

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



Tina Doney
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Q. I sprained my ankle this spring when I was walking on uneven ground. I don't know if I should come to physiotherapy or not. Sometimes it heals on its own.

A. Yes, it is true, sometimes a mildly sprained ankle does heal on its own, and does not require physiotherapy. However, if you are repeatedly re-spraining the same ankle, you really should go to physiotherapy.

Physiotherapists will work on re-training the muscles around the injury as well as your proprioception (how the muscles and ligaments around the ankle work together to give feedback to the ankle to balance and correct the position of the ankle when you are walking on an uneven surface. This prevents you from rolling over on your ankle again). When you initially sprain your ankle, your brain forgets how to make those fine adjustments around the ankle when you are walking on uneven ground, which causes you to be unsure of your footing on these surfaces, or to re-injure your ankle again by rolling over onto it. If you have a mild ankle sprain, once it heals, you can re-train this yourself by simply trying to stand on one foot, first with your eyes open, and then, with your eyes closed. If you are into a particular sport, or have a moderate to severe ankle sprain, you really should attend physiotherapy to properly rehab your ankle and prevent future injury on the ankle when you return to sport or daily activities.

How do you know if it is a moderate to severe sprain? You have sustained a moderate sprain if you have bruising around the ankle, up the leg, or into the foot. It means that some sort of soft tissue has torn and is bleeding underneath your skin. Usually these kinds of ankle sprains respond well to physiotherapy. You have a severe sprain if you cannot put weight through the foot. For these, you should also come to therapy, but first, consult your family doctor for an x-ray to make sure nothing is broken. A mild ankle sprain with no bruising and mild swelling, but still painful after two to three weeks, should also come to physiotherapy.

Give the therapists a try at the Halton Community Rehabilitation Centre, and we'll get you back in the action in no time!!!



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Over the past few months I have received many "lost cat" notices to hang on our board. On top of that, every Friday in the Champion, there are numerous lost cat notices. Because there are no leash laws for cats and it is impossible to confine them to the backyard, cats are subject to many more dangers than dogs are.

In my practice we see cats suffer from injuries and illness as a result of altercations with other cats, dogs and wildlife (raccoons, skunks and coyotes), road vehicle accidents, fan belt injury (cats like to seek warmth from car engines). Cats that wander can come into contact with toxins such as slug bait, antifreeze, pesticides and herbicides. I have treated many cats with tongue lacerations from licking tin cans in other people's garbage. Cats can come in contact with other cat's viruses such as leukemia, feline AIDS, FIP and Rabies - all of which are potentially fatal.

My advice to all cat owners is to keep them indoors. This can be very difficult, particularly for cats who are already accustomed to having that freedom. For those of you who have recently acquired a cat or kitten, don't expose them to the outside world - not even on a leash. If a cat is not shown what it is like to go outside, they will never come to expect it.



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Q: What can I do to prepare my home for sale?

A: Simple Advice... Remove Clutter

This is the hardest thing for most people to do because they are emotionally attached to everything in the house. After years of living in the same home, clutter collects in such a way that may not be evident to the homeowner. However, it does affect the way buyers see the home, even if you do not realize it. Clutter collects on shelves, counter tops, drawers, closets, garages, attics, and basements.

Take a step back and pretend you are a buyer or let a friend help point out areas of clutter. A real estate agent can help too!

The kitchen is a good place to start removing clutter, because it is an easy place to start. First, get everything off the counters. Find a place where you can store everything in cabinets and drawers. Of course, you may notice that you do not have cabinet space to put everything. Clean them out. The dishes, pots and pans that rarely get used? Put them in a box and put that box in storage, too.

Many people have too much furniture in certain rooms, not too much for your own personal living needs, but too much to give the illusion of space that a homebuyer would like to see. Get some ideas from style magazines and home improvement television shows on what to remove and what to leave in your house.

Basements, garages, attics, and sheds accumulate not only clutter, but junk. These areas should be as empty as possible so that buyers can imagine what they would do with the space. Remove anything that is not essential and take it to the storage area.

Create as much Open Space as you can...and the SOLD sign will go up quickly.



Christine Johnson
Center Director

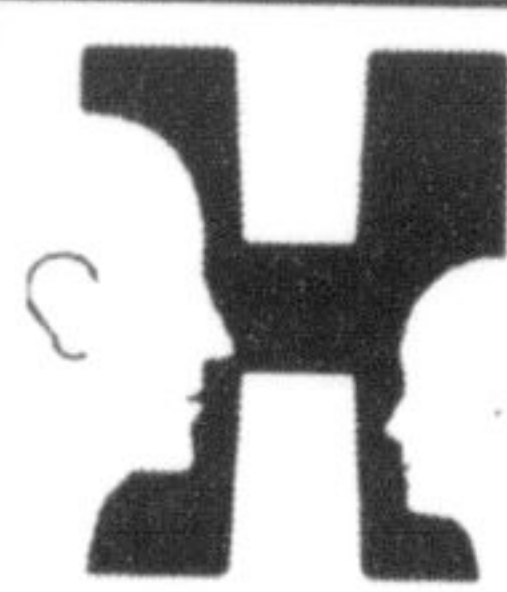
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385 Main St. next to Bell World
www.herbal-1.com

WEIGHT LOSS TIPS

1. Eating more fiber is a great way to feel fuller throughout the day. Your breakfast can pack a fiber punch. Make sure you use whole wheat bread for toast. Choose a high-fiber cereal like raisin bran. Enjoy some fruit with its skin such as an apple.
2. Buying single serving packages of foods - especially snacks - is a great way to control portions. Not only will they help you eat in moderation, the nutrition information is also handy. If single serving bags prove too pricey, measure out individual servings into plastic bags when you buy the larger size packages. Just don't reach for a second bag or this trick won't prevent overeating.
3. Setting big goals does more harm than good. It's easy to get discouraged when you never seem to meet them. Instead, set mini goals and reward yourself to stay motivated. Be realistic and treat yourself gently. The pounds didn't appear like magic, so don't expect them to **poof** and go away! :-)
4. If you know you're going to go overboard with the appetizer dinner rolls, ask the server to remove them from the table. If you ask me, it's virtually impossible to practice portion control within the scent of freshly baked bread. Avoid the temptation to think, "It's free. I really should eat it." It may be free to your wallet, but not your waistline!
5. Avoid eating anything directly out of the container, particularly foods that lend themselves to binges like ice cream or potato chips. It's virtually impossible to practice portion control when you eat straight out of a container. When you eat from the sources, you're likely to fall into all-or-nothing thinking: "If I'm being this 'bad' then I should just go all the way." You'll feel more in charge of your actions by eating one serving mindfully from a dish.
6. Self-talk really does work, whether it is positive or negative. Lift your spirits and prolong your motivation every single day by telling yourself that you can and will succeed. You may even find that it is helpful to say self-affirming phrases out loud. Your roommates may think you've gone crazy, but when you find it is quite effective, you won't mind. Look in the mirror today, and say, "Nothing is going to stop me from meeting my weight loss goal."



Halton Hills
Speech Centre
Division of M. Karen MacKenzie Stepler Speech Language Pathology Professional Corporation

"Your Caring Partners..."

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Question: I have noticed that my teenage son will often "get stuck" on words or may repeat them a few times when he is talking. Does this mean he has a stuttering problem?

Answer: It is important to be able to recognize the difference between stuttering and normal non-fluency. Hesitations, pauses, word repetitions and revisions are all considered normal dysfluent behaviours. All of us experience these moments of dysfluency when speaking, especially when placed in a demanding environment.

For the teen, situations such as oral presentations in class, answering questions in front of a group of people or having to compete for speaking time can be difficult and may result in an increase of anxiety and fear. Sometimes this fear and nervousness can increase the tension experienced by a teen. Often, the initial reaction to this tension is to increase their speech rate which can cause them to stumble over their words. Concern with stuttering is often noted when normal non-fluencies become more frequent and longer in duration. At times, physical tension may also begin to develop as they struggle to speak (e.g. facial grimace, quivering lip, eye blinking/twitching). As talking situations become more difficult for your teen, he may begin to avoid speaking situations or may not complete his comments. Your teen may become frustrated and annoyed with speaking and may respond with comments such as: "Forget it!", "Never mind!", "I can't get it out!"

If your teen is exhibiting any of these behaviours, or if he/she has had a history of dysfluency in the past, especially as a child, contact our Centre. Our Speech-Language Pathologists will be able to provide you with further information and help to determine if your teen has a stuttering problem.



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Q. What is Athlete's Foot and how is it treated?

A. Also known as Tinea Pedis, Athlete's Foot is a fungal infection that affects about 12% of the population. Contrary to its name, Athlete's Foot can strike anyone. It is common in both adults and children.

Symptoms:

- Athlete's Foot may appear on any part of the foot but is most common between the toes (especially between the 4th and 5th toes) and on the bottom of the foot
- The infection may appear wet or dry
- Redness, scaling, blisters, itching and burning are common findings
- One or both feet can be affected
- Sufferers often have recurrent episodes

What you can do:

- Over-the-counter antifungal products are often effective for skin infections when used according to the manufacturer's instructions. These products must be used for the full treatment period, which means that they are used even after the symptoms disappear.
- Wash and dry feet thoroughly on a daily basis and sprinkle foot powder to absorb perspiration.
- Wear shoes made of natural materials, like leather or canvas that allow moisture to escape from the shoe
- Select socks made from natural fibers, preferably cotton
- Change shoes and socks regularly to decrease moisture
- Foot soaks can help to dry excessive perspiration
- Avoid walking barefoot in public places