Healthy behaviours - promoting physical activity and healthy eating

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Promoting Physical Activity and Healthy Weights

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Introduction
The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) supports the promotion of healthy behaviours to help prevent the occurrence and progression of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) that are responsible for an estimated 70% of deaths in Canada, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes. These diseases are largely preventable through lifestyle changes such as regular physical activity and healthy eating. The CMA recognizes the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles to improve population health outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.

Recent data from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) indicate that while there has been an increase in physical activity and healthy eating, many Canadians are still not meeting recommended guidelines. For example, in 2018, only 50% of adults met the recommended level of physical activity, and 67% met the recommended level of fruit and vegetable consumption. These figures highlight the need for continued efforts to promote healthy behaviours.

The CMA supports initiatives that promote physical activity and healthy eating, such as the Canada’s Food Guide, which provides recommendations for a healthy and balanced diet. The CMA also supports policies that create opportunities for physical activity, such as active transportation options and safe environments for physical activity.

Conclusion
Healthy behaviours, including regular physical activity and healthy eating, are essential for maintaining good health and preventing chronic diseases. The CMA encourages healthcare professionals, policymakers, and the general public to support initiatives that promote healthy behaviours and advocate for policies that create opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating.

References
- Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) 2018
- Canada’s Food Guide
- Physical Activity Guidelines for Canadians

CMA Policybase - Canadian Medical Association