

KEEPING THE WEIGHT OFF IN THE SUMMER

City Centre Health and Fitness

For many, summer is considered as a time to be outdoors, active and carefree. But looming behind the lazy hazy days of summer can be the tendency to gain weight and engage in some not so healthy behaviours. Backyard barbecues, beer after the baseball game and fast food stops while traveling with the family are only some of the summer practices Canadian families engage in.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is a year-round commitment. We seem conditioned to pay attention to what we are eating in December when cold days limit our outdoor activities and festive parties tempt us with sweets and high fat foods. January is the month when most Canadians hit the gym and make plans to lose weight. Come Spring many Canadians seem to throw their fitness plans out the open window. A few days of burgers, ice cream and potato salad can lead you right back to where you were in the dark days of winter.

A new obesity study conducted by the University of Washington showed that adults were more likely to gain weight over the two days of a summer weekend than any other days of the year. The study showed that the participants in all control groups took in at least 200 calories more on the Saturday of a summer weekend than any other day. The conclusion of the study was that weekend behaviour, especially increased alcohol consumption had a tremendous impact on weight gain. .

From this study we can learn that one of the best ways to not gain weight in the summer is to drink alcohol in moderation. When it is hot outside there is nothing like a cold beverage. Beer, coolers and high calorie frozen drinks seem to taste better in the heat but can actually dehydrate you, making you want to drink even more. Instead try a glass of cold water before and between each alcoholic drink.

The study also included a control group that participated in a three day per week supervised exercise program during the summer and were recorded to have lost or maintained their weight while the group that did not exercise gained almost one pound per week.

It is important to stay active in the summer and it is a great time to take advantage of outdoor activities. Sitting at the beach or by the pool do not count! Activities such as swimming, playing volleyball or Frisbee all contribute to having a healthy, active summer. Many adults easily overestimate the amount of physical activity they are getting in the summer as they relate being outdoors or being physically hot or sweaty to being active. Cutting the lawn or gardening can be a healthy use of your time but may not give your heart or bones the exercise that is required to stay healthy year round.

If you are not getting enough exercise outdoors due to the hot summer sun, try an indoor fitness facility. They are less busy in the summer months so it is a perfect time to try

them and they provide you with air conditioned comfort! **For more information call or visit City Centre Health and Fitness 399 Main St. 250-487-1481**