

# Global Citizens for Nutrition

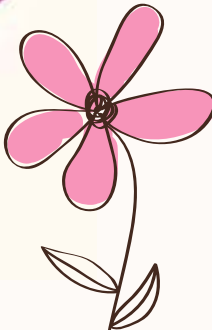
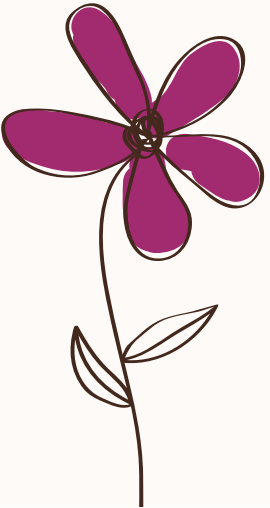
BY YOUTH FOR YOUTH

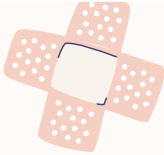


HELLO!

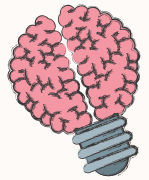
My name is Dr. Megg Wylie and I am a recent medical school graduate from the University of Calgary (Class of 2022). Starting in July of 2022, I will be beginning my residency in Emergency Medicine in Edmonton, Alberta. Outside of school, I am passionate about working within research and advocacy realms surrounding harm reduction, age-friendly healthcare, as well as housing and homelessness.

MEGG WYLIE





I have been involved in research and advocacy around housing and harm reduction for several years. I believe that physicians have an obligation and responsibility to be active advocates in both their communities and globally. I am aware of how physicians, and in some ways also medical students have immense societal influence and power.



It is both an honour and a privilege to be in medicine, to serve the underserved and to be a conveyor of medical knowledge. I choose to engage in advocacy because it is my responsibility to advocate for my patients and my community in multiple spheres; this includes my individual interactions with patients but also my engagement in the levels of social services (i.e. housing), and government and policy.



THINK  
POSITIVE





While I am not an expert on nutrition, I believe that it is important to effectively fuel your body by understanding the importance of nutrition while also treating it with kindness. I believe women are often conditioned into having a negative relationship with food; where instead of seeing food and nutrients as fuel for their bodies, they are instead seen as something to battle against - a calorie count to be defeated in the sake of achieving a body type that is largely unattainable.



Furthermore, women's nutrition is important because women deserve to have a healthy relationship with food and to effectively fuel their bodies. Women play a crucial role in talking about nutrition when having conversations with one another about food because we have a long way to go in shaping the way we talk about nutrition, food, and weight with one another.









I am a strong believer that people do not always need to have a compelling story of inspiration regarding the things that they love. Largely, I feel I have sought out becoming a physician because I love to learn and it is a career of life-long learning. Also, I have a passion for justice and advocating for others. However, I did in part feel inspired to become a doctor by my father, who was the first person to become a physician in my family.

My father went back to medical school to pursue medicine as his second career during his late 30s. Seeing my father complete medical school during my formative years also emphasized to me that being a physician was something within my reach, something possible for me to try to achieve. Prior to that it never was an option on my horizon--and it was still not an option, right away. I only became truly interested in medicine in my late teen years. During and after medical school I became increasingly interested in bouldering. I have always had an interest in individual rather than team sports. I went through a challenging emotional period several years ago where I was looking for something to set my mind to, something apart from academics. I tried bouldering on a whim, and later roped rock climbing and fell in love with the capacity for self-driven improvement, strength, and problem solving the sport provides for me.






Personally, my commitment to nutrition and holistic health emerged through changing my relationship food to being a positive one. A relationship with food that focused on effective fueling, tasty meals, and challenging food related guilt was essential for my well-being. I also am committed to my own health via fitness -- I am an active rock climber and boulderer, and find I thoroughly enjoy participating in a sport that is self-motivated.



I challenge myself to improve, become stronger, and be better than I was the last time I climbed. Sport, and climbing has impacted in my studies by bettering my mental health (reduces stress and anxiety levels), while also increasing my confidence in myself and my ability to become and be strong.



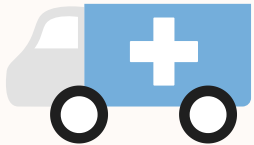
In my eyes, effective mentorship is key to elevate more women into leadership roles and challenge imposter syndrome. When women can be encouraged to grow, learn and adapt to new scenarios they can become leaders. I had women-identifying mentors when I began as a researcher who took an active role in fostering my development, connecting me with opportunities an encouraging me to progress in my career. Without active mentorship I would not have the same leadership skills I do at this time.



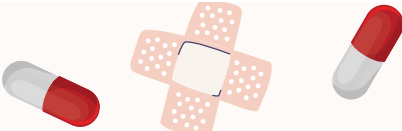
# SAYED MADI

HELLO!


Hi my name is Dr. Sayed Madi and I am recent medical graduate from the University of Calgary Cumming School of Medicine. Currently, I am a resident in Calgary, Alberta in Internal Medicine. Prior to medicine, I completed a master's degree in Biochemistry and a bachelor's degree in Biology at the University of Alberta. Since undergrad, ensuring proper nutrition and exercise have allowed me to excel in my studies while maintaining good physical and mental health.



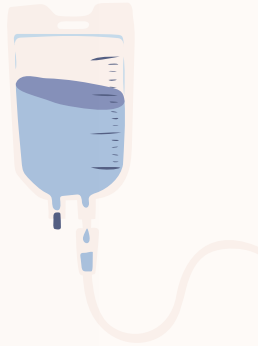
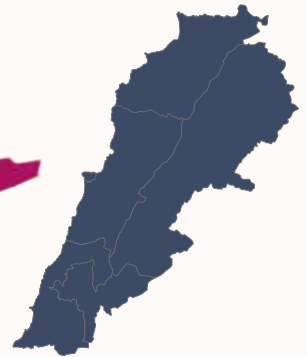


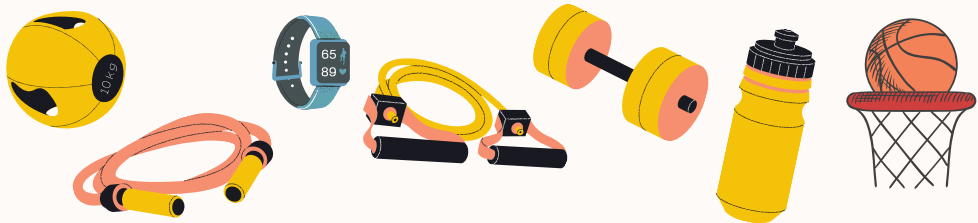


I have worked tirelessly over the years to learn more about how our body utilizes **micro** (proteins, fibre, carbohydrates, and fats are examples of micro-nutrients) and **macro** (antioxidants, minerals, and vitamins are examples of macro-nutrient) nutrients and how to best meet it's metabolic demands. In 2018, I decided to use the knowledge I had gained over the years and to train for a men's physique contest. I exercised and dieted for eight months, and was able to get into great shape for the competition. This experience was incredibly valuable because it motivated those around me to also want to get into shape. I was asked to host exercise seminars for the general public at the local Running Room, where I taught the importance of healthy eating and demonstrated exercises that could be done at home without any equipment. In my spare time, I enjoy preparing healthy recipes, going to the gym, and playing basketball.

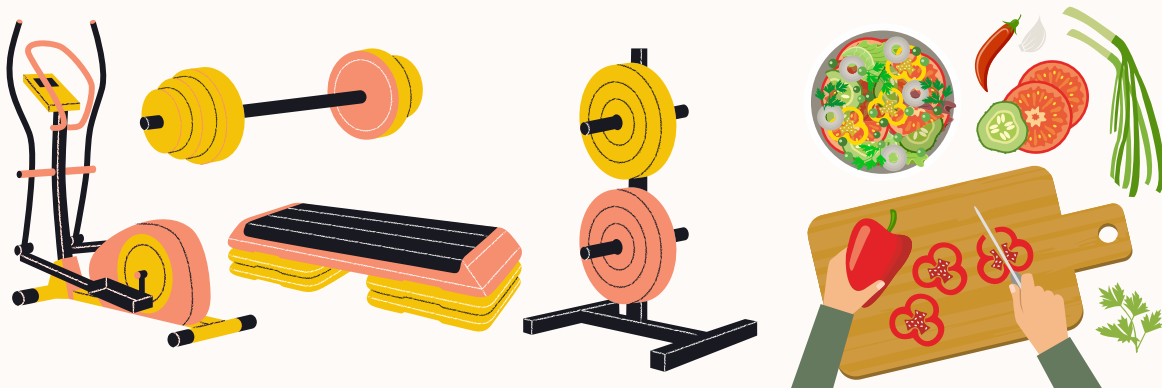


Growing up, I lived in Lebanon where access to high quality medical care was not always available. As a child, I witnessed those around me endure debilitating chronic disease and felt weak not being able to help. These experiences motivated me to pursue medicine to help those most vulnerable.





To continue advocating for positive well-being, I was asked to host exercise seminars for the general public at the local Running Room, where I taught the importance of healthy eating and demonstrated exercises that could be done at home without any equipment. Additionally, in my spare time, I enjoy preparing healthy recipes, going to the gym, and playing basketball.





In my eyes, the key to solving the gap in nutrition literacy is through education. In my opinion, not enough is being done in schools (whether that be grade school or beyond), to educate individuals about nutrition. I believe changes to curriculum should be mandated to cover basic topics such as how to read nutritional labels and understanding ingredients. People should understand what they are putting into their bodies and how this can impact their health. I hope to continue advocating for nutrition-centered medicine as a practicing physician.

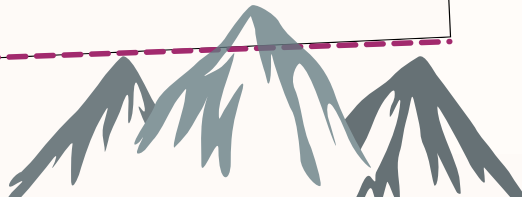




HELLO!

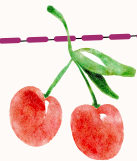
Tansi/Oki! Niisto niitaniko Mikostiiyoohkotok. My name is Sierra Koochicum and my ancestry is rooted in Peepeekisis First Nation No.81 in Saskatchewan and also in Siksika First Nation in Alberta. These land bases have shaped me into who I am today and have guided me into the role I am in now. I think it is very important to acknowledge the lands that we come from; I was taught this acknowledgement is essential for creating a healthy relationship with the land and all its relations. I live, work, and play on Treaty 7 territory, home of the Blackfoot Confederacy comprising of the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations, and home to the Tsuu T'ina Nation, the Stoney Nakoda which encompasses the Chiniki, Bears paw, and Wesley First Nations, and the Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. I am a University of Calgary student striving towards a Bachelor of Arts in International Indigenous Studies. I am also the Team Lead for the Ótáp ímisskaan Indigenous Youth Leadership Program at the Writing Symbols Lodge on campus. I am passionate about wellness, storytelling, and youth work, and I see myself working within the environmental advocacy sphere once I am done my studies.

SIERRA KOOCHICUM





Women's health and wellness is important because as women we are the portals that bring new life into this world, if we choose to and if we can. It is an important and sacred ability to give life so we must be good to our bodies if we want to give life to healthy generations of the future. Women are elevating into leadership roles because there has been a shift in our understanding of what wellness and leadership itself means. We need to understand the inherent connection between leadership and women being life-givers. Especially when it comes to wellness, women play such an important role because we speak from the experience of our bodies. Just as women give birth to such diversity, our understanding of wellness and nutrition needs a diverse understanding as well. When women rise into their power, we see a collective shift into a future of wellness. Through an Indigenous perspective of the world, we understand that everything is interconnected, so when women stand strong in their wellness, those around them will also feel the benefits of their healing. The land and women are deeply connected as life-givers and sustainers. When the women heal, so too will the land.



healthy  
 •BODY•  
 healthy  
 •LIFE•



**BE**   
**BRAVE**

Although I hadn't initially set out to do advocacy work, when I think about the work that I do with the University of Calgary at the Ótáp ímisskaan Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, advocacy is an inherent role. Generally, any role that involves sharing Indigenous knowledge is advocacy work. Within this Western society we must constantly advocate for ourselves. We are always justifying our ways of life and our existence. I am happy to do this work because it is about building healthy relationships with others and providing positive examples of leadership for youth to model themselves after. All I am doing is sharing our collective truth as Indigenous peoples and building community while I do it. When I work with the youth I always try to come from a place of integrity and honesty. I share the knowledge I have learned from Elders and from books, and I always try to weave in stories and events that bring awareness. For me, it is all about raising the collective consciousness and advocating for wellness within our communities. Everything I share comes down to raising awareness about the barriers that Indigenous peoples face when wanting to lead healthy and positive lives.







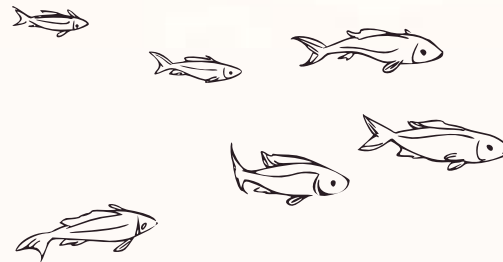
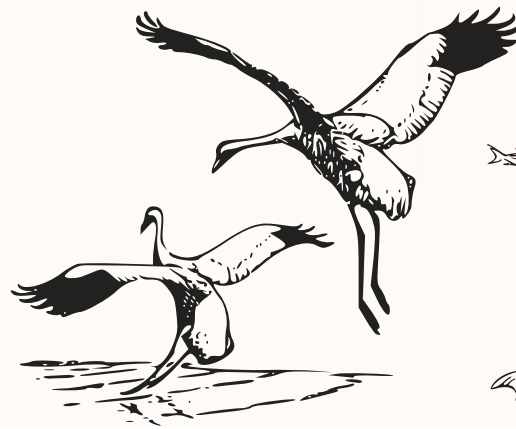
It is important to have discussions around Indigenous nutrition because there are so many barriers that prevent Indigenous peoples from living well and healthy lifestyles. A lot of people don't realize that these barriers are systemic oppressions rooted in years of colonization and colonial mindsets. As Indigenous peoples we have internalized these struggles and have made them the norm. Many Indigenous families have never experienced a nutritious diet, and this isn't necessarily their fault.

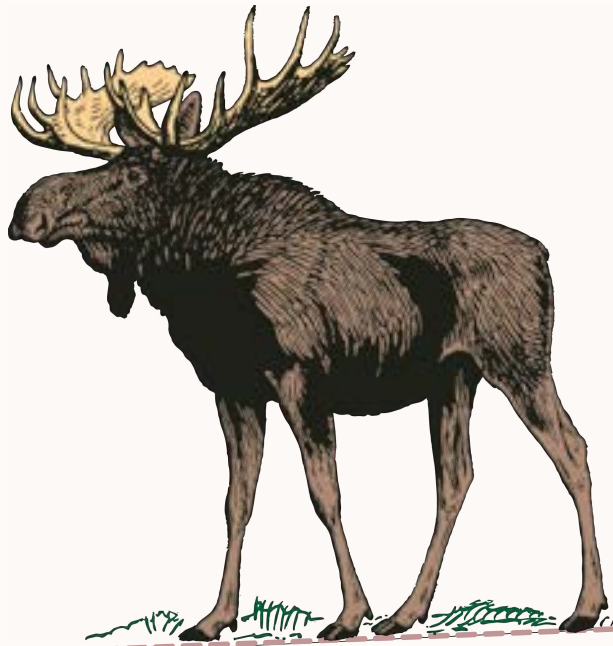
There are so many barriers that influence a healthy diet for Indigenous people. When we think about the residential schools and their intergenerational impact, we can see how it affects Indigenous health and wellness. Those "schools" caused a lot of trauma and when people are existing from a place of trauma, they're not making the best decisions or being kind to their selves. A lot of the time they don't understand how their choices are influencing those around them, such as their children. But that requires healing from intergenerational wounds. As Indigenous people we are born grieving and we don't understand why, so we make choices that reflect that pain inside. It is through awareness, culture, ceremony, and community that we can heal.



healthy  
•BODY•  
healthy  
•LIFE•

Another barrier is the reserve systems. A lot of First Nations don't have access to clean drinking water and the more northern communities are isolated from groceries stores, or the prices are too expensive to buy nutritious food. We must also understand that as Indigenous people we have our own understanding of nutrition. Everything we needed to survive and thrive came from the land. Our diets adapted to our land bases, so when Indigenous peoples are forced out of their traditional territories or a new diet is introduced, it takes a long time for our bodies to adjust. Our bodies aren't designed for a lot of the food that is available in this Western society. Many Indigenous peoples are lactose intolerant because drinking animals' milk wasn't a part of our traditional diet. A lot of awareness comes when we understand the lands we live on. It is through the land that we can understand their people.





My favourite dish is moose meat with vegetables and saskatoon berry soup. I am very privileged to have access to wild game from my home territory. Saskatoon berry soup from hand-picked berries is like medicine to my spirit. I love being able to nourish myself from the land my ancestors nourished themselves from. It helps me build a strong connection to my culture and the land.

