



Healthy lifestyle for South Asians



Did you know that if you are a South Asian Canadian, you are 3 to 4 times more likely to have diabetes and high blood pressure than other Canadians? This increases your risk for stroke and heart disease.

Making better food choices, keeping active and maintaining a healthy weight will help reduce your risk of Type 2 diabetes. For those with diabetes, these lifestyle changes will help you manage your diabetes.

How do I tell if I am at a healthy weight?

There are 2 ways to tell:

1. Know your BMI (Body Mass Index)
 2. Measure your waistline
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What is BMI and how do I know mine?

The BMI is a calculation of your weight (kg)/height (m)².

You can also look on the BMI chart on the back of this handout to find your BMI.

Healthy BMI for South Asians is less than 23 kg/m².

What's a healthy waist measurement?

A healthy waist measurement is:

- Women: Less than 31" (80cm)
- Men: Less than 35" (90cm)



The higher your waist measurement, the more you are at risk for developing Type 2 Diabetes (even if your BMI is healthy).

What if I need to lose weight?

Small changes can go a long way. A weight loss of 5 to 10% of your body weight can improve blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar levels. For example, if you weigh 180 lbs (81.8 kg), a 5 to 10% weight loss would be 9 to 18 lbs (4 to 8 kg).

To lose 1 lb (0.5 kg) of body fat, you need to give up 3,500 calories over a period of time.

For example, you can lose 1 lb (0.5 kg) every 10 days by cutting out 200 calories a day from foods and drinks, and including an exercise that burns 150 calories a day.

Examples of how to reduce calories

Change From:	Change To:	You Save (calories)
1 tsp ghee on 2 chapatis	No ghee on chapatis	45
2 cups 2% milk	2 cups 1% milk	40
2 cups 2% milk	2 cups skim milk	76
½ cup yogurt made with whole milk	½ cup yogurt made with 1% milk	52
2 tbsp 18% cream in coffee	2 tbsp 2% milk	41
2 tbsp 10% cream in coffee	2 tbsp 2% milk	21
½ chicken breast with skin	½ chicken breast no skin	62
1 can (355 mL) regular soft drink	355 mL diet soft drink or Jaljeera	150
1 tbsp regular jam	1 tbsp sugar-reduced jam	30
4 tsp sugar in tea through the day	4 tsp artificial sweetener	64
10 potato chips	3 cups plain popcorn	65

Did you know that cutting back on your serving sizes is also a good way to lose weight?

Examples of how to burn 150 calories

Exercise	Minutes
Fast social dancing	30
Swimming laps	20
Water aerobics	30
Shoveling snow	15
Bicycling 3 miles (4.8 km)	30
Playing golf and carrying clubs	30
Walking 1 ½ miles (2.4 km)	35
Washing windows or floors	45 to 60
Pushing a stroller for 1 ½ miles (2.4 km)	30
Gardening	30 to 45
Raking leaves	30
Climbing stairs	15



Reducing your fat intake

Did you know that 1 teaspoon of fat has 45 calories?

Cutting back on the fat in your diet will help you to lose weight.

Instead of:	Choose more often:
Paratha or Poori	Roti or Chapati
2% or whole milk	1% or skim milk
Fried salted snacks	Crackers, popcorn, puffed rice
Fried Samosas, Pakoras	Baked Samosas, Dhokla
Pickles in oil	Chutneys
Ghee (clarified butter)	Spices, lemon juice for flavouring
Dosa	Idli
Fried rice	Boiled rice
Butter chicken	Tandoori chicken
Curries with fat	Curries with fat skimmed off



Decreased concentrated sweets intake

Did you know that 1 teaspoon of sugar has 16 calories?

Instead of:	Choose more often:
Sweets like Burfi, Halwa, or Gulab Jamun	Fresh fruit for dessert
Sugar in chai or coffee	Artificial sweetener
Sugar in kheer or custard	Artificial sweetener
Regular pop	Diet pop or Crystal Light



Mangoes make a nice dessert.

Recipe for a Healthy Snack

How to Make Dhokla

Ingredients:

- 1 cup gram flour
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp sugar
- ½ tsp soda/Eno
- 1 tbsp yogurt
- ½ tsp ginger paste
- ½ tsp turmeric (Haldi) powder
- ½ tsp sesame seeds (Til)
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- 2 tbsp chopped coriander leaves (Hara Dhania)
- 1 tbsp curry leaves
- 2 thinly sliced green chillies (Hari Mirch)
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 tbsp canola oil (total)



1 serving of Dhokla

Method:

1. Mix flour, 1 tbsp oil, lemon juice, sugar, yogurt, ginger paste, turmeric powder and salt. Add boiled water just enough to make a thick smooth paste.
2. Add soda or Eno and stir it well.
3. Pour the dhokla paste into a greased steel plate and steam for about 10 to 12 minutes.
4. Once the dhokla is done, cut it into square or diamond shaped pieces.
5. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a frying pan. Add mustard seeds, sesame seeds, curry leaves, and sliced green chilli. When the mustard seeds start spluttering, remove the pan from heat.
6. Pour this over the steamed dhokla.
7. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves.

What's your BMI (Body Mass Index)?

- BMI – Weight (kg) / Height (m)²
- Healthy BMI for South Asians is less than 23 kg/m²

Weight lbs	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210	215			
kg	45.5	47.7	50.0	52.3	54.5	56.8	59.1	61.4	63.6	65.9	68.2	70.5	72.7	75.0	77.3	79.5	81.8	84.1	86.4	88.6	90.9	93.2	95.5	97.7			
Height in km	Underweight										Healthy					Overweight					Obese					Extremely obese	
5'0"	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42			
5'1"	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40				
5'2"	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	36	37	38	39			
5'3"	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	37	38			
5'4"	17	18	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	31	32	33	34	35	36	37			
5'5"	16	17	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	29	30	30	31	32	33	34	35	35			
5'6"	16	17	17	18	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	34			
5'7"	15	16	17	18	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	33			
5'8"	15	16	16	17	18	19	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	32			
5'9"	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	31	31			
5'10"	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	30	30			
5'11"	14	14	15	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	28	29	30			
6'0"	13	14	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	29	29			
6'1"	13	13	14	15	15	16	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28			
6'2"	12	13	14	14	15	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	27			
6'3"	12	13	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	26	26			
6'4"	12	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	17	18	18	19	20	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	26	26			



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Targets

Aim for the following ABCDE targets for good health:

A = A1C. A1C is a 3 month average of blood sugars. Target is less than 7%.

B = Blood pressure. Target less than 130/80.

C = Cholesterol. LDL is the bad cholesterol. Target less than 2.0 mmol/l.

D = Diet. Eat a balanced diet. Follow “Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide”. See website www.healthycanadians.gc.ca

E = Exercise. Include regular exercise. Follow “Canada’s Physical Activity Guide”. See website www.healthycanadians.gc.ca

Remember to take your medication as prescribed by your doctor.

Resources

www.diabetes.ca

www.diabetes.org

www.diabetesindia.com

www.hsf.ca

www.prebtani.ca

www.dietitians.ca

www.hhsc.ca

Metric and Imperial Sizes		
250 ml	=	1 cup
175 ml	=	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
125 ml	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
60 ml	=	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
15 ml	=	1 tablespoon (tbsp)
5 ml	=	1 teaspoon (tsp)
25 g	=	1 ounce (oz)