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Tips For Joining a Gym

by the Better Business Bureau



If your goal is to lose weight, get in better shape, or improve your overall health, deciding to join a gym may be the first step. However, don't just sign up at the gym you see or visit. Before signing on the dotted line, research all options first!

Get the most from a gym membership by considering these tips from BBB.

- Determine your fitness goals. Determining your goals in advance will help you select a facility that is most appropriate for you. Consult with your physician before embarking on a new fitness regimen, especially if there are medical conditions that might be a concern.
- Figure out your priorities. What is most important to you? Will a convenient location and extended hours help you stick to your fitness plan? Will a variety of equipment or classes keep you motivated? Do you work out while traveling and prefer a chain with numerous outlets? Determine your top priorities before you start shopping around.
- **Take a tour.** Make sure the gym has the equipment, classes, and trainers you need or expect. Pay attention to things that are important to you, whether it's the cleanliness of the showers or the availability of Wi-Fi. Ask questions and make sure you understand all the rules. Ask about busy times, wait times for equipment, whether classes require pre-registration, availability,

and cost of trainers, etc. Ask how the gym staff is maintaining the cleanliness of the facilities.

- Ask questions about limited free trials. Gyms often give a one-week free pass for potential members; this is a great way to see if the gym is a good fit for you. Try the gym at different times to see how crowded it is and whether there is a wait for certain equipment. Check out classes if they are offered.
- **Don't feel coerced.** Do not give in to high-pressure sales tactics to join right away. A reputable gym will give you enough time to read the contract thoroughly, tour the facilities, do some research, and make an informed decision.
- Calculate the true costs. Gyms often use special introductory offers to encourage new members, but the price could go up more than you budgeted once the initial period is over. Make sure you understand what the regular monthly fees will be and what they include.
- Understand the terms. Read the contract carefully before signing. Make sure that all verbal promises made by the salesperson are in writing. What matters is the contract and the terms within it, so don't just take a salesperson's word for it. What happens if you move, or the gym goes out of business? Will the membership renew automatically at the end of the term? What is the cancellation policy and under what circumstances?



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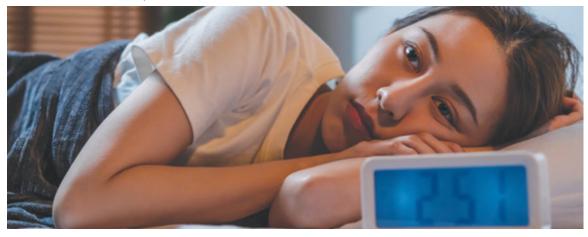
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MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT

How to Deal with Those Long Sleepless Nights

by Nancy Bergeron, R.Psych. | info@nancybergeron.ca



As we turn the corner from the longest nights of the year, sleeplessness is a common issue for many. Sleep is a basic human need and is essential for good mental and physical health. Sleep-wake disorders involve excessive sleepiness, breathing-related sleep disturbances, and abnormal experiences during sleep.

Common symptoms of insomnia and sleep-wake disorders include difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, and having trouble waking up most days.

Factors that contribute to sleep disturbances are things like anxiety, stress, depression, chronic pain, stimulants (caffeine, nicotine, and some medications), and having an irregular sleep schedule. Some groups of people are at higher risk than others such as doctors and nurses, shift workers, truck drivers, and parents with very young children.

Lack of deep sleep causes a multitude of issues such as daytime fatigue, difficulty paying attention, concentration challenges, decrease in productivity, irritability, angry outbursts, memory challenges, and an inability to multitask.

To overcome these challenges, keep track of the time you fall asleep and wake up, how long it takes you to fall asleep, how often you wake through the night, and how long it takes to fall back asleep. Bring your answers to a psychologist or doctor who specializes in sleep disorders. Your doctor can send you to a sleep clinic to see if you have sleep obstruction (sleep apnea). Your partner or roommate may tell you how loud or how much you snore. Doctors can prescribe you short term medication to get you back on track. However, compared to medication, your psychologist can teach you drug free techniques by assessing your sleep problems, teaching you better sleep hygiene, and offering evidence-based psychotherapy, and self-care practices such as:

- 1. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- 2. Relaxation techniques
- 3. Specific exercise routines
- 4. Exploration of nicotine and caffeine use (caffeine is hidden in many foods)
- 5. Help create consistent sleep routines
- 6. Help you learn to limit naps
- 7. Teach you how to create a healthy sleep environment
- 8. Night-time brain dump

Sleep is essential to your well-being. Don't put off seeking the help that's available.

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Sledding Safety

by Alberta Health Services

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) would like to remind parents and children about a few toboggan/sledding safety tips as the winter season continues. Injuries may result from collisions with stationary objects on the hill, such as trees, poles, rocks, or even collisions with other people. Unprotected falls can also result in more serious injury if you lose control at high speeds. However, everyone can be safe and have fun on the toboggan hill by following these reminders.

Equipment

- Always ensure your toboggan, or sledding device, is in good repair. Inspect it for any damaged or missing parts before each use.
- Be certain the operator is fully capable of staying in control of the sled at all times.
- Wear a ski helmet, designed for use in cold weather and high speeds.

Hazards

- Avoid hills that are too steep or too icy.
- Choose hills free of all obstacles such as trees, rocks, utility poles, benches, or fences.

- Beware of loose scarves, or clothing containing drawstrings, which could present a strangulation hazard if they become caught or snagged.
- Look out for others. Move quickly to the side after finishing a run and stay to the side of the sliding path when walking up the hill.
- Children should be supervised by an adult; never toboggan alone.
- Tobogganing at night is not advised.

Plan Ahead

- Dress warmly in layers and anticipate weather changes.
- Consider bringing extra sets of gloves and toques to exchange wet garments for dry ones.
- Take breaks out of the cold to warm up.
- Attempt to cover any exposed skin.
- Even when properly protected from the elements, the fingertips, toes, ears, the tip of the nose, and other high points on the face, such as the forehead and cheek bones can be affected by frostbite.
- If frost bite has occurred, treat it by first removing the individual out of the cold environment. Gently warm the affected skin by placing a warm hand over it, or by placing the affected part in warm - not hot - water, until re-warmed.



Burrito Beef and Bean Soup

by Jennifer Puri

Beans and rice have been a staple dish around the world for centuries. If eaten together, the combination of rice and beans creates a complete protein. They provide a healthy plant-based protein and eating more protein can help build muscle mass and help you maintain a healthy weight.

The other benefit of eating rice and beans together is their fiber content which can help to improve digestion, maintain healthy blood sugar levels, and lower blood pressure and cholesterol.

The black bean is found in both Latino and Hispanic cultures and is served in a variety of Mexican dishes. It can be added to burritos, quesadillas, salsas, rice, salads, or soups like in the burrito beef and bean soup recipe below.

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 60 minutes Servings: 6 to 8



Ingredients:

- 2 lbs lean ground beef
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 tbsps of hot and spicy taco seasoning
- · 2 cups of low sodium corn kernels drained and rinsed
- 2 cups black beans drained and rinsed
- 2 cups diced tomatoes
- 1 cup of uncooked white or brown rice, rinsed

- 1 small can tomato puree
- 2 cartons beef broth
- Salt to taste
- Sour cream (optional)
- · 2 ready to eat avocados (optional)
- Queso taco chips (optional)

Directions:

- In a large pot or saucepan, sauté ground beef, garlic, and onion until the beef turns brown.
- Add taco seasoning and mix together. Next add the black beans, corn, diced tomatoes, tomato puree, and salt to taste. Stir all ingredients together and then add the rice and the beef stock.
- Bring pot or saucepan to boil, then cover and let simmer for about 45 minutes. Check to see if rice is cooked, especially if using brown rice which takes longer to soften than white rice.
- Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with chopped avocado and sour cream. Serve queso taco chips on the side if desired.

Note: This recipe can also be made in a Slow Cooker which can be a big time saver for busy families. Add sautéed beef, vegetables, rice, and stock to a slow cooker and simmer on low setting for six to eight hours or on high for four to six hours.

Bon Appétit!





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The University of Calgary Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board has approved these research studies (REB20-0983, REB20-2133, REB21-0535)





Fun Filled Time in 4-H

by Abigial Dowler, Prairie Winds 4-H

Another month of 4-H has gone by, and we have had so much fun! Something we forgot to mention in our last update in October, was the senior's home visit where members talked about 4-H to the residents.

November started off with an executive training session where we learned what each role is and how you do that job. We even hosted the district executive workshop, how fun! Projects this month began with a trip back to the racetrack to help with cleaning horse stalls after having a free tour and lunch in October. It was challenging work, but we got a lot done.



The junior members had a "Fun with Foods" workshop where they learned all about making healthy snacks, and the intermediate and senior members participated in an Italian cooking workshop to learn how to make gnocchi. Making

gnocchi took a long time as we started from scratch, but it tasted delicious in the end! The first foods project meeting happened this month and a few members participated in the Christmas decorating fundraiser.



November ended with some exciting projects, including the Global TV behind-thescenes tour where members learn how the news happens, and the VCA vet clinic tour where members learn what happens when you take your pet to the vet. To finish off the month, the Event Planning group had their second workshop and are doing a

fantastic job planning the club Christmas party that takes place in December.



Tuscany Real Estate Update Last 12 Months Tuscany MLS Real Estate Sale Price Update

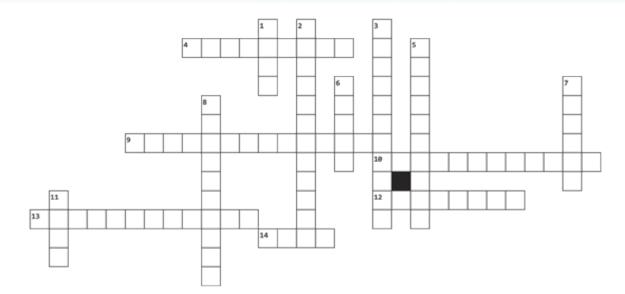
	Average Asking Price	Average Sold Price
November 2023	\$ 650,000	\$ 649,788
October 2023	\$ 675,000	\$ 687,350
September 2023	\$ 649,900	\$ 648,000
August 2023	\$ 675,000	\$ 680,000
July 2023	\$ 629,900	\$ 642,893
June 2023	\$ 629,900	\$ 650,000
May 2023	\$ 641,950	\$ 634,200
April 2023	\$ 622,400	\$ 623,750
March 2023	\$ 590,000	\$ 592,500
February 2023	\$ 609,900	\$ 595,000
January 2023	\$ 689,900	\$ 692,550
December 2022	\$ 639,900	\$ 600,000

Last 12 Months Tuscany MLS Real Estate Number of Listings Update

	0 1	
	No. New Properties	No. Properties Sold
November 2023	15	19
October 2023	25	22
September 2023	20	17
August 2023	26	33
July 2023	28	26
June 2023	30	37
May 2023	48	34
April 2023	27	34
March 2023	34	28
February 2023	18	17
January 2023	15	8
December 2022	5	13

To view more detailed information that comprise the above MLS averages please visit **tusc.mycalgary.com**

January Crossword



Across

4. Every year on January 11, Sir John A. _____ Day is observed in Canada.

9. Premiering on January 6, 1975, this game show features multiple contestants working with the alphabet to try and solve a puzzle. It has 41 seasons.

10. In 1904, the first New Year's celebration was held in Times Square to celebrate the new headquarters of this popular publishing company.

12. January is known for being the coldest month in this hemisphere.

13. Before being turned into a film, *The Girl on the Train* was written by _____ and published on January 6, 2015.

14. Born on January 25, 1981, this talented Alicia sings "No one" and "If I Ain't Got You".



Down

1. People born between December 22 and January 22 are considered Capricorns. Interestingly, this word comes from 'Capricornus' which means ______ in Latin.

2. A true Canadian icon, this former hockey player was born on January 26, 1961, and holds the nickname "The Great One".

3. This gruelling survival film came out on January 8, 2016, finally winning Leonardo DiCaprio his long-awaited Oscar.

5. This British singer songwriter was born on January 10, 1945, and is known for his raspy voice and his album *Every Picture Tells a Story*.

6. This two-faced God is the symbol of January in ancient Roman myth.

7. This stone is the official birthstone for January and is meant to keep you safe when travelling.

8. On January 25, 1961, Disney put out the spotted masterpiece, *101* ______.

11. This iconic single from Canada's own Justin Bieber features Ludacris and was released and available for digital download on January 18, 2010.



Councillor, Ward 1 Sonya Sharp 403-268-2430 ward1@calgary.ca © f @sonyasharpyyc

Happy New Year, Ward 1!

I hope everyone had a restful holiday season. My best wishes to you and your families for 2024!

Budget

As of the time I write this, deliberations on The City's budget have only recently concluded. Council approved a 7.8% increase to property taxes which I did not support. At a time when many Calgarians are struggling with affordability, we need to be focusing on the top priorities: safety and affordability. It's just not the right time for most of the new spending.

You can read more about my thoughts on this budget, and the feedback I received from Ward 1 constituents, at calgary.ca/ward1.

Residential Parking Permits

Through the budget, Council approved lower fees for residential parking permits than originally proposed. As a reminder, the new fees only apply to areas where permits are already required. There are no plans to impose permits or fees on new areas automatically. Visit calgary.ca/rpp to learn more.

Property Assessment

Property tax assessment notices are mailed out this month. The customer review period runs from now until March. Questions or concerns? Contact The City's Assessment department at 403-268-2888 or visit calgary.ca/assessment.

Calgary Awards

Nominations for the Calgary Awards to recognize outstanding individuals, groups, and businesses in our community are now open. Visit calgary.ca/awards to learn more and nominate someone for their contributions to our city.

Sidewalk Clearing

A reminder that sidewalks must be cleared by property owners or occupants within 24 hours after a snowfall. Be a Snow Angel! Consider helping out a neighbour by clearing their sidewalk.

Outdoor Activities

January is a great time to get outside to enjoy all the best that winter has to offer, like pleasure skating, hockey, crokicurl, cross-country skiing, and tobogganing right here in Ward 1. Visit calgary.ca/parks to find activities near you!



MP Calgary Rocky Ridge Pat Kelly 202 – 400 Crowfoot Crescent NW Calgary, AB T3G 5H6 Substantion 403-282-3587 Substantiation 403-282-3587 Substantiation 403-282-3587

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

In November, I visited the Field of Crosses and attended the Youth Day Sunset Ceremony. I also spoke and laid a wreath at the Bowness Legion's Remembrance Day ceremony where we honoured those who served, those who continue to serve, and the fallen.

The October 7 attack by the terrorist group Hamas on Israel shocked the world. Many constituents have contacted me with their views, including some who have said that they fear that they will be targeted for their faith here in Calgary. My full statement can be found at patkellymp.ca.

Many Calgarians are struggling with the high cost of living. The federal carbon tax has increased the cost of gas, groceries, and home heating. When the federal government announced that they will remove the carbon tax from home heating in Atlantic Canada, I repeatedly asked the government to apply the removal to all forms of home heating and all Canadians. I have and will continue to be a vocal opponent of the carbon tax, particularly as it applies to home heating and other necessities of life.

This winter, I have also repeatedly raised the issue of affordability and home ownership. I have asked the government to address rising interest rates and inflation. Many Calgarians are concerned that high interest rates will make their homes unaffordable when their mortgage comes up for renewal, while others cannot afford rent increases and believe they will never be able to own a home. I have called on the government to reduce the taxes and deficits that drive inflation which has triggered higher interest rates.

Constituents are welcome to contact me with concerns related to federal policy. Feedback from constituents is critical and helps me know what constituents think about matters under federal jurisdiction.

It remains my honour to represent you at the House of Commons as your Member of Parliament.

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