

Ask The Professionals

If you have any questions these professionals can answer, please write to:

"Ask The Professionals"
c/o The Canadian Champion
875 Main Street E.
Milton, Ontario L9T 3Z3
or Fax to: 878-4943

H Halton Hills
Speech Centre
Division of M. Karen MacKenzie Stepien Speech Language Pathology Professional Corporation
"Your Caring Partners..."

Northview Centre, 211 Guelph St., Suite 5, Georgetown
(905) 873-8400 • www.haltonspeech.com

Q: I've heard a local preschool is offering a specialized literacy program that you are involved with. Can you give me more information on the program?

A: The program you are referring to is called TLC for Kids (Technology Enhanced Literacy and Communication for Kids). TLC is currently offered at the Tiny Tim Developmental School campuses in Milton and Georgetown. It is a collaborative program of several community organizations that aims to enhance the literacy and social communication skills of all children aged 2 to 6. The program is currently offered free of charge to all families who consent for their children to attend. The children attend a session once a week for 30-40 minutes in a small group format. A Speech-Language Pathologist oversees the program, sets goals and monitors each of the children's progress. A Communicative Disorders Assistant actively runs the program with the Early Childhood Educator. The use of a computer and data projector allow the children to interact with computer games that focus on literacy and language skills, and a variety of motivating circle activities are also used. Goals in the TLC program are also incorporated into the children's daily routine. Workshops, newsletters and hand-outs are also a part of TLC. The Halton Hills Speech Centre is very proud to be a part of this innovative program.



Melissa L. Coulson, CA

Melissa L. Coulson
Chartered Accountant
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Q: I have a home based business. Can I write off a portion of my living costs on my tax return?

A: Home based businesses are a great way to earn income while not having to worry about the cost and time associated with commuting to a larger centre. It can also provide you with some tax breaks as you may have the ability to write off a portion of your household costs against the income you generate from your business.

Conditions to Qualify

You can deduct expenses for the business use of a work space in your home as long as you meet one of these conditions:

- The work place at home is your main place of employment or business.
- You use the work place only to earn your employment or business income and you use it on a regular and ongoing basis for meeting your clients, customers or patients. (Source - CCH Canada)

If you satisfy any of those conditions, you will need to determine what portion of your house you are using for the purpose of the home based business. Usually, this is done by determining the square footage of the area that you are using for the purpose of the business and then dividing that by the total square footage of your home. So, if you have a 2000 square foot home and you use a bedroom measuring 100 square feet, you will be able to write off 5% of the allowable expenses for home based deductions

Allowable Expenses

Allowable expenses include:

- Heat, hydro and utilities
- Property taxes
- Maintenance
- Mortgage interest or rent
- Home insurance

Such items that cannot be deducted include:

- Your hot tub
- The big screen TV that you purchased to watch the Superbowl last year

Note that if you run a home based daycare, the allowable expenses list is longer and include such things as groceries, toys and supplies used for the care and maintenance of the little ones (i.e. diapers).

If you have a GST number, be aware that the GST is not deducted from these costs. As well, capital cost can be taken on your home however if you sell your home, you will have to pay capital gains on the portion of your house that you took the capital cost on.

As always, your practitioner should be able to assist you in ensuring that you have received the deduction you are entitled to.

Melissa Coulson is a Chartered Accountant located in downtown Milton. She provides accounting, tax, auditing and bookkeeping services to both individuals and corporations.



Herbal Magic
WEIGHT LOSS & NUTRITION CENTRES

ESTABLISHED SINCE 1999
15 Martin St. 905-693-9594
www.herbalmagicsystems.com



Stephanie Norrie

Did You Know?

Cucumber is 95 percent water, so eating it helps hydrate the body and maintain fluid balance. The cucumber is low in calories and high in both water and fiber, which promotes regularity and satisfies hunger.

A cup of tea or coffee with cream and at least two sugar cubes is as rich in calories as a big piece of chocolate cake. Instead, drink herbal teas without sweetener or cream. They are soothing and rich in antioxidants, and will benefit digestion, hydrate the body, and curb the appetite.

Parsley is excellent to munch on between meals because it's high in vitamins, will give you fresh breathe, and is a natural diuretic, which may alleviate water retention.

The key to healthy eating is balance, variety, portion control, and moderation. The amount of food you need every day depends on your age, sex, body size, activity level, and personal health history. Herbal Magic teaches people how to lose weight naturally by eating balanced, healthy meals that incorporate all the food groups. Clients eat real foods from the grocery store in combination with natural supplement support. Herbal Magic counselors provide guidance, education, and motivation so that clients learn how to lose the weight and keep it off. Call today for your free consultation.



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MISSING PETS

On a too frequent basis we receive telephone calls from distraught members of the public asking us what to do as their pet has gone missing. I would like to offer a few useful suggestions when faced with this dilemma.

Once pet owners have gotten over their awful initial shock and panic, we suggest that the best thing to do is to comb the local area, repeatedly calling the pet's name. Get help from family members, friends or neighbours. This is based on the fact that pets are often found within a few kilometers of home. It is a good idea to call house to house and ask neighbours to check their sheds or garages and leave them your phone number so you can be contacted.

Whilst the search is going on designate one person to remain at home. This is very important as the pet might decide to return home and have a snooze! This designated person should also contact all local Veterinary Hospitals and Humane Societies, and give them full details of the missing pet, including any identity tattoo or microchip number. You might consider contacting the Police in case there may have been a road accident involving a pet.

If initial actions fail to find the pet, other steps can be taken which include the distribution of brightly coloured posters offering a reward. Print the word REWARD in large letters. You should visit the animal shelters or humane societies every two days, and call them every day to check the "found pet register" Advertising in the local newspapers, or in an adjacent area newspaper, with or without a photo, may also prove successful. Some owners have also utilized a "mailing" inserted in the local paper.

As heartbreaking as all this searching can be, try not to give up hope. If you are lucky enough to get that telephone call telling you that your pet may have been found - remember, he or she may look different. They could be dirty, matted and may have suffered weight loss. They may also be in shock or may be injured.

If your pet is found, it is strongly advised that you have your veterinarian carry out a quick examination, as quickly as possible, just to make sure that all is well.

Sometime ago, I wrote an article for this column about MICROCHIPPING. This tiny chip is inserted, by a veterinarian, into the nape of the pet's neck. It is painless and permanent, and is a wonderfully simple way of making sure that your pet is identifiable. Each pet hospital, animal shelter and humane society will check every pet that is brought in, in the hope of finding a microchip, and in turn, reuniting pet with owner.

If you have any questions about micro chipping, please contact your veterinarian.



Marilyn J. Samuels

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Q: I am in the process of separating from my wife and I have heard a lot of crazy stories about divorces and don't know what to expect.

A: Thanks to television and "it happened to me" stories, there's more MIS-information about divorce going around than you might realize. Many people think they know the law because they "heard it from a friend or read it on the Internet. Here are some of the more common misconceptions people have.

1: The court favours the spouse initiating divorce proceedings.

The spouse initiating divorce proceedings has no special rights above the other spouse, other than to determine the location of the court case. If you have children the court case must be started where they live.

2: A legal separation precedes a divorce.

In Ontario, there is no such thing as a "legal" separation. People who no longer want to be married separate. What's "legal" is the agreement entered into with your spouse after the fact.

3: Legal fees for a divorce are generally proportionate to the assets involved.

Division of property, while an essential part of the divorce process, is not normally the major issue between the parties. Custody and access, child support and spousal support are often major issues that exhaust the parties' financial resources when they cannot agree. The more the parties can't agree the more the legal fees will be.

4: Someone 'wins' a divorce.

Divorce is not about winning, it's about severing ties, distributing property and protecting the best interests of your children. If there are any real winners in divorce, it's the people who are able to maintain positive relationships with an ex-spouse/co-parent. Enjoying future life events (such as weddings and college graduations), without the bitter taste of animosity, is the victory for those with the foresight to control negative feelings in order to minimize disruption to the children.

Milton Therapeutic Massage Clinic



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Registered Massage Therapy

The Muscle Spasm

The physiological response of muscle to trauma of any type (overuse, overload, hypertension, impact) is tightening. This tightening is facilitated by the nervous system and results in a spasm at the exact spot where the trauma occurred. A spasm is a group of muscle fibers held in continuous (tetanic) contraction, unable to secure its own release - a rigid knot. Because spasms are an extension of the normal contraction process, nothing will show up on x-rays or diagnostic imaging. It is, however, a malfunction, and any portion of a muscle that is not working for you is working against you - ACTIVELY! A spasm in a muscle can severely impact its ability to contract and relax (release). The portion of the muscle involved in the spasm is unable to work, forcing the remainder to work excessively. A compromised muscle is a weak one, which fatigues quickly. With continued use the spasm becomes aggravated and enlarges, causing pain and discomfort. Worse yet, the shortened fibres in the spasm restrict the ability of the muscle to be stretched to full length.

A muscle that cannot accommodate the movement placed on it will pull or even tear. Thus, a movement normally within the safe context becomes unsafe when shortening and spasm are present. The stage is now set for one final overstretch overload which will produce the massive spasm of a charley horse or straining of the tissue.

Massage Therapy is effective treatment for muscle spasms and contractures. The therapist will use techniques to reduce pain and increase the local circulation to help reduce the spasm. More importantly, the therapist will help prevent recurrence of the spasm by considering the causes or contributing factors and reducing their effect.

Clinic Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8-8 • Sat. 10-2 • Closed Sunday