easily implemented and should not take up a great amount of time. Many tools and resources have been developed to support the Walk for Wellness Challenge and can be adapted depending on the needs of your worksite. You are also encouraged to develop additional resources as needed.

The role as Challenge Coordinator is crucial for successful implementation of this challenge and without your support this workplace wellness initiative would not be possible.

The Workplace Health program encourages you to share your workplace Walk for Wellness Challenge success by emailing your story to workplace health@niagararegion.ca . Your workplace could be featured in one of the monthly workplace health e-newsletter which may motivate other worksites to establish workplace wellness physical activity and health eating initiatives.

If there are any questions, suggestions, or requests for additional information, please contact the Physical Activity Advisor Volunteer Program support at 905.688.8248 ext. 7344 or by emailing nrphvolunteers@niagararegion.ca .

Steps for Success

Following the **6 easy steps** outlined below will help you to implement the **Walk for Wellness Challenge**.

These steps will also be useful for planning other workplace wellness initiatives.

As the Challenge Coordinator you will need to:

1. Gain management support for the promotion of this challenge.
2. Gather your committee and make a plan - develop and coordinate the workplace wellness challenge.
3. Spread the news - communicate the plan and purpose of the challenge to your team, your staff and co-workers.
4. Adapt and develop the tools and resources to meet the needs of your workplace.
5. Have fun participating in the challenge! Motivate and support participants throughout the challenge.
6. Evaluate the success of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge**.

Following the **6 easy steps** will be useful for workplaces that are planning a workplace wellness initiative for the first time as well as workplaces that have an established workplace wellness program.

Step 1- Management Support and Buy In

Workplace wellness strategies require strong management and staff support to ensure that the initiative will be successful. The support and active participation of senior management will ensure that employees appreciate the importance of the initiative and the positive impact it can have on their health.

As the Challenge Coordinator, it is your role to acquire management support early in the program development. It is important to clearly outline the potential cost savings and benefits of a physical activity program to the organization and then tailor this message to meet the unique needs of your organization. It is important to highlight the benefit to employee health and morale, as well as benefits to the corporate image and community profile.

The Physical Activity Advisor program offers a presentation for workplaces on the benefits of physical activity within the workplace, has a separate section on the importance of physical activity for shift workers and a section on building a business case for active living at work. Additional resources can also be found at the back of this manual on how to develop a health promotion program for work or creating an active living strategy within the workplace.

There is additional information to assist in the development of a business case for management support and thus ensure the success of your **Walk for Wellness Challenge**.



What Key Players Should You Think About?

When you start thinking about who you need onboard in this early stage consider:

1. Who develops the budget?
2. Who approves the budget?
3. Who has the power to assign human resources to support the strategy?
4. Who has the power (formal or informal) to throw up road blocks?
5. Who will have to play a key role in the planning and/or implementation of the strategy?
6. Who will a healthy workplace committee have to work closely with to ensure success?
7. Who needs to apply a supportive, public face to this strategy in order for it to be successful?

In answering these questions, you should be able to generate a list of the key people or groups you need to approach. In general you should be thinking about:

- Senior management/owners
- Unions, employee associations
- Employees
- Other key stakeholders, such as occupational health, health and safety, human resources, benefits, training and development departments



Health Benefits for Active Employees

The health benefits associated with being physically active on a regular basis can be achieved by participating in a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous amounts of physical activity throughout the week. These minutes do not need to be done all at once, but rather accumulated in bouts of 10 minute sessions throughout the week.

While approximately 55% of the Niagara population is active, a substantial portion of adults aged 20 years and older are not physically active enough to experience health benefits. In fact, sedentary lifestyle is a serious problem confronting the health of many individuals across the province of Ontario today.

Physical activity plays an important role in the health, well-being and quality of life of Canadians. People who are physically active live longer, healthier lives. Active people are more productive, and more likely to avoid illness and injury.

Physical activity has been shown to reduce the risk of over 25 chronic conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, breast cancer, colon cancer, Type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis.

Regular physical activity and higher levels of fitness allow daily tasks to be accomplished with greater ease and comfort and with less fatigue. Research shows that as much as half the functional decline between the ages of 30 and 70 is due not to aging itself but to an inactive way of life.

Other benefits of physical activity participation include:

- Increased energy and decreased fatigue
- Weight management
- Improved health and fitness
- Improved sleep patterns
- Improved self-image
- Continued independent living
- Improved productivity and mood
- Reduced stress
- Reduced risk of back injuries
- Improved job satisfaction and team spirit (Singh, 2002; Shephard, 1999)

Benefits of an Active Living Strategy in the Workplace for Employers

Workplace health and physical activity promotion strategies are becoming more common as many organizations realize it as an investment in the organizational long-term success and sustainability.

The [Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute](#)'s most recent survey of over 1,700 Canadian businesses highlighted the following perceived **economic benefits** of implementing active living programs:

- Reduced absenteeism and increased productivity - approximately 75% of employers consider these to be key benefits in the implementation of a physical activity program
- Reduced health-care costs - 67%
- Reduced number of accidents - 46%
- Reduced workers' compensation claims - 45%
- Incentive to recruitment - 40%

Physical activity can contribute to the prevention and treatment of several chronic diseases with few negative outcomes. When an employer supports physical activity within the workplace, the positive spin off includes:

- Improved employee health and wellness - 86%
- Improved employee morale - 78%
- Better employer-employee relations - 71%
- Greater job satisfaction among employees - 62%
- Improved corporate culture - 55%

Therefore, not only is a Walk for Wellness activity good for employees, but it also makes good business sense.

Step 2- Gather Your Committee and Make a Plan

Once management support has been secured, the next step is to develop a plan of action. The **Walk for Wellness Challenge** provides Challenge Coordinators with many tips, tools, templates and resources to carry out a successful workplace challenge. The Challenge Coordinator can adapt the challenge and required resources to meet the specific needs unique to the worksite or organization. However, it is important to identify necessary resources and to develop an implementation plan and evaluation strategy in the early stages.

Objectives for Walk for Wellness Challenge

The objectives for any workplace wellness initiative usually include an increase in staff awareness and skill development, change workplace culture or a development of a workplace policy. When planning your initiative ensure your goals and objectives are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Action-oriented and are capable of producing the desired results
- Compatible with other workplace wellness goals and company policies.

Some sample objectives for the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** may include:

- Increased awareness on the importance of physical activity and healthy eating.
- Increased physical activity participation at the workplace.
- Motivated staff members developing and achieving measurable, realistic goals.
- Enhanced skills that motivate staff to become more active.
- Enhanced tools that assist staff in improving their health.
- Improved workplace morale and environment conducive to good health.

Challenge Committee

Depending on the size of your workplace you may wish to establish a Challenge Committee to assist in the planning and implementation of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge**. The Challenge Committee will often ensure the success of your initiative by fostering support and feelings of ownership by all those involved in the planning and implementation of your initiative.

Include staff from all levels of your organization, multiple departments, and various sites if you have employees at more than one location. Recruit volunteers who are enthusiastic and supportive of a workplace wellness initiative. Provide volunteers with a clear description of their expected roles and responsibilities including objectives, time requirements and challenge duration to ensure effective and whole-hearted participation.

Step 3- Spread the News and Communicate

The success of the Walk for Wellness Challenge is dependent on communication to the management team, Coordinating Committee and workplace staff being invited to participate. While modifying the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** to meet the needs of your workplace, also consider how to effectively communicate and promote the initiative.

Consider the following when outlining your communications plan:

- Audience
- Available resources, tools & promotional materials
- Timelines

Audience

Workplaces and organizations are comprised of a diverse group of individuals. Cultural background, age, gender, language(s) and education levels can greatly affect how a message is received. Individual staff needs, staff readiness and motivation to change behaviours may also impact how the message is received. When developing communication tools and implementation resources, use positive terms and phrases easily understood by all. Avoid slang, highly academic terms and negative messages to ensure that all participants understand and feel included in your messaging.

Available Resources, Tools & Promotional Materials

Assess the tools, skills, resources and promotional materials already available in this Challenge Coordinator manual. It may be important to adapt the method of communicating and promoting the Walk for Wellness Challenge based on organizational needs of the workplace (i.e., posters versus email or intranet, etc.).

Timelines

Before implementing the Walk for Wellness Challenge, set realistic timelines for the coordination, development and implementation of the challenge. Outline the roles and responsibilities of each individual involved. Identify the required resources that need to be developed and implemented. A sample timeline for the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** Coordinator is found on the following page.

Challenge Coordinator Timeline and Task List

	DATES	TASKS
Pre-Event	7-8 Weeks prior to event launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain management support and approval
	6 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble your committee Register with Winnipeg <i>in motion</i>
	5 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Pedometer purchasing plan (if necessary)</u> Update/Adapt Champion, Team Captain and Participant Manuals
	4 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt/Develop Email communications/Promotional Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of physical activity/Risks of Inactivity Information on <i>Step by Step: Walk for Wellness</i> initiative
	3 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intranet "<i>Step by Step: Walk for Wellness</i>" page development (if applicable) If using champions from multiple sites – host an information meeting. Distribute Champion manuals Begin to recruit teams/participants
	2 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute Participant manuals
	1 Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletter/Email reminder about the initiative Distribution of Pedometers (if ordered) Distribute participation materials to senior management
	Event Launch/Baseline Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Step by Step: Walk for Wellness</i> launch Baseline team data collection
Event	Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email communications: Tips for being active, Removal of barriers
	Weeks 3 - 9	Each Week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly email, intranet leader update Weekly email, intranet profile update Weekly email, intranet physical activity suggestion/motivation Potential email – testimonial or staff suggestion for workplace "fun" activity
Post - Event	Week 1 Post Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final email Communication, Collect evaluations
	Week 2 Post Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of certificates/prizes to winning teams and the most active worksite
	Week 3 Post challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletter/Intranet Update – Top 3 teams Send in your "Ran the Challenge Form" to Winnipeg <i>in motion</i>

Step 4- Adapt and Develop Tools and Resources

Promotional Tools

It is important to note that many variables can influence behaviour. Current activity levels, abilities and personal goals will impact how “ready” an individual is to participate in a workplace wellness initiative. To successfully market the Walk for Wellness Challenge it is important to effectively communicate the following:

- Walk for Wellness Challenge goals & objectives
- Benefits of physical activity to employees
- Challenge duration and time requirements
- Management support for the Challenge
- Challenge updates

Keep promotion of the Walk for Wellness Challenge and updates short, inclusive, action oriented, and fun! Several sample promotional tools have been provided in this manual including sample posters, form and electronic email updates.

Motivational Tools

Motivational tools are necessary as they may help reduce or eliminate many of the common barriers associated with physical activity participation. Understanding the Stages of Change model and building on the importance of increasing self-efficacy (building a person's own belief that they have the skills to make positive changes to their habits) may assist in the development of a successful strategy to increase physical activity participation amongst all employees.

Stages of Change Model

Prochaska and Diclemente developed a theoretical model to help explain how as a person's motivational readiness to change increases, that person may move between the stages of change (1989).

The five stages of the model are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Pre-contemplation | Person is not considering change |
| 2. Contemplation | Person is considering change |
| 3. Preparation | Person is planning to act |
| 4. Action | Person is practicing the new behaviour |
| 5. Maintenance | Person is sustaining the new behaviour |

The Challenge Coordinator does not have to motivate every participant to change physical activity behaviours but rather provides tools and resources to help create a supportive environment. Healthy examples for physical activity may assist staff members to favourably alter behaviour. Building awareness is often enough to move participants through the first two stages.

The Physical Activity Advisor Program offers presentations that can be offered in a lunch and learn format that provides education around the benefits of living a healthy, active lifestyle. While educational and awareness opportunities work for some individuals, others may need stronger motivational tools to assist in the adoption of a more active lifestyle and healthy eating.

Some participants in the Walk for Wellness Challenge may believe that there is the ability to implement small changes into current routine and habits. Focus your messages to include simple tasks and routine changes that can be made to add healthy lifestyle behaviours and reduce negative behaviours.

For example:

Less Effective: People **must** get 150 minutes of activity weekly and turn off the television.

More Effective: Strive to get 150 minutes of physical activity every week by adding 10 minute bouts of physical activity to your routine, and by watching a little less TV each day.

Less Effective: People **must** follow Canada's New Food Guide.

More Effective: Try to get the recommended number of servings of vegetables and fruit each day. Start by grabbing a piece of fruit for a mid afternoon snack.

Step 5- Have Fun and Motivate

Once the challenge has begun, the focus should be on having fun, participating and keeping employees motivated by maintaining enthusiasm and interest. For most people, physical activity and healthy eating are a priority in their lives, but unfortunately time sensitive tasks and hectic schedules can force many to put off active living to another time.

Create a positive environment and lead by example

The Challenge Coordinator can lead by example and keep positive, enthusiastic, inspiring and actively involved in the challenge. Work to create a workplace environment that is supportive of healthy living and encourages staff to participate in physical activity breaks. Participation by senior staff usually improves the social environment and adds credibility to the Challenge.

Be creative and make the programming fun

Encourage teams to challenge each other, find new activities that can be done together and to share motivational stories. If possible, coordinate social opportunities for your teams to meet and discuss progress or goals.

Monitor progress

Assist employees to keep track of participation by encouraging weekly log updates. Identify how close a member or team is to their goal and this may help to maintain drive and focus. By monitoring progress, it is possible to modify the initiative to better meet the needs of the workplace, if necessary.

Offer ongoing education opportunities

Email, newsletters, workshops, group walks and Lunch & Learns sessions with Physical Activity Advisors are great ways to motivate the workplace to adopt healthy behaviours permanently. Physical activity and healthy eating educational opportunities should not stop when the challenge is over. Physical Activity Advisors and Community Food Advisors have many topics that may motivate staff including Physical Activity and Women, Physical Activity for the Older Adult, Safe Food Handling, How to Eat Healthy on a Budget and more. If your workplace is interested in booking a presentation, please email nrphvolunteers@niagararegion.ca.

Recognize personal and team achievements in communications to continue to motivate team members. Some participants may find a marathon a challenge while others may equate going for a 10-minute walk a challenge, so it is important to recognize all levels of achievements with small incentives, emails or certificates. Even a small bit of recognition can help individuals stay motivated.

Step 6- Evaluate

It is important to evaluate the Walk for Wellness Challenge to provide feedback on the outcomes of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge**. An evaluation can also provide valuable information about employee physical activity and healthy eating awareness, needs and can assist in determining whether participating employees feel the challenge has had a positive impact on their health.

Prior to the start of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** it is important to establish an initial (pre-challenge) level of your workplace's current situation. At the completion of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** a post-challenge level is assessed to compare with pre-challenge levels and determine any behaviour change.

Sample Pre & Post Challenge surveys are available for adaptation in the Walk for Wellness Challenge Evaluation Tools Manual.

It is beneficial to consider the following when implementing a staff survey:

- **Confidentiality** is meant to ensure that the survey information is anonymous and does not violate any laws.
- **Incentives** will often increase the percentage of staff that will complete and return the survey.
- **Results** of the survey must be shared with the staff. Outline communication strategies that will disseminate results with senior management and all participating staff members.
- **Distribution** of the survey must be considered and how the results will be tallied. In a large workplace there may need to be different methods for securing the input from staff. Electronic forms, online submissions, paper surveys or phone surveys are all effective methods for gathering data from staff members.

Modifying the Challenge

The **Walk for Wellness Challenge** has been designed to be easily modified based on the needs and structure of your workplace. Both large and small workplaces can adopt the concept to implement the challenge.

Options for **larger workplaces** may include:

- An extra level of support or the use of workplace “Champion” at each site or within each department.
- Champions can act as a local point of contact to answer questions, disseminate information and provide motivation to on-site staff.

Options for smaller workplaces may include:

- Modification to the size of the teams with a maximum of up to four participants.
- Challenge to surrounding businesses or offices in the neighbourhood to provide additional excitement.
- Consider offering prizes for the winning office such as a healthy pot luck lunch or an activity day.

Shorter or Longer Timelines:

The challenge is set up to run for five to twelve weeks:

- One week to collect participants’ baseline data
- Followed by four to eleven additional weeks
- As Challenge Coordinator you will want to consider a few extra weeks of lead up and wrap up time.

Determine the best length of the challenge remembering that for a change of behaviour to occur, it can take weeks or even months to establish a new pattern for the behaviour.

Shorter Challenge:

If choosing a shorter challenge be sure to avoid holidays that may interfere with participants’ commitment. Try to avoid running December holidays, spring break and the summer months.

Longer Challenge:

The longer challenge should be considered if you are familiar with employee’s interest in participating in workplace health initiatives. Have an understanding of employee interest prior to determining the length of the challenge as a longer challenge could be seen as a barrier for participation by some staff.

Bonus Challenge:

Once the initial challenge has been completed, consider offering a bonus challenge for interested individuals by rearranging teams to include those who want to participate in a longer challenge. If the budget allows, extended participation may be rewarded with bonus prizes or incentives. This will help to encourage ongoing participation in a longer challenge.

Participants of all abilities:

The challenge has been designed to ensure all participants, regardless of fitness level, ability or experience, can succeed.

Pedometers:

The best method to count steps for this challenge is by using a pedometer. A conversion tool should be available to all participants to assist in tracking other activities or interests, such as swimming, that cannot be measured with a pedometer.

Odometers:

This challenge is meant to be inclusive and those individuals that use a wheelchair can participate by using an odometer rather than a pedometer. Odometers can be purchased at local bicycle shops and installed on a wheelchair to measure the distance traveled throughout the day. The distance can then be converted into steps and points awarded accordingly.

Challenge Points System Overview

The **Walk for Wellness Challenge** is designed to include people of all fitness and activity levels, whether they are already active or not. Participation is meant to be fun, encourages learning new things and having people adopt a healthier lifestyle after the challenge is complete!

The **Walk for Wellness Challenge** involves teams of one to four participants (one team captain and up to three participants). **Daily** for the duration of the challenge, participants track their physical activity using a pedometer/odometer, minutes of activity or the conversion chart provided for non-step activities. In addition to logging physical activity, participants will log the number of servings of vegetables and fruit consumed each day. The steps and servings can be logged on the Personal Activity/Nutrition Tracking Sheet provided.

There are two phases for the participants in this challenge:

Baseline – Week One

The purpose of the week one is for participants to track fruit and vegetable servings, along with their physical activity daily.

Physical activity can be tracked using the conversion tool for non-step activities (appendix), pedometer, odometer or minutes of activity to log their steps.

Fruits and Vegetables can be tracked using the Nutrition Tracking Sheet (Appendix C).

These values will determine the baseline for physical activity and healthy eating and no points will be awarded for the first week.

Participants will begin to accumulate points at the beginning of the second week.

Challenge – Four to Eleven weeks

During the Challenge, participants will continue to track their daily activity and number of servings of vegetables and fruit using the Personal Activity/Nutrition Tracking Sheet provided. At the end of each week, participants will forward their weekly totals to their Team Captain.

Captains will forward their teammates' **average weekly** activity totals to the Challenge Coordinator. Team point totals will be tallied based on the sum of the contributions of each team member.

The point system has been developed to reward gradual and continual progress, as well as the successful maintenance of a 10,000 + step per day average throughout the challenge.

The nutrition portion has been set up to reward healthy eating behaviour based on the 2007 edition of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*.

How to Track Points

Initially, the point system may seem a bit difficult at first, however it is necessary to “level the playing field” for participants of all fitness levels.

The point system rewards participants for making consistent improvements by 10% or better in their physical activity level or for already being active and remaining above 10,000 steps for the duration of the challenge.

The point system is designed to equally reward participants that are less active and those that are more active at the start of the challenge.

“Step Points” - Physical Activity Points

Basic Step Points:

1 point for each **1000** steps per teammate for their weekly average of steps up to a **max of 10 points** (10,000 steps).

Weekly Bonus Step Points:

Less Active Participants

For less active participants who have an average **below** the benchmark of 10,000 steps per day:

- **5 points** for an improvement of 10% or more up to the weekly equivalent of 10,000 steps per day.
- **Example:** Participant “Jane” averages 5,000 steps during the baseline week. During week two, “Jane” averages 8,000 steps. “Jane” would then receive 8 step points and 5 bonus step points for 13 combined points.

Active Participants

For active participants who have an average **above** the benchmark of 10,000 steps per day:

- **3 points** for an improvement of 10% or more beyond the weekly equivalent of 10,000 steps per day.
- **Example:** Participant “Jack” achieves an average of 11,000 steps during the third week of the challenge. Then during the fourth week, then “Jack” increases his average step total to 12,100 steps. “Jack” would then receive 10 basic step points for staying above 10,000 steps and would also receive 3 bonus step points for increasing his step total by 10%.

End of Challenge Step Bonuses:

- Bonus points are tallied at the end of the challenge and awards become greater as the length of the challenge increases.

Challenge Length	5-7 weeks	8-10 weeks	11-12 weeks
Average Step increase each week by at least 10% for duration of challenge	10 Bonus Points	20 Bonus Points	30 Bonus Points
Average Step totals > 10,000 steps for duration of challenge	10 Bonus Points	20 Bonus Points	30 Bonus Points

“Healthy Eating Points”

Basic Healthy Eating Points

- 5 points will be awarded to each participant who achieves a weekly average of at least 7 fruits and vegetables per day.

End of Challenge Healthy Eating Bonuses:

- Bonus points tallied at end of challenge and awards are greater as the length of challenge increases.

Challenge Length	5-7 weeks	8-10 weeks	11-12 weeks
Maintaining an average of at least 7 fruit and vegetable servings for the duration of the challenge	10 Bonus Points	20 Bonus Points	30 Bonus Points

Pedometer Considerations for the Workplace

The **Walk for Wellness Challenge** is based on the use of a pedometer. A pedometer is a simple device that is about the size of a pager and is generally worn on the waistband of your clothing or belt. Pedometers work on a pendulum motion and count the number of steps taken while being worn.

Prior to running the challenge, a workplace must decide which of the four options they would like to use for their employees to access pedometers:

1. Company purchases the pedometers for participants:
 - Through a local vendor/sporting goods store
 - Through a promotional materials supplier (having the company's logo added to each pedometer).

This option is the most expensive for the employer but potentially eliminates several barriers to participation by reducing the cost associated with buying the pedometer and the motivation to go and purchase one.

2. Company acts as a vendor for purchasing pedometers by ordering the pedometers and then selling pedometers at a subsidized or reduced cost for the employee or selling to the employee participants at the actual cost.

This option may potentially eliminate barriers to participation as the pedometers are generally low cost and available for pick up on site. The disadvantage to this option is that it puts additional responsibilities on the Challenge Coordinator or Challenge Committee to order, distribute and manage funds for the pedometers.

3. Individual participants purchase their own at a local sporting goods store.

This option is the simplest to promote and manage, however, participants must be motivated enough to go and purchase their own pedometer.

4. Individual borrows a pedometer for use during the challenge from local library.

This option does create some barriers as most library lending periods only offer a loan period of three weeks and may not have large quantities to accommodate a larger workplace.

What to Look for in a Pedometer

Pedometers are not created equally and generally speaking you get what you pay for. Pedometers range from free promotional giveaways to over \$100. The basic pedometer, which simply measures the number of steps taken, is all that is required for this challenge. More advanced pedometers can also measure distance traveled, calories burned, and duration walked. The more features your pedometer has, the more it will likely cost.

Here are a few key things to consider when purchasing a pedometer:

What features are you looking for in a pedometer?

- Basic step counting (all that is required for this challenge)
- Distance travelled in miles/kilometres
- Time of walk/run
- Steps per minute
- Speed

Is the design of the pedometer functional?

- Are the buttons easy to use?
- Is the display panel easy to read?

It is recommended that you buy a model where the buttons are located inside a flip-down case. This feature protects the buttons and should eliminate your pedometer from resetting itself unintentionally.

Does the pedometer have a secure clip?

- Pedometers are only effective if they are held firmly in place.
- Some pedometers come with an extra security clip that can be clipped on to prevent a pedometer from falling off your waistband.
- If your pedometer doesn't have this extra feature you may wish to add a string and a safety pin to prevent your pedometer from falling to the ground or going for a swim when using the washroom.

APPENDIX A - Sample memos, emails & updates

Sample Email/Memo #1:

Introducing the Challenge – *best sent from Senior Management (if possible)*

Hello to all. I am very pleased to announce that we're launching a new healthy living initiative called the *Walk for Wellness Challenge*. This challenge is designed to motivate our staff to be more physically active and eat increased fruits and vegetables, so that we can enjoy better health.

The challenge will start on (insert start date) and run for XX weeks. It has two major components:

- Wearing a pedometer to track daily physical activity, and
- Tracking the number of fruits and vegetables consumed daily.

I believe this challenge will help us all to be healthier, and it will also help to create a healthier and happier work environment.

Over the next few days, you'll be receiving more information from (insert name of coordinator), who will be acting as Coordinator of the Challenge. If you have any questions, please contact (insert first name of Coordinator) at (insert phone number and/or email address).

I'm looking forward to participating in this challenge and I hope you'll join in the challenge too. Let's get healthier together!

Enjoy the Challenge,
(insert name and title)

Sample Email/Memo #2:

An Invitation to Participate in the Challenge – sent from Challenge Coordinator

Hi everyone. I'm the Coordinator of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge**, and it's my pleasure to invite each of you to participate in this exciting, healthy living event.

As (insert name of person who signed the previous email/memo) mentioned in an earlier email (or memo), this is a XX (5 to 12) week, pedometer-based walking challenge open to all employees. It's great fun, and it's easy to participate:

- Form a team of XX (2, 3 or 4) employees
- Pick a captain
- Record the number of steps taken daily, the amount of other activity, and the number of fruits and vegetables you eat
- Submit weekly totals to your team captain, who will submit them to the Challenge Coordinator

This **Walk for Wellness Challenge** is being held because our employer knows that regular physical activity and eating healthy are crucial for good health. Recent studies show that nearly 2/3 of Canadians are not physically active enough for health benefits, and our inactivity leaves us at increased risk of premature death, chronic disease and disability.

As a workplace, the overall goal is to assist our valued staff members to improve overall health by promoting active living at work. By adding regular physical activity and a diet with additional fruits and vegetables into our day, we can all make significant improvements to our health.

Each of us will benefit, and the workplace will benefit too.

An overview is attached, which provides the information you need to participate in the challenge. If you would like more information on the Challenge, please contact me at (add phone number and/or email address).

Don't forget – the Challenge starts on (insert date), so get your team together today. Make sure that you're a part of the **Walk for Wellness Challenge**.

Sincerely,
(insert name)
Challenge Coordinator

Sample Email/Memo #3:

Pre-Challenge Email – sent from Challenge Coordinator

Is your team ready for the Walk for Wellness Challenge? The Challenge begins on (add in the start date), but first, it is important to find your “baseline” activity level.

This is easy to do!

Starting Monday, wear your pedometer and go about your normal activities. At the end of the day, record your step total on the *Personal Activity/Nutrition Tracking Sheet* that has been provided to you, or can be found in the Participant's Manual.

Do this each day for seven days. Your goal is to establish how many steps you normally take in a typical day over a one-week period. This will become your activity baseline.

Do the same with healthy eating by tracking the number of fruits and vegetables that are eaten during the baseline week. There's a place to record your fruits and vegetables on your *Personal Activity/Nutrition Tracking Sheet*.

It's very important that you stick to your regular physical activity routine during baseline week. This will help you to establish realistic daily and weekly step goals when the Challenge begins. After you set your baseline, we'll look at easy ways to add steps to your day and set activity goals that will work for you.

Pedometer Tips

At the end of each day, after you record your daily steps, be sure to reset your pedometer to zero. Keep your pedometer by your bed each night and don't forget to attach it to your belt when you get out of bed. Every step counts!

If you're not sure how your pedometer works, check the *Pedometer Fact Sheet* for instructions on wear and care in the Participant's Manual. If you forget to wear your pedometer, use the *Non-Step Activity Conversion Tool* to keep track of the time spent being active. Both tools can be found in your Participant's Manual.

Remember – every step you take is a step towards better health. Good luck and have FUN!

Sample Email/Memo: #4 Pre-Challenge Email

Email Sent to Workplace from Challenge Coordinator

Okay Teams:

Dust off your comfortable walking shoes, baseline week for the **Walk for Wellness Challenge** is about to begin.

Starting on Monday, you will begin to use your pedometer to log steps each week. It is important in this first week to just wear the pedometer and go about your regular activity patterns. This will reflect your average step total and physical activity pattern. Next week, you will want to look for ways to increase this number of steps.

The Walk for Wellness Challenge name reflects an important message~ every step you take is a step taken towards better health. Keep your pedometer by your bed each night and don't forget to attach it to your belt when you get out of bed. Every step counts!

See the pedometer fact sheet for instructions on how to wear and care for your pedometer. If you forget to wear your pedometer, you can still keep track of your activity levels by keeping track of your time spent being active by using the Non-step Activity Conversion tool found in the participant manual.

In addition, be sure to keep track of the number of servings of vegetables and fruits eaten daily and add to the tracking sheet.

Baseline week is important because it gives you an opportunity to assess your current activity level and to set realistic, achievable goals for yourself.

Good luck and have FUN!

Remember there are 1440 minutes in every day.
Attempt to make at least 30 of them active!

Sample Email/Memo: #4 Start of Challenge

Are you wearing your pedometer today?

The **Walk for Wellness Challenge** begins TODAY!

If you forgot to put your pedometer on this morning, don't worry. Keep track of the time you spend being active and then estimate your steps using the Non-step Activity Conversion Tool found in the Participant's Manual.

Remember to record your steps each night before you go to bed on your Personal Activity Tracking Tool found in the Participant's Manual.

Don't forget your vegetables and fruits. Be sure to mark down how many servings you ate!

Every step taken is a step towards better health.

Sample Email/Memo: #5 Motivational – Week 2

Can you hear them? Do you see them?

That's right! Our staff members are eating healthier and moving more!

Hopefully you have all made an effort to become a little more active this week. Adding a little activity to your day can help put more bounce in your step and a smile on your face!

The goal throughout this challenge is to increase activity levels from the previous week by at least 10% or to stay active if you are already very active. Remember, step by step, gradually improve your step count and be sure to listen to your body.

Canada's Food Guide has recommendations for vegetables and fruits – be sure to check out the new guide in your Participant's Manual. The goal for this challenge is to include at least 7 servings a day. Try packing a piece of fruit or a small bag of cut up vegetables for a mid-afternoon snack. It will give you energy in the afternoon and help you avoid the temptation of heading to a nearby vending machine.

Keep it light, keep it lively, and keep on stepping!

Sample Email/Memo: #6 Tips on Pedometer Care

You may wish to include this in an early email or when you are distributing pedometers to staff.

How to Keep your Pedometer Happy!

Did You Know...

- Pedometers can be worn daily, just like underwear and deodorant!
- Pedometers only like to walk and run. Take off pedometer when participating in other activities such as cycling or skating and use the non-step conversion tool for these activities.
- Pedometers don't like to be shaken. They can get dizzy and confused and as a result will overestimate your step count.
- Pedometers don't like to be kept hidden in your pocket. They cannot see where you are taking them and they can't stay vertical. As stubborn as they are... they won't count your steps accurately.
- Pedometers don't like to be wet or dropped. Pedometers feel safer with a lifeline or a string attached to their clip and pinned to clothing. That way they know they will be around for much longer and won't be flushed down the toilet, left behind, dropped, crushed or eaten by the dog.

APPENDIX B - Personal activity/nutrition tracking sheet

Remember to reset your pedometer each day. Be sure to put it on as soon as possible each morning. Every step counts... for your health and for the challenge. Use the Non-Step Conversion Tool for non-step activities and/or for when you are not wearing a pedometer.

- Refer to your manual for information on serving sizes of vegetables and fruits.
- Each week, forward your weekly totals to your Team Captain. Be sure to try and increase your total steps and fruit and vegetables by 10% each week.

Week		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Weekly Total	Weekly Average
Week 1 Baseline	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 2	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 3	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 4	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 5	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 6	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									

Week		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Weekly Total	Weekly Average
Week 7	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 8	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 9	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 10	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 11	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 12	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									
Week 13	Pedometer Reading									
	Step Equivalents									
	Servings of Fruits & Veg									

APPENDIX C - Non-Step Conversion Tool

The pedometer is a great motivational tool for tracking activities that involve stepping (e.g. walking, stair-climbing, jogging, etc.) or all the extra steps you take throughout the day. There may be times that a pedometer cannot measure the activity accurately (e.g. rowing, yoga, stretching, etc.).

In these situations, keep track of the duration (in minutes) of the activity. Using the chart below for your activity (or one similar to it), multiply the number of minutes of activity by the number of steps per minute (e.g., 30 minutes of ping pong equals 3,480 steps).

Steps	Activity	Steps	Activity
145	Aerobics (low impact)	101	Pilates
246	Aerobics (step)	116	Ping pong
131	Badminton	203	Racquet Sports
174	Basketball	125	Raking leaves
116	Bicycling, leisurely	203	Rollerblading
203	Bicycling, moderate	101	Rowing, light
87	Bowling	203	Rowing, moderate
87	Canoeing, light	463	Running, 10 mph (6 min/mile)
232	Circuit Training	391	Running, 8 mph (7.5 min mile)
232	Cross-country skiing	290	Running, 6 mph (10 min mile)
125	Curling (sweeping)	232	Running, 5 mph (12 min/mile)
131	Dancing	203	Scuba diving
174	Downhill skiing	174	Snow shovelling
203	Elliptical trainer	182	Snowboarding
145	Firewood, carrying/stacking	203	Soccer
260	Football	145	Softball
116	Gardening (light)	348	Squash
174	Gardening (heavy)	180	Stair climbing (light)
131	Golfing, without a cart	260	Stair climbing (moderate)
101	Golfing, with a cart	72	Stretching
67	Grocery Shopping	203	Swimming
348	Handball	116	Tai Chi
172	Hiking, general	232	Tennis
116	Horseback riding	101	Trampoline
260	Hockey	87	Volleyball
101	Housework, general	87	Wash the car
203	Ice skating	116	Water aerobics
290	Jumping rope	174	Water skiing
290	Martial Arts	87	Weight lifting, moderate
160	Mowing the lawn	174	Weight lifting, vigorous
260	Orienteering	145	Yard Work
131	Painting walls	72	Yoga

APPENDIX D - Converting wheelchair odometer distance to steps

Use the following chart to convert your wheelchair odometer reading into steps. The chart is based on the premise that the average distance covered by walking 10,000 steps with an average stride length of .8 meters is 8 kilometres (5 miles).

Distance (reported in meters)	Equivalent # of Steps
100 m	125
200 m	250
300 m	375
400 m	500
500 m	625
600 m	750
700 m	875
800 m	1000
900 m	1125
1000 metres (1 kilometre)	1250
1100 m	1375
1200 m	1500
1300 m	1625
1400 m	1750
1500 m	1875
1600 m	2000
1700 m	2125
1800 m	2250
1900 m	2375
2000 m (2 kilometres)	2500
2100 m	2625
2200 m	2750
2300 m	2875
2400 m	3000
2500 m	3125
2600 m	3250
2700 m	3375
2800 m	3500
2900 m	3625
3000 m (3 kilometres)	3750
4000 m (4 kilometres)	5000
5000 m (5 kilometres)	6250

APPENDIX E - Ideas That Motivate (walking road trip)

Updates - Updating participants throughout the challenge with general information, tips and ideas for increasing the number of steps, etc., will help challenge and motivate employees to increase their steps.

Distance Travelled - Convert the number of steps taken into kilometres and match the distance to a location of choice. The distance traveled will vary dramatically depending on the number of participants in your challenge.

Walking Road Trip- Based on the average stride length being .8 metres - 10,000 steps will equal 8 kilometres (5 miles). One kilometre equals 1250 steps. Using this formula, you can determine where your participants have traveled.

From St. Catharines to the following town or destination...

Town or destination	Distance in Kilometres	Equivalent # in steps
Calgary, AB	2,754	3,442,500
Ottawa, ON	377	471,250
Vancouver, BC	3,401	4,251,250
Toronto, ON	56	70,000
New York, NY	518	647,500
New Brunswick, Saint John	1,079	1,348,750
Nova Scotia, Halifax	1,267	1,583,750
Mexico City	3,221	4,026,250
Nassau, Bahamas	2,017	2,521,250
Honolulu, Hawaii	7,514	9,392,500
London, England	5,755	7,193,750
Melbourne, Australia	16,271	20,338,750
China, Beijing	10,670	13,337,500
France, Paris	6,040	7,550,000
Haiti, Port-au-Prince	2,808	3,600,000
Florida, Miami	1,930	2,412,500
California, Los Angeles	3,517	4,396,250
Philippines, Manila	13,283	16,603,750
Brazil, Rio de Janeiro	8,192	10,240,000
Iraq, Baghdad	9,793	12,241,250

Plan a celebration after achieving a certain distance or location – you may select a tropical destination in the winter and have a tropical themed celebration. (i.e., Hawaiian luau when you reach Hawaii).

For estimating distances to various destinations by air, visit:

www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/distance.html

APPENDIX F - Ideas that Motivate (Physical Activity Tips)

It is easy to assist participants in reaching success of adding activity to their day when they receive practical suggestions that can easily be incorporated.

These practical suggestions can be done at home or at the office to assist participants in adding steps to their day. Consider including these suggestions in whole or in part in weekly emails, memos and other updates to challenge participants.

Tips for increasing your daily steps!

- While talking on the phone at the office or in the home, consider standing up. Cordless phones and headsets offer the ability to move freely about the house, yard or office. Steps taken while pacing back and forth during an important phone call will contribute to your daily total. This is a simple way to get some movement in those muscles.
- Recruit a phone buddy as motivation to be active on those days you can't get together to go for a walk or jog.
- Take the stairs whenever possible.
- Park the furthest from an entrance and walk.
- If taking the bus, get off a stop or more before required.
- Whenever possible use an active method of transportation to your required destination.
- Send print jobs to a printer furthest away from your desk.
- Get up and talk to people within the department rather than call or email.
- Take active coffee breaks or lunch hours.
- Organize a walking club. The Physical Activity Advisor Program offers a Walking Club for Leaders manual.

Seasonal Ideas for the Walk for Wellness Challenge

Autumn Ideas:

Fall brings many unique opportunities to be active. The beauty of the changing leaves and lingering sunshine of still-long days set the stage for afternoon hikes and evening walks.

Comfortable temperatures tempt us to head outside and enjoy fall festivals and an array of fundraising walks and runs. Encourage participants to focus on the many social benefits of physical activity by encouraging fall events and spending time with family and friends outdoors.

- Take in the fall festivals, craft shows and themed events that many communities offer.
- Support a worthwhile cause; participate in an active fundraising event for charity while improving health.
- Enjoy a scenic bike ride, walk or hike in or around your community or along the Niagara River Parkway.
- Visit a pick-your-own farm for apples and seasonal vegetables.
- Visit local farms to pick your own pumpkins, tackle a corn maze or build a scarecrow.
- Rake the leaves instead of using a lawnmower or leaf blower.

Winter Ideas:

Winter provides a wonderful opportunity to get active and discover the great outdoors...or the great indoors if the cold isn't your cup of hot apple cider!

What really helps people become and stay physically active all winter long is the pure enjoyment of it. Review these tips and pick one or two to highlight to participants during the weekly updates throughout the Challenge.

Taking it Outside

Say hello to snow!

- Create a 3-D portrait. Build a snowperson look-alike for each participant or get family members involved. Make a family of snow angels.
- Build snow castles, mazes, or snow sculptures.
- Consider shoveling instead of using the snow blower
- Go tobogganing. Remember the helmets!
- Plan a team game of snow pitch (slow pitch in the snow) or neighbourhood game of Capture the Snowball.
- Use food colouring in a spray bottle to create a hopscotch game on the snow.
- Enjoy the winter wonderland along the Niagara River Parkway or one of the many trails that Niagara has to offer.
- Try skating on an outdoor rink.

Indoor fun

Winters may be short on snow, but tall on cold temperatures! On those days, participants may be tempted to forgo physical activity altogether, instead offer these practical suggestions:

- Organize a workplace fitness circuit session that includes jumping jacks in the outside of the lunch room, wall push-ups in or other stations based on the suggestions of the participants.
- Help with housework and tidy up or vacuum with vigor.
- Play active games during break with a quick game of Twister or Simon Says.
- Try a new activity or an older favourite! Try indoor skating, bowling or an indoor playground.
- Take in a museum or walk through the mall or an indoor attraction.

Jumping Into Spring:

Spring is a great time to encourage participants to add activity into their daily routine at work and at home. The days are getting longer and warmer, and it feels great to be outside. There are many activities that can assist participants to increase their step count and beautify their living spaces at the same time. Encourage participants to consider:

- Give the yard an overhaul. Instead of using a lawnmower to pick up old leaves and dead grass, participants can use a rake instead.
- Plant a garden or consider helping out in a community garden.
- Trim the trees or shrubs. Plant flowers. Overturn the soil.
- Organize a neighbourhood clean-up day within the workplace. Consider having staff members donate a lunch hour to clean up a local park or green space.
- Walk outdoors during coffee breaks, lunch breaks or whenever possible.

APPENDIX G - Ideas that Motivate (Nutrition Tips)

Tips on Vegetable and Fruits to the Daily Menu

Vegetables and fruit are loaded with vitamins, minerals, fiber and disease fighting phytochemicals. Research has shown that getting the recommended servings of vegetables and fruit each day can help reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some types of cancer.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide recommends the following number of servings of fruit and vegetables:

Males (age 19 – 50)	8-10 servings/day
Females (age 19 – 50)	7-8 servings/day
Males and Females (50 +)	7 servings/day

What is a Serving?

1 Serving of Vegetables or Fruit is...	This looks like...
1 medium sized vegetable or fruit	A banana, apple or carrot
1 cup (250 ml) green salad	A small side salad about the size of your fist
½ cup (125 ml) unsweetened juice	A small glass of orange juice or ½ juice box
½ cup (125 ml) raw, cooked, frozen or canned vegetable or fruit	A scoop of peas or a small bowl of sliced peaches or grapes
¼ cup (60 ml) dried fruit	A small box of raisins

Adding Vegetables and Fruits to your Day

Remind Challenge participants that adding vegetables and fruits can be easy with a little planning during the grocery store visit.

- Sprinkle berries or sliced bananas over favourite breakfast cereal.
- Grab a piece of fruit, a wedge of low-fat cheese and a handful of wholegrain crackers for a fast and nutritious breakfast.
- Fill your desk drawer with healthy grab & go snacks such as fruit cups (packed in juice not syrup), fruit leathers, dried fruit and unsweetened applesauce cups.
- Wash and pre-bag baby carrots, celery sticks and peppers to add to lunch bag.
- At the sub, pita or sandwich shop, pile sandwich high with the variety of vegetables available.
- Eat at least one vegetable or fruit with every meal and at snack times.
- Become famous for the wonderful vegetable and dip trays you bring to work parties.
- Buy fresh fruits and veggies in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor.
- Shred carrots or zucchini into casseroles, quick breads, and muffins or cakes. Use applesauce instead of oil when baking.
- For dessert, have baked apples, pears, or try frozen juice bars (100% juice), sorbet, sherbet, or frozen yogurt topping with fruit.

APPENDIX H - Eating Vegetables and Fruits on a Budget

- Cook enough for several meals and freeze leftovers. Place enough food for 1-2 meals in each container.
- Create a meal plan for the week that uses similar fruits and vegetables, prepared in different ways. Make the most out of the produce that you buy.
- Buy fruits and vegetables in season at farmers' markets or at your local grocery store.
- Grow your own vegetables. Invest a little in seeds, and get a lot of vegetables in return. Try indoor pots or greenhouse growing for the cooler months.
- Mix it yourself as 100% juice from frozen concentrate is often less expensive per serving than pre-bottled juice.
- Minimize waste, by buying only the amounts your family will eat.
- Enjoy the comforts of home more often. Eating at restaurants can increase the amount you spend on food.
- Be creative! To get the most out of your purchase, enjoy your fruits and vegetables in different ways. For example, you can use fruits for dessert. Try baking apples or poaching pears with some cinnamon.
- Homemade soup is a healthy and tasty way to use vegetables. Make a big batch and freeze leftovers in small lunch-size containers.
- Look for sales and deals on fruits & vegetables at the grocery store or through coupons.
- Cut your fruits and vegetables at home. Pre-cut produce can cost much more than whole fruits and vegetables.
- Canned fruits and vegetables will last a longer and can be a healthy addition to a variety of meals. Choose canned vegetables that have no added salt and fruit that is canned in 100% fruit juice.
- Frozen fruit and vegetables store well in the freezer until you're ready to add them to a meal.
- Pick your own at local farms. Late summer and early fall is a great time to pick your own fruits and vegetables. This can be a fun and less expensive way to buy in bulk and freeze, can, or dry for later.
- Store-brands can be a great budget choice for many forms of fruits and vegetables.
- Buy frozen fruits and vegetables in large bags to stretch your budget (e.g., green beans and blueberries). Avoid those with added sugar, salt, or sauce.

APPENDIX I - Web Resources to Support Staff for Challenge

Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q) (included in participants manual)

<http://www.csep.ca/cmfiles/publications/parg/par-q.pdf>

Canada's Food Guide for Healthy Eating

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>

Canada's Guide for Physical Activity

<http://www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/CSEP-InfoSheetsComplete-ENG.pdf>

Dietitians of Canada

<http://www.dietitians.ca/>

APPENDIX J - Stages of Change Readiness Questionnaire

Physical Activity Stages of Change—Questionnaire*

For each of the following questions, please circle **Yes** or **No**. Be sure to follow the instructions carefully.

Physical activity or exercise includes activities such as walking briskly, jogging, bicycling, swimming, or any other activity in which the exertion is at least as intense as these activities.

	No	Yes
1. I am currently physically active.	0	1
2. I intend to become more physically active in the next six months.	0	1

For activity to be *regular*, it must add up to a *total* of 150 minutes or more per week and should be moderate or vigorous intensity. The 150 minutes can be accumulated throughout the week in bouts of 10 minutes or more.

	No	Yes
1. I currently engage in <i>regular</i> physical activity.	0	1
2. I have been <i>regularly</i> physically active for the past six months.	0	1

SCORING

If question 1 = 0 and question 2 = 0, then you are at stage 1 (Pre-contemplation).

If question 1 = 0 and question 2 = 1, then you are at stage 2 (Contemplation).

If question 1 = 1 and question 3 = 0, then you are at stage 3 (Preparation).

If question 1 = 1, question 3 = 1, and question 4 = 0, then you are at stage 4 (Decision/action).

If question 1 = 1, question 3 = 1, and question 4 = 1, then you are at stage 5 (Maintenance).

* Source: Adapted from B. H. Marcus and L. H. Forsyth, 2003, *Motivating People to Be Physically Active*, (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).