



HEALTHY ALBERTA  
COMMUNITIES

# Building a **Healthy** Community:

## *Norwood/North Central Edmonton*



## *Our Report to You*

*Healthy Alberta Communities* is a five-year project, funded by Alberta Health and Wellness, and delivered by the Centre for Health Promotion Studies in the School of Public Health at the University of Alberta. Since 2005, we have been working with organizations and people in Alberta towns and cities to build communities that promote and support healthy living. Your community is one of four project communities. The purpose of this report is to tell you what your community has done to become a healthy Alberta community. **We're excited by the changes we have seen in Norwood/North Central Edmonton – and we want you to get excited too!**



## *The Healthy Alberta Communities Project*

The purpose of *Healthy Alberta Communities* is to develop, implement and evaluate an approach to preventing chronic disease and improving health that has worked in other provinces and countries. Our goal is to create a uniquely Albertan approach that can be used by other communities across the province. To do that, we sponsor a community coordinator in Norwood/North Central Edmonton and provide “seed money” to invest in community activities and facilities that help make it easier to eat healthy, stop smoking and get active. This small investment has returned great dividends to your community!

## *Getting Started*

In the first six months, the community coordinator got to know your community by listening to people, making connections, participating in events and investing in activities. With this solid grounding, the project hosted a community workshop to get people excited about *Healthy Alberta Communities*. The workshop brought together potential partners from municipal government, health region staff, community organizations and interested individuals. Together, we set out a road map that would take us to a healthier community.

## *Measuring the Baseline*

In 2006, we did a telephone survey to learn more about the health of people in Norwood/North Central Edmonton. We also set up a clinic to measure height, weight and other health indicators of people who agreed to participate. Your community is using this information to set priorities and take action where it will make the most difference. Our team will also use these baseline measures to answer the question, “Did we make a difference?” (See pages 2-3: *The Measure of Health in Norwood/North Central Edmonton*)

“The Eastwood and Area Food Security Network engages local organizations and community members in addressing food security issues. Healthy Alberta Communities supports the network in raising awareness of food insecurity in North Central Edmonton and in developing initiatives that increase access to healthy foods for community residents.”

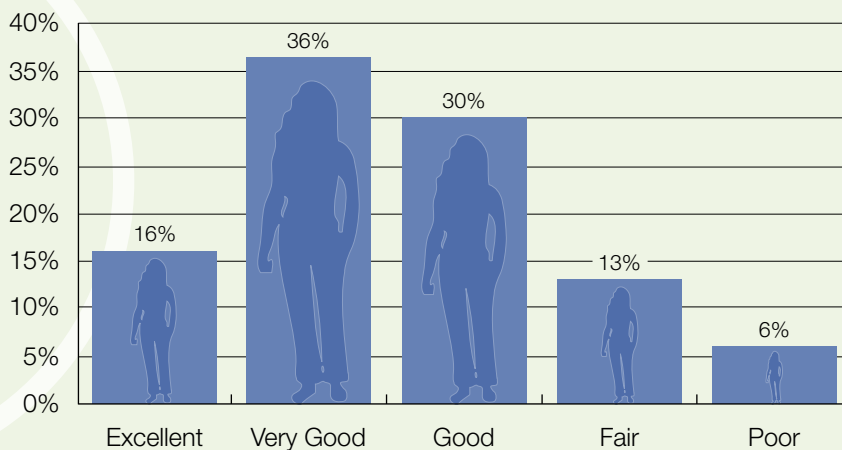
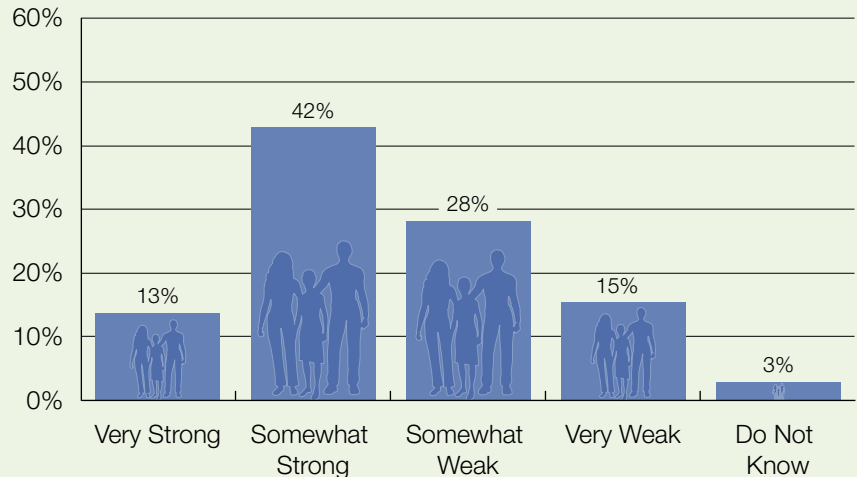
*Dianne Gillespie, Community Coordinator  
Healthy Alberta Communities*



## *The Measure of Health in Norwood/North Central Edmonton*

### Community Belonging

More than half of adults in Norwood/North Central Edmonton feel a somewhat or very strong sense of community belonging.

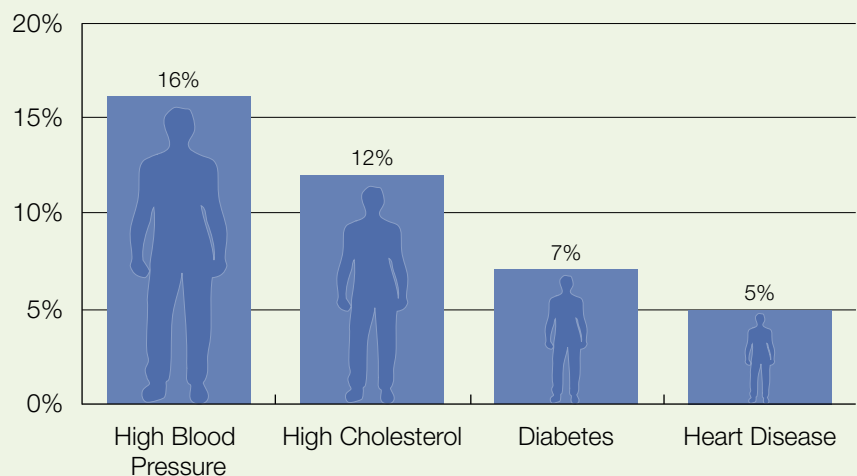


### Self-Rated Health

Most adults in Norwood/North Central Edmonton rated their health as good, very good or excellent.

### Self-Reported Chronic Disease

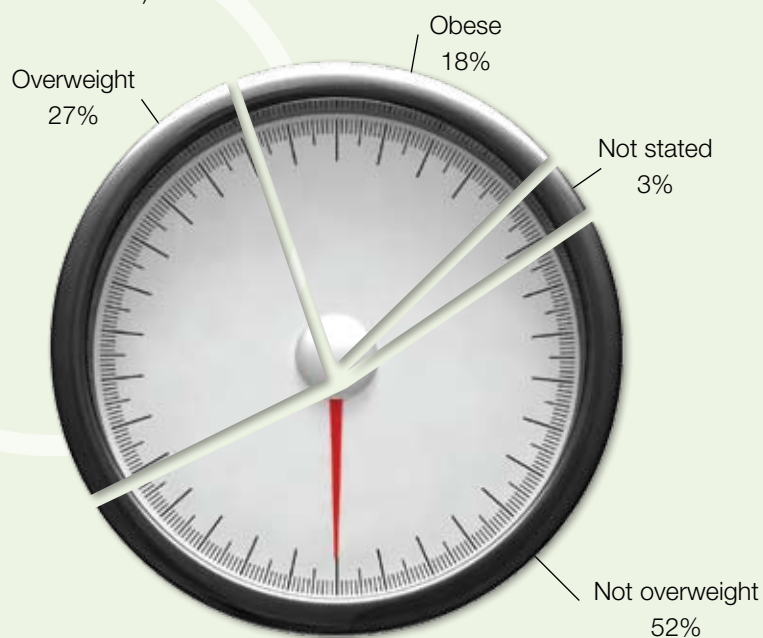
Less than one in five adults in Norwood/North Central Edmonton reported that they have high blood pressure and just over one in 10 reported high cholesterol. Over one in 20 adults reported diabetes and one in 20 reported heart disease.



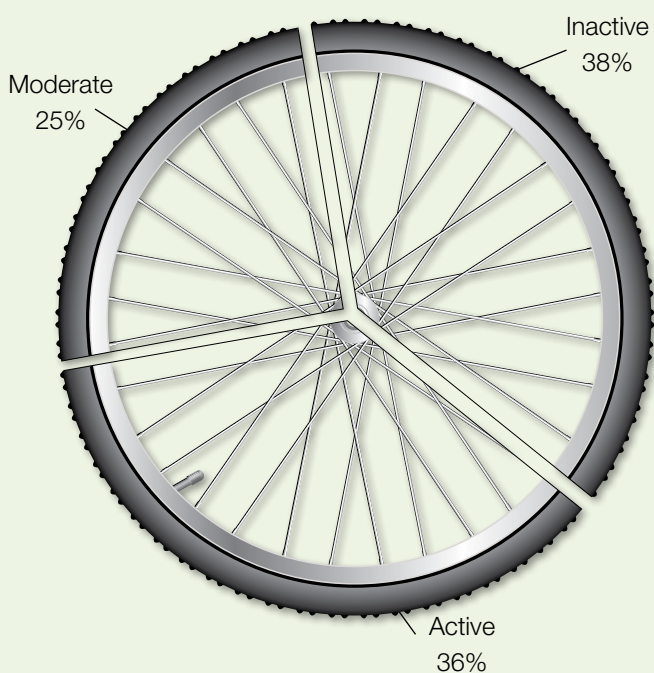


## Risk Factors for Chronic Disease

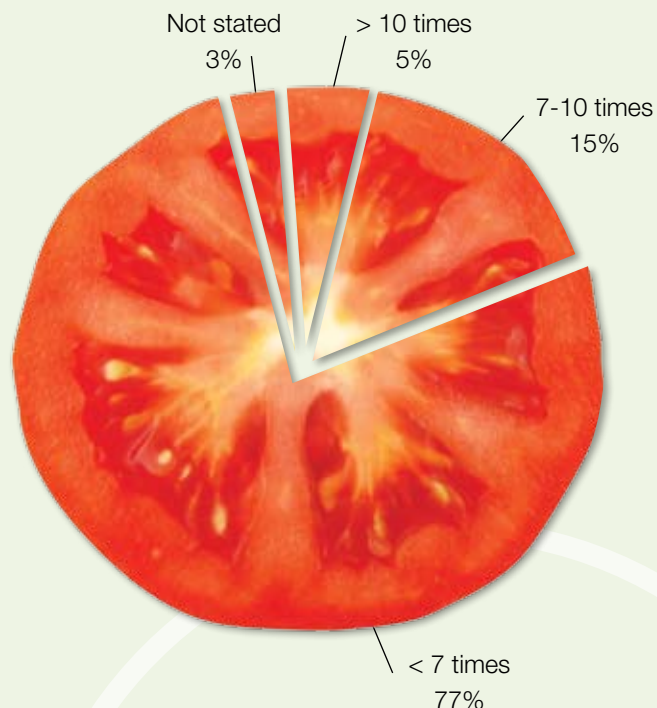
Less than half of the adult population in Norwood/North Central Edmonton reported being overweight or obese, compared to 50.5% for the province as a whole (34.7% overweight, 15.8% obese).\*



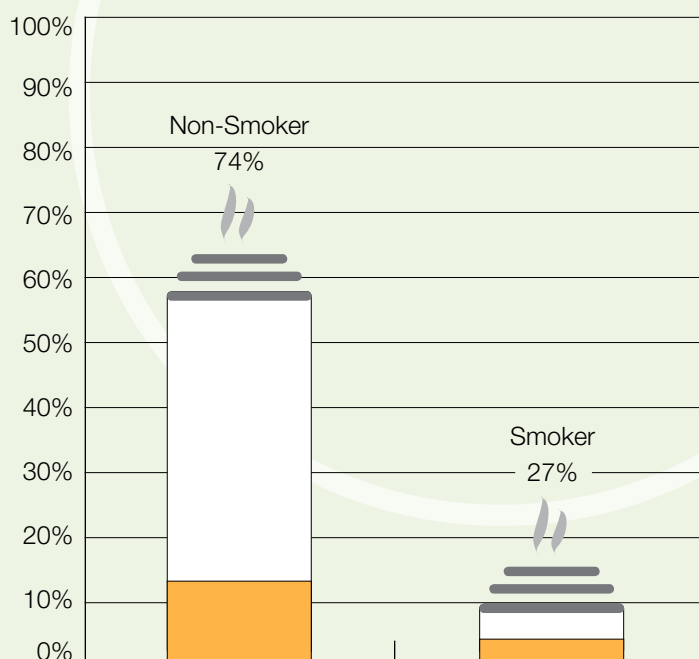
Almost two thirds of adults in Norwood/North Central Edmonton are moderately active or active. Two in five adults are not active.



Most adults in Norwood/North Central Edmonton do not eat enough fruits and vegetables. Just one in five adults reported eating fruits and vegetables seven or more times a day.



More than one in four adults in Norwood/North Central Edmonton smoke. The rate of smoking is highest among adults, 35-64.



## Setting Priorities

In 2007, *Healthy Alberta Communities* hosted a two-day priority setting workshop with community groups and organizations in Medicine Hat and area. The purpose of the workshop was to find out what was already working and what more could be done to remove barriers and promote healthier choices. Community participants set three main priorities:

- 1) Promote social inclusion
- 2) Support food security
- 3) Increase access to recreation space

## Taking Action

It's not enough to simply tell people to "eat healthy," "stop smoking" and "get active." Rather, people need to live in communities where it is easy to make healthy choices. That means creating environments where people have the things they need to be healthy. *Healthy Alberta Communities* works to influence these key environments:



**Physical** – Do people have access to sidewalks, trails and facilities that make it easy to get active?



**Economic** – Does the community offer meaningful work? Can people make enough money to pay for healthy food?






**Social** – Do people have good friends and neighbours? Do they feel a strong sense of community belonging? Does the community offer social supports and services when people need them?



**Political** – Are there policies, laws and regulations in place that help create safe and healthy spaces in the community?

Here are some of the exciting ways your community is taking action on the determinants of health... and making it easier to make healthy choices!



| Carrot Café   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <br><br> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote social inclusion</b></li> </ul> | <p>Carrot Café is a volunteer-driven coffee house that provides a place for people to gather and connect with others in the Norwood neighbourhood. Healthy Alberta Communities supported "the Carrot" by funding the development of a business plan for this unique social enterprise. The Carrot Café is an initiative of Arts on the Ave, a community-based, grassroots organization that "blends artistic expressions into an educational, mentoring and sharing environment."</p> |

For more information, visit: the Carrot Café at 9351-118 Avenue or <http://artsontheave.org/index.php/thecarrot/>

| Food Security  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <br><br><br> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Support food security</b></li> </ul> | <p>Healthy Alberta Communities worked with City of Edmonton social workers to kick-start the Eastwood and Area Food Security Network. The network has created a food basket program and started a community garden (see below). The food basket program, offered through WECAN, provides healthier food at a lower price by buying in bulk. Network members have also offered collective kitchens, junior chefs programs and a gardening workshop series – Get Gardening (see below). Healthy Alberta Communities is also a member of the Edmonton Food Security Network.</p> |

For more information on the Eastwood and Area Food Security Network, contact: [dianneg@ualberta.ca](mailto:dianneg@ualberta.ca)

For more information on the Edmonton Food Security Network, contact: [sgibson@earthsharesolutions.ca](mailto:sgibson@earthsharesolutions.ca)

### Get Gardening Workshop Series



- **Support food security**



Get Gardening, a series of seven workshops, was offered to community members in Norwood/ North Central Edmonton to encourage local food growing. Workshop topics included composting, seed starting, insects, ecoscaping, herb gardening and container gardening. Over 50 people attended each day of the two-day workshop.

For more information, visit: [www.healthyalbertacommunities.com](http://www.healthyalbertacommunities.com)

### Modified Fit to Play



- **Increase access to recreation**
- **Promote social inclusion**



Healthy Alberta Communities worked with Crystal Kids and the City of Edmonton to offer a modified version of the City's Fit to Play program. The goal was to increase use of public recreation facilities by Crystal Kids' members, by reducing barriers and offering specific programs that would appeal to this group of young people.

### Crystal Kids Community Garden



- **Support food security**
- **Promote social inclusion**



The Crystal Kids Community Garden in North Central Edmonton gives youth and other community members an opportunity to grow their own food. The garden, located in a private yard in the Eastwood neighborhood, offers six separate garden plots.

For more information, contact: Crystal Kids, 780-479-5283

### Community Action Dash



- **Increase access to recreation**
- **Promote social inclusion**



Healthy Alberta Communities helped initiate a family fun run in the McCauley/Alberta Avenue area to raise awareness of the walkability of the neighbourhood. The Community Action Dash attracted about 30 participants in its first year (2007) and 50 in 2008. Action for Healthy Communities, a community-based organization, continues to offer the Community Action Dash as an annual event.

For more information, contact: Crystal Kids, 780-479-5283

### Reducing Barriers to Recreation



- **Increase access to recreation**
- **Promote social inclusion**






Healthy Alberta Communities worked in partnership with the City of Edmonton, Bissell Centre and Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative to identify barriers that new immigrants and other community members face when accessing recreation facilities. In response, a Diversity Awareness Seminar was developed for front-line recreation staff to help make these facilities more welcoming.

### Mentorship



Healthy Alberta Communities worked with Eastwood School and the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program to create a mentor room at Eastwood School – and provided a computer and desk for the room. The mentor room and mentorship program contribute to overall well-being, by helping young people make healthy choices in all areas of their lives. Healthy Alberta Communities also helped to develop a mentoring program for at risk youth with the Eastwood Neighbourhood Empowerment Team, an Edmonton Police Services program.

For more information on the mentor room or the NET program, contact: Eastwood School, 780-477-2352 or [sarah.christiansen@police.edmonton.ab.ca](mailto:sarah.christiansen@police.edmonton.ab.ca)

| Metamorphosis   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <br><br> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote social inclusion</b></li> </ul> | <p>Healthy Alberta Communities initiated and funded a video project to highlight the work of Action for Healthy Communities, a community-based organization working in north central Edmonton. Students from the Victoria School of Performing and Visual Arts in central Edmonton partnered with Healthy Alberta Communities and Action for Healthy Communities to produce the video. The result – Metamorphosis – not only tells the story of community action, it has also encouraged the students to become more involved in the local community.</p> |
|   |   |   |
|   |   |   |

For more information, contact: Crystal Kids, 780-479-5283

## Creating Connections

Healthy Alberta Communities in Norwood/North Central Edmonton works with the following networks and organizations, representing agencies, government departments and individuals:

- Action for Healthy Communities
- Active Edmonton
- Alberta Avenue Business Association
- Alberta Avenue Community League
- Alberta Social and Health Equities Network
- Another Way
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Bissell Centre
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Capital Health
- Carrot Café
- City of Edmonton
- Community Connect
- Crystal Kids
- DECSA
- Edmonton's Food Bank
- Edmonton Food Security Network
- Edmonton Public Schools
- Edmonton Social Planning Council
- Edmonton Tobacco Reduction Network
- Growing Food Security in Alberta

- Health For Two
- Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative
- Neighbourhood Empowerment Team
- Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre
- Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Running Room
- Social Enterprise Fund
- St. Faith's Anglican Church
- Stronger Eastwood Families
- Urban Core Support Network
- Voices from Our Neighbourhoods
- WECAN

## Here's how you can get involved in building a healthy community in Norwood/North Central Edmonton!

- Use and enjoy the activities that are now available in your community, including the Carrot Café, community gardens and new recreation opportunities.
- Support the exciting initiatives in this report by getting involved as a volunteer.
- Encourage your municipal government to make decisions and set policies that will support healthy living.
- Watch for opportunities to help set priorities for increasing healthy choices in your community.



...and if you see "Healthy AB Cmty" on your caller ID, please answer the phone! We will be repeating the telephone survey and measurement clinics in Spring 2009 and want to hear from you.

For more information, visit:

**[www.healthyalbertacommunities.com](http://www.healthyalbertacommunities.com)**

Or contact:

Tatjana Alvaj

Phone: **780-492-2064**

Email: **[tatjana.alvaj-korenec@ualberta.ca](mailto:tatjana.alvaj-korenec@ualberta.ca)**





“The on the ground capacity building work of Healthy Alberta Communities is exactly what is needed to address some of the most serious social issues facing Edmonton today.”

*HAC partner*

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Centre for  
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