



## MEET Blair Nelson

*“Throughout college, I gained nearly 70 pounds and was weighing in around 245 pounds. As a 5’8” person, this was not healthy,” Blair says.*

**Blair Nelson recognized that he was not his healthiest self and wanted to make a change.**

**“Coincidentally, this started two years ago at the same time as my career move to Magna LexaMar in Boyne City, Michigan and is ongoing.”**

He began his journey trying out various fad diets, such as low fat, low carb, calorie counting and more. Fad diets are popular diets that usually guarantee weight loss, however, typically do not follow guidelines for supporting overall good health.

*Blair found that fad diets were not very sustainable over a long period of time and decided to focus on changing his lifestyle in order to improve his overall health.*

This 42-year-old adjusted his dietary plan by focusing “on reducing inflammation by minimizing grains and removing genetically modified foods from my diet,” he says. Blair begins his day by exercising first thing in the morning. “I have learned that this is one of the best ways to burn excess fat and calories and it allows me to have my evenings after work for family and other activities.” Blair’s primary fitness regime includes the use of a variety of fitness apps to help him track his exercises and receive guidance for proper strength training. He also incorporates cardiovascular training at least three times per week.

Blair enjoys staying fit through his love of exploring the Northern Michigan outdoors, and participating in various activities including kayaking, hiking, overnight camping, fat-tire mountain biking, and snowboarding.

The World Class Manufacturing Manager “started ‘exercising’ before the age of 8 as a youth wrestler.” He states that “between then and now, I have learned one key factor in health: small changes over time aids in the creation of habits. These habits can be good or bad. They can sneak up on you, so be aware of them. Take time to do a ‘check up from the neck up,’ and evaluate those habits. It helps to have accountability partners in life to make sure you’re being honest with yourself.”

As important as exercise and nutrition have been for Blair, his support system which include his fiancée, his daughter, and his Fitbit community have been just as influential. His family and friends “were very supportive and encouraging” throughout his journey and have helped keep him motivated.

*Over the years, Blair has found what works for him on his journey to a more healthful life.*

“As I have aged into my 40’s, my health has gotten better. I feel more in control of myself and this is an empowering feeling that most definitely translates into a better work-life balance.”

His use of advancing health technologies and his personal support system continue to keep him on the right track.

### BLAIR NELSON

Magna LexaMar

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## DID YOU know?

### ELECTROMAGNETIC (EM) RADIATION is all around us!

EM radiation is a form of energy that includes x-rays, radio waves, and light waves. It is found all around us and in things we use such as cell phones, microwaves, and electric motors.

Some forms of EM radiation are ionizing and clearly harmful to the body, including gamma rays and x-rays, though these are very useful in diagnosing and treating disease. In the case of non-ionizing radiation, such as radio waves from cell phones and Wi-Fi networks, we are far less certain about any harmful effects.

#### NOT SURE OR WANT TO KNOW HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF?

Check out Defender Pad Laptop EMF Radiation and Health Shield that is designed to block cellphone, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and heat radiation.



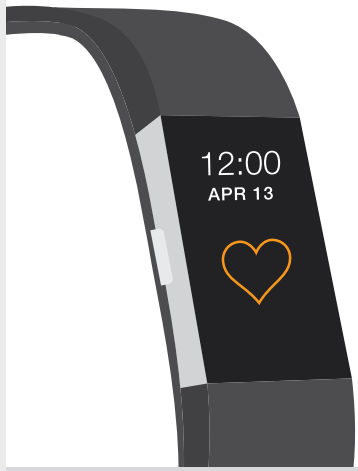
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# WEARABLE TECHNOLOGIES

One of the fastest growing trends in the world is wearable technologies. From smart watches and heart rate monitors, to eyewear and more, wearable technologies are being thoroughly embraced by people of all ages around the globe. This vibrant market is expected to grow to \$17 billion by 2021, and the opportunity for health-related technologies is emerging as well.



## FITNESS

Fitness devices such as FitBit and Garmin are amongst the most popular technologies, and dominate the wearable's technology market alongside similar "smart watch" products. These devices have the ability to track sleeping patterns, monitor heart rate, track steps, display on-screen workouts, stress levels, nutrition information, and provide GPS tracking of just about every exercise available including swimming, biking and running. It is no wonder they have found their place as a staple in peoples' daily lives. Built-in pedometers track steps throughout the day, which can be an excellent and simple tool to help people make positive changes to their lifestyle. Heart rate monitors have also become increasingly popular in the fitness world. Other companies like MYZONE have found their niche product in developing a chest strap to more accurately track heart rate activity during exercise. The trend is continuing to grow, and several health insurance plans are now even offering incentives to their members for achieving activity related goals.

## HEALTHCARE

Wearable technologies have also emerged in the healthcare industry, and the opportunity for growth is a landscape of green space. Companies such as Nuyu Sleep System can help a person with sleeping difficulties to fall asleep, and stay asleep longer, by helping the body maintain natural sleep rhythms and body temperature. Virtual reality, which was originally developed for gaming, is now being adapted for areas such as rehabilitation and pain management. Neurofeedback devices have been created to train individuals to learn and practice meditation, and has even been used to aid in addiction therapy. Diabetics have found great use in wearable technology known as "Continuous-Glucose Monitors," which allows a person to track their glucose levels throughout the day and night. Blood pressure home monitoring systems and tools have also been successfully used for some time. Hypertension and heart disease is on the rise, and companies like Heartisans are developing wearable technology to help detect early signs of cardiac arrest through ECG tracking, which reads electrical activity of the heart in order to prevent a heart attack.



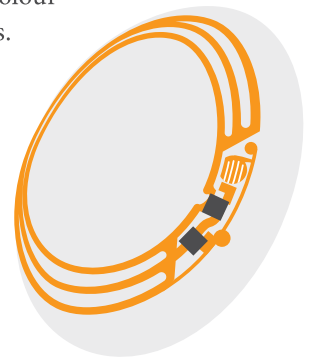
## SECURITY

Individuals with elderly relatives in their care have found the use of wearable technology to be beneficial for both security and healthcare. Medical life alert bracelets are very popular, which can alert both loved ones and health emergency personnel if an individual has experienced a fall or injury. Another interesting development are gait sensors. By attaching sensors to socks, systems are able to detect a number of potential issues in movement patterns. This technology can also be especially beneficial with respect to tracking movement in the elderly, and can limit disappearances caused as a result of conditions such as dementia. There are even bed alarms that alert if a person has unknowingly gotten out of bed. Fall prevention is also being taken to the next level with wearable clothing such as hip-attached airbags, to prevent injuries during a fall.



## FUTURE

The wearable technologies industry continues to grow every day, and there are many new product ideas already in development. One interesting concept is using "smart shoes" to charge your phone, which can allow an individual to generate power through their movement. Other products stem from clothing technology, which can include mood shirts or rings which change colour based on sensors that detect physiological responses to the wearer's emotions. T-shirts that vibrate based on which direction to go, or illuminate based on which muscle groups are being activated are also being developed. Personal assistant smart contact lenses can also potentially be embedded with the ability to measure blood sugar levels. Even "smart tattoos" have found the spotlight, which uses special ink that is able to conduct electricity, opening the door for a number of potential health benefits including activity tracking, and temperature monitoring. The only questions that remain are where does it go from here, and are we ready for it?



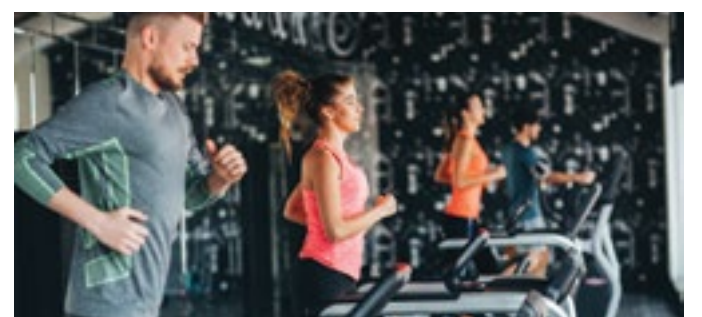
## FITNESS & EXERCISE TRENDS

These days there are countless options to get your daily dose of physical activity. Check out our list of the biggest fitness and exercise trends for 2018.



### BARRE

Barre classes are inspired by ballet. They mix elements of pilates, dance, yoga, and functional training. The classes are choreographed to music and use the barre as a prop while doing exercises. Barre focuses on posture and isometric strength training, which is contracting a specific set of muscles while holding the rest of your body still. It involves high repetitions of small range movements. Barre has been proven to be beneficial for strength, muscle definition, endurance, flexibility, posture, and strengthening the mind-body connection.



### EPOC THEORY

Some fitness clubs offer one hour full body group fitness workouts, focused on endurance, strength, and power. The workouts are based on Excess Post Exercise Oxygen Consumption (EPOC), which is better known as the "afterburn" effect. During the workout, you will wear a monitor that will display your heart rate and calorie burn. Intensity is based on your individual heart rate zones, and is designated to maintain a target zone that stimulates metabolism and increases energy. Believers claim that members burn an estimated 500 to 1,000 calories in the hour and continue to burn calories for up to 36 hours thanks to the afterburn effect.

## At Home GENETIC TESTING KITS

It has been said that knowledge is power, and as the market surges with at home genetic testing kits, they aim to give us knowledge about our ancestors and our genetic make-up, providing us with power to connect and be proactive when it comes to our health.

At home genetic testing kits are an easy way to access information about your ethnicity and ancestral background, as well as connect you with relatives. Most kits require you to collect a small amount of saliva, label the collection vial, and send it in for analysis. Some kits will also provide you with information on specific genetic health risk factors, including if you are a carrier for certain diseases. There are many companies that offer varying degrees of genetic tests, below are some highlights.

### 23 & Me

\$129–  
\$250

23 & Me offers a DNA Health and Ancestry Kit which provides you with information about your ancestors, your health, and can connect you to genetic matches within their database. The DNA Health kit will provide you with multiple reports such as a Wellness Report that can identify if you are lactose intolerant and identifies your body's muscle composition. This kit also offers a Traits Report that can identify male hair loss, whether or not you'll have dimples or freckles, your skin pigmentation, eye colour etc. With this test you will also get access to a Carrier Status Report that identifies variants in your genes to see if you are a potential carrier for 40+ health conditions. Finally, there is a Genetic Health Risks report that will tell you if you could develop early onset Alzheimer's disease, Hemochromatosis, Parkinson's disease, if you have celiac disease or macular degeneration. The DNA Health and Ancestry Kit provides you with a lot of information, and can prompt you to make lifestyle changes to avoid certain health risks.

### Ancestry DNA

\$69–  
\$129

The Ancestry DNA test offered through Ancestry.ca identifies your ethnicity and family background. The test uses autosomal mapping of your DNA to determine your ethnic origin from 150 different regions of the world. Ancestry has over 6 million people in their database and can also connect you to potential relatives through the DNA matching service.

### My Heritage

\$140

The My Heritage genetic test will give you an ethnicity estimate, which is a breakdown of your ancestral background by percentage. This company also offers DNA matches, and allows other DNA testing providers to upload information into their database, thereby giving you a larger pool of potential matches. My Heritage provides you with a percentage genetic match based on shared genetic sequences to anyone in their database you share DNA with.

### WHY DO IT?

You may choose to have your DNA tested to connect with unknown relatives, or to predict your susceptibility to certain health conditions. Unlocking this information can empower you to make changes to your lifestyle and help prevent disease.



### CROSSFIT

CrossFit is promoted as both a physical exercise and a competitive fitness sport. The workouts are based on high intensity interval training (HIIT) and incorporate functional movements from gymnastics, weightlifting, running, rowing, plyometrics, and more. The focus of CrossFit is doing the most amount of work in the least amount of time. Combining constantly changing movements with high intensity leads to larger gains in your fitness level.



### HIGH INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING (HIIT)

HIIT works by alternating quick bursts of high intensity exercise with short rest periods. The workout has you exerting 100% of your effort to keep your heart rate up, which burns more fat in a shorter period of time. On average, a 20 minute HIIT workout will alternate between 30–45 seconds of various high intensity exercises, and 10–15 seconds of rest. This will burn calories during the workout, as well as kick start the afterburn effect which allows you to burn calories even after you have stopped exercising.



### KICK BOXING

Some fitness clubs offer kickboxing themed fitness, incorporating functional, interval, cardiovascular, and circuit training routines. The 20 minute workout consists of nine three-minute stations that each target different muscle groups. This full body strengthening workout can help you achieve significant results.

## Guided Meditation PHONE APPS

*Close your eyes and center your focus... Begin to relax the muscles around your head, neck, shoulders, and back. As you continue to breathe calmly, notice how the air flows freely in and out with each breath. Feel whatever tension you may have escape the body...*

The art of meditation is a century old practice of mindful breathing, and guided imagery to promote awareness and develop a sense of calm clarity. Studies show that meditation may help promote relaxation while reducing anxiety, stress, and depression.

Undoubtedly our smartphones, and technology in general, compete for the top spot of distractions in our busy day-to-day lives. This is where meditation apps try to help.

Guided meditation and mindfulness apps are picking up as a hot new trend for smartphones. All in the palm of our hands, they are designed to offer a sense of calm reprieve from the busy hustle of our everyday lives.

These apps are generally meant to offer a free introduction to the basics of guided meditation, progressive relaxation, and breathing techniques. Features include a selection of 3, 5, 10, and even 20-minute pre-set guided meditations accompanied by tips and reminders for restful sleep and relaxation. Some also include sleep stories and soothing background sounds.

Whether you have experience with meditation, or are just looking to get started, these apps will help set you on the right track to a centered mind, body, and soul.

Apps such as Calm, Headspace, and the Mindfulness App are some of the top reviewed guided meditation apps for both iPhone and Android devices. Try them out, and start your journey toward mindfulness today!



### Calm

IPHONE ★★★★★  
ANDROID ★★★★★

Free



### Headspace

IPHONE ★★★★★  
ANDROID ★★★★★

Free



### The Mindfulness App

IPHONE ★★★★★  
ANDROID ★★★★★

Free

### DID YOU *know?*

Mindfulness is a type of "thoughtless awareness," the ability to be present, to rest in the here and now, and be fully engaged with whatever we're doing in the moment.

[headspace.com/meditation-101/what-is-meditation](https://www.headspace.com/meditation-101/what-is-meditation)





There is something extra satisfying about starting your day off with a healthy breakfast.

Smoothies are quick to make (can even be made ahead of time) and easy to customize with all sorts of healthy options; but you can easily find yourself hungry in no time if you don't fill them with the right ingredients. Don't just make a smoothie with fruit, ice, and liquid — add protein, fat and fibre to the mix to keep you feeling full longer.

**HERE ARE SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE SMOOTHIE ADDITIONS:**



This nutrient dense protein powder serves as a great source of both protein and fibre. 1 scoop (30 g) is packed with 8 grams of fibre and 15 grams of protein! Hemp is also a great source of magnesium which helps to support blood sugar levels, regulate blood pressure and helps with muscle recovery.



Spinach, kale, and even a few other dark leafy greens make delicious and fibre-rich smoothie ingredients. If blending your greens sounds strange, consider that it is the easiest way to “get in your greens” without eating a salad and improve your fibre intake at the same time. Greens contain around 5-6 grams of fibre per 2 cups which is the perfect amount for a green smoothie. You can also choose frozen spinach to save money and fridge space if fresh spinach is not an option.



These tiny seeds pack quite the nutritional punch and are an asset to any smoothie. Just 1 ounce (2 tbsp) contains 10 grams of fibre and 9 grams of healthy unsaturated fats including omega-3s, which are anti-inflammatory and assist with controlling blood cholesterol levels.



Avocados are considered one of the best fruits due to their many health benefits. While many fruits are high in carbohydrates (carbs) ½ of an avocado only contains 9 grams of carbs, with 7 grams coming from fibre! They are also high in healthy fats which not only helps you feel full for longer but also helps to keep cholesterol levels in check. Being one of the highest sources of potassium and a source of magnesium, avocados are also good for blood pressure making it our fruit of choice for heart health and a great addition to your smoothie.



**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 CUP unsweetened almond milk
- 1 SCOOP hemp protein powder
- 1 CUP fresh spinach
- 1 CUP fresh kale
- ½ CUP frozen blueberries
- ½ banana
- 1 TSP cinnamon
- ½ CUP ice

*If you're feeling adventurous, try adding spirulina powder to replace 1 cup of the greens!*

**METHOD**

Blend all ingredients in a high powered blender and enjoy chilled! This smoothie is both delicious and packed with protein and nutrients from the hemp protein powder and the added greens.

**POPULAR DIET TRENDS**

You may have heard the common terms paleo or ketogenic, but what do these mean? The following are a list of popular diet programs and their Do's and Don'ts when it comes to food recommendations. Please note, this is by no means a recommendation to start a specific diet or program. It is for informational purposes only with the intent to explain the differences between diets.

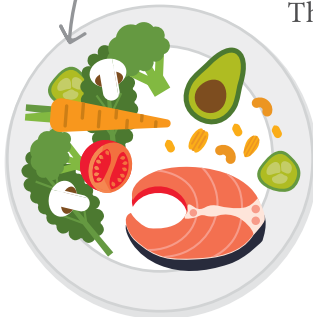
**PALEO DIET**

The paleo diet, commonly known as the “caveman diet,” is based on eating foods that our ancestors ate.

The diet focuses on eating the right foods versus counting calories.

**EAT:** meats, fish, seafood, fruits and vegetables, eggs, nuts, seeds and healthy oils.

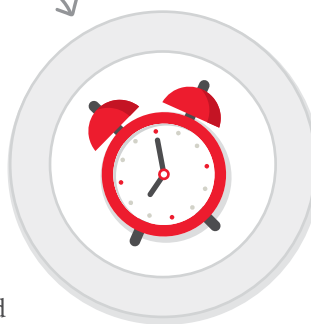
**AVOID:** processed foods, refined sugar, cereal grains, dairy, legumes, potatoes, refined vegetable oils, and salt.



**INTERMITTENT FASTING**

Intermittent fasting refers to fasting, or not eating any food, for a set period of time, typically 8–12 hours.

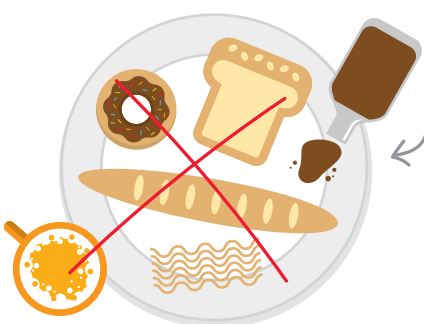
The diet does not focus on what foods you eat, but rather the timing of your meals. It is believed that intermittent fasting has benefits related to weight loss and metabolic health.



**GLUTEN-FREE**

A gluten-free diet is based on eliminating foods that contain gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, some oats and other grains. Some individuals do this to manage food sensitivities or an allergy, and others simply eat gluten-free based on personal choice.

Common gluten-containing foods to avoid are: bread, pastries, pasta and noodles, crackers, baked goods, cereal, sauces and gravies, beer, and any product with “wheat flour” as an ingredient.



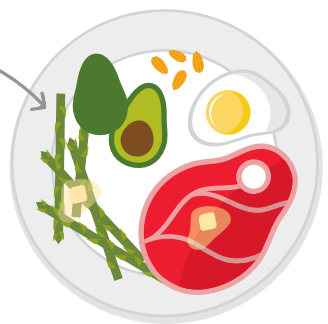
**KETOGENIC DIET**

The ketogenic diet is based on eating foods high in healthy fats.

The nutrient intake goal is to eat 70% fats, 25% protein, and 5% carbohydrates (carbs). As a result the diet is also known as a “low-carb diet.” The purpose is to encourage the body to burn fat as fuel (versus carbs/sugar as fuel).

**EAT:** meats, leafy greens, vegetables, high fat dairy, nuts and seeds, avocado, berries, and healthy fats.

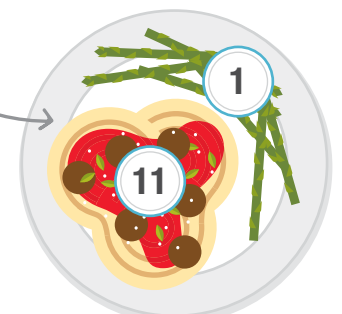
**AVOID:** grains, sugar, fruit, tubers, and root vegetables.



**WEIGHT WATCHERS**

The Weight Watchers program is based on measuring portions of macronutrients (carbs, fats, and protein).

The program tries to make this process easier for people by using a point system whereby different foods have different point values. The idea is to stay within a point range every day, and it allows you to consume a variety of food, but limits volume/portion sizes.



FOR MORE articles, employee stories, quizzes, and recipes, please visit [magnawellness.ca](http://magnawellness.ca)

**WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

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