

# Step into Health

## What is Step into Health?

- It is an innovative program that encourages people to be physically active by taking the stairs rather than elevators or escalators.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends that adults should accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity every day to maintain or improve your health.
- Encouraging individuals to use the stairs is a simple way to help people build physical activity into their daily lives.
- Motivational signs are placed near stairs, escalators and elevators.
- These signs carry health promoting messages to encourage individuals to take the stairs.
- Step into Health was adapted from the “Stairway to Health” program developed in partnership by the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Council for Health and Active Living at Work.



## What are the benefits of having Step into Health in your building?

- Studies show that organizations that promote wellness and healthy behaviours create a positive environment for their visitors and employees.
- By partnering with Toronto Public Health, your building will be recognized in the community as being a healthy environment that supports active living.
- **Step into Health** may build upon other health initiatives and programs in your facility.
- Stair climbing is an activity that most people feel confident to do.
- Encouraging stair use helps to decrease congestion on escalators and in elevators.
- Step into Health signs can increase stair use by up to 15 percent.
- People using the stairs can assist in identifying any problems or concerns with the stairs and bring them to the attention of management.
- In case of an emergency, visitors and employees may become more familiar with the location of emergency exits.

## What is involved in starting Step into Health in your building?

- This is a FREE program. There will be no cost to you.
- Toronto Public Health staff will work with you to assess the suitability of your building for the Step into Health program.
- Toronto Public Health staff will work with you to organize the placement of signs in your facility.
- Toronto Public Health will work with you to help promote stair use in your building to both visitors and employees.

## Questions and Answers for Building Managers

### Will more people using the stairs increase the risk for slips and falls and liability suits?

No. In fact, by having more people use the stairs or stairwells, the overall building risk management program can be greatly improved.

### Will the locked access doors on floors be propped open?

No. We understand the importance of security in the building.

### What type of health message will be on the sign?

- Get Active. Take the Stairs.

### What type of design and size of signage will be used for this program?

We will consult and seek approval from the building manager regarding size and placement of signage.

## Did you know that...

- Almost 2/3 of Canadians are not physically active enough to maintain or improve their health.
- Physical activity increases physical strength and flexibility and is an effective stress reliever.
- Stair use is a physical activity that is easy to do and does not require special equipment.
- Time spent stair climbing over the course of the day can contribute to the amount of physical activity adults require every day.
- Regular stair use improves a person's overall fitness, increases bone strength, improves cholesterol levels and can help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

**For more information, call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 or visit [toronto.ca/health/walkintohealth](http://toronto.ca/health/walkintohealth)**

