

# POWER UP YOUR HEALTH

ALBERTA HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAM- CALGARY ZONE NEWSLETTER



Live your Best Life

## Joy, boundaries, and self-kindness: Navigating the holidays with chronic pain

For many people, the winter holidays are a time for family, parties, presents, tasty treats, joy and laughter. If you live with chronic (long-lasting) pain from a condition like arthritis, fibromyalgia, or a past injury, you may need to change how you prepare for the holidays so you don't push yourself too hard and cause more pain.

If you are hosting a family gathering, you may have a long to-do list, like inviting your guests, cleaning your home, buying groceries or gifts, and cooking meals. You can make this easier by:

- Planning the gathering at a time of day where your pain is usually lower.
- Setting boundaries, and learning to say no.
- Making a list, and spreading out your tasks over time.
- Turning the dinner into a potluck so you don't have to cook everything yourself.
- Scheduling (and taking) breaks before you start feeling pain, or before your pain gets worse.
- Keeping a journal to understand what triggers your pain, what makes it worse, and what helps.
- Being kind to yourself just like you would be to a good friend, if you don't finish everything you hoped to do.

Power up your health with a gift of knowledge on how to take charge of your chronic pain with these upcoming free online classes:

### [Pacing for People with Chronic Pain](#)

- Thur Jan 8 from 10 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

### [Better Choices, Better Health® - Chronic Pain](#)

- Wed Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, Feb 5 & 12 from 1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- Sat Jan 10, 17, 24, 31, Feb 7 & 21 from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

### [Try a Little Self-Kindness: Motivating with Self-Compassion](#)

- Thur Jan 29 from 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

### [Conserving Your Energy](#)

- Thur Feb 19 & 26 from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.



Let's get moving

## We can help you take charge of your health condition.

As 2025 comes to an end, many of us are thinking about new opportunities that are on the horizon in 2026. If you or a loved one are navigating a long-term (chronic) health condition, like arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, or others, you might be wondering if exercise can help you manage your symptoms and help you feel better in every day life. The good news is, it can!

Our free exercise program can help you start being active safely, even if you haven't exercised in a long time. As everybody coming into our program has a unique story and goal, your journey through this program will be unique. You will start this journey meeting one-on-one with one of our knowledgeable exercise professionals, who will help create a plan based on your needs, goals, and abilities. After that, you might decide to join our one-on-one activity coaching program to help navigate any barriers, stay motivated, and achieve your activity goals. You may also decide to sign up for one of our three exercise classes, which are offered both online and in person at different sites in Calgary. No matter which path you take, our goal is to make sure that you leave this program feeling confident and ready to use exercise to help you take charge of your life.

You do not need a doctor's referral to join this program, but you do need to live in the Calgary Zone and have a family doctor or nurse practitioner. If you live in the Calgary Zone, call 1-844-527-1160 to get started. If you do not live in the Calgary Zone, [visit our website](#) to learn about exercise services in your area.



## Has your doctor told you that you have GERD? We can help.

GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease) happens when your stomach acid goes up into your throat. You may feel heartburn, chest pain, or have a sour taste in your mouth as a result. You may also feel like food or liquids are coming up into your throat or mouth after eating.

These symptoms can really impact your day-to-day. The good news is that there are small lifestyle changes that can make a big difference. Here are some tips that can help:

- Aim to eat smaller portions at meals. Large portions of food can make your GERD symptoms worse.
- Stay sitting up after eating. Try to leave 2-3 hours between the last time you ate and when you lay down.
- Pay attention if specific foods make you feel worse. It can be helpful to write down what you eat and any symptoms you experience after to understand any food triggers. Some common GERD triggers are:
  - Caffeine
  - Chocolate
  - Citrus (like lemons, limes, oranges, or grapefruit)
  - Peppermint
  - Spicy or high fat foods
  - Tomatoes
  - Carbonated beverages (like pop, or carbonated water)
- Stop smoking and limit or avoid alcohol
- Try raising your head off the bed when sleeping by 6-8 inches (15-20 centimeters). You can use a foam wedge under the mattress or bed blocks under your bed legs.
- Sleep on your left side.
- Aim to wear loose clothing around your stomach. Tight clothing can make your symptoms worse.

Do you have questions about managing your GERD symptoms? If you live in the Calgary Zone, you can call 1-844-527-1160 to set up a free one-on-one [nutrition counseling](#) appointment with one of our registered dietitians. If you do not live in the Calgary Zone, call 8-1-1 to learn about services in your area.

## Upcoming In-Person Classes

Click on the class title for more information or to register.

### [Understanding the Experience of Grief](#)

- Monday, January 26, from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. at Richmond Road Diagnostic and Treatment Centre (1820 Richmond Rd SW):

### [Your Voice, Your Choice: Health Decisions Matter](#)

- Wednesday, January 21, from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at Grace Gardens (1028 15 Ave SW, Calgary)
- Wednesday, January 28, from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at Mountview Apartments (710 16 Ave NW, Calgary)

### [Your Kidney Health](#)

- Wednesday, February 11, from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. at South Health Campus Wellness Centre (4448 Front St SE)

### [Better Breathing](#)

- Tuesday, February 19, from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at East Calgary Health Centre (4715 8 Ave SE)

