



NEW RELEASE

Newly Released COVID-19 Guidelines Designed to Help Canadians Maintain Optimal Health Through Pandemic

OTTAWA, September 8, 2021 – The Canadian Kinesiology Alliance announces the release of new guidelines to help Canadians get through the pandemic. The *MOVING FORWARD WITH COVID-19 – KINESIOLOGY GUIDELINES FOR MAINTAINING OPTIMAL HEALTH* demonstrate how Canadians can ensure a safe return to their former active lifestyles and physical activity programs. They are meant for all Canadians, including COVID long-haulers and seniors who may also need help returning to daily living activities.

While the pandemic is not over, these practical recommendations can be used now and as restrictions are lifted. The Guidelines recognize the expertise and leadership of Kinesiologists in finding solutions for health and well-being, with a focus on six fields of practice cognitive capacities including mental health, ergonomics, cardiorespiratory health, functional abilities, weight gain and obesity, and safe return to sport.

“Physical activity is a foundational element for a healthy lifestyle,” says Kathie Sharkey, President of the Canadian Kinesiology Alliance. “The Guidelines are a key resource for Canadians as we all strive to return to activities, improve our health and quality of life. With the help of Kinesiologists, we can move better and live better.”

The confinement restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic significantly changed lifestyles in terms of reduced daily active living and exercise. Canadians face many challenges as a result: dealing with the effects of increased stress and anxiety; losing the ability to perform regular daily tasks; and gaining weight from the inability to exercise or play sports while being more sedentary. Recent research also suggests that not meeting physical activity guidelines on a regular basis may increase the risk of severe COVID-19 outcomesⁱ.

SUPPORT FOR THOSE WORKING FROM HOME OR BACK AT THE OFFICE

The pandemic caused many workstation challenges over the last year, including greater sedentary time. Since it was expected that the situation would be short term, many people are still working from less-than-ideal workstations at home, leading to poor posture, increased pain and decreased focus. According to Statistics Canada, an inadequate physical workspace was a barrier to productivity for one in ten people working from homeⁱⁱ. Kinesiologists can help Canadians return to work safely.

“As a large number of people are now teleworking, we would like to see more corporations provide support from professionals who can help them setup better working station at home, states Sharkey. We also strongly encourage governments to include fitness memberships and services as a medical cost on personal taxes. This medical tax deduction would help Canadians as more than 80 percent do not get the recommended 150-minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise weekly.”

RECOVERING COGNITIVE SKILLS

Cognitive skills of many Canadians have been lost or altered as a result of trauma or illness such as having COVID-19, with mental health impacted by chronic stress. The Canadian Survey on COVID-19 and Mental Health indicates that about one in five Canadian adults screened positive for symptoms of depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorderⁱⁱⁱ. With the help of physical activity, Kinesiologists can help build cognitive capacity to ensure Canadians are able to cope with normal life stresses and participate more fully again in work and leisure. Studies have shown that with an additional 35 minutes of physical activity each day, those at risk for depression may be protected against future episodes^{iv}. Prescribed treatments from the Kinesiology Guidelines can help clients recover brain pathways, retrain and improve daily living and working skills.

GETTING SUPPORT THROUGH ALL PHASES OF LIFE

“Kinesiologists are human movement experts who provide scientific advice and physical activity treatments that improve recovery, health and well-being, through all phases of life,” says Sharkey. “A Kinesiologist’s training and education encompass physical, cognitive and mental health, leaving them uniquely placed to understand how these domains of health fit together by using movement as treatment.”

The Guidelines can be adapted to local regulations and rely on the expertise of local Kinesiologists and provincial kinesiology associations, who are committed to supporting health and well-being for all. Recovery and a safe return to work and a more active lifestyle are paramount for all Canadians.

ABOUT THE CANADIAN KINESIOLOGY ALLIANCE

The Canadian Kinesiology Alliance (CKA) is a non-profit corporation that advocates and promotes the advancement of the profession of kinesiology in Canada. The CKA strives to be recognized as the unifying voice for the profession of kinesiology in Canada, and to have a positive impact on Canadians. On a national level, the CKA represents nine provincial kinesiology associations (PKAs) that are member associations and over 4,500 affiliated kinesiologists by developing progressive partnerships with other national organizations, providing support to effect positive change within government and public policy, and by promoting the science of kinesiology. The CKA establishes and promotes the standards of the profession across Canada. To find a kinesiologist, visit www.cka.ca.

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To schedule an interview or for more information, contact:

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ⁱ <https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/early/2021/04/07/bjsports-2021-104080>

ⁱⁱ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210318/dq210318a-eng.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2021001/article/00012-eng.htm>

^{iv} Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health: [More evidence that exercise can boost mood](#), *Harvard Women's Health Watch*, May, 2019.