



Practice random acts of kindness – for your heart

It's never too early to start taking care of yours.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for Canadian men and women; that's because your heart health can be compromised by so many different risk factors including high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, an unhealthy Body Mass Index, excessive alcohol, a sedentary lifestyle, stress, snoring, sleep apnea, family history, and more. Unfortunately, the list goes on and on.

Track your steps!

A pedometer is a great way to keep track of your daily steps – aim for 10,000 a day. If you are the type to forget to wear your pedometer or fitness tracker, try a smart phone app instead.

Some smart phones even have a health tracker app pre-installed on your phone. There are many apps designed for iPhone and Android phones to get you moving. The Heart & Stroke Foundation “30 Days to a Healthier Heart” app assesses your risk factors and gives you daily challenges designed to reduce those risks. It's free and it's loaded with tips and trivia to motivate you and keep you going.

Decide what works best for your lifestyle, and start tracking today!

Get moving.

Try to get outside every day even if it's cold or rainy. Staying active every day is one of the best ways to get and stay on track to better health.



Give 'til it doesn't hurt.

Your heart does so much for you, what else can you do for it? Maintain a healthy weight. Don't smoke. Cut down on salt, processed foods, and saturated fat. Increase your intake of fibre and plant-based proteins. Learn to cope with stress in healthy ways. This can include making decisions rather than putting them off, delegating responsibilities, and looking for the root causes of your stress. Last but definitely not least, try meditating, which can provide benefits with as little as 5-minutes' practice a day.

Learn the warning signs of stroke, FAST.

Could you (or someone else) be having a stroke? Act **FAST**: **F**ace: is it drooping? **A**rms: can you raise them both? **S**peech: is it slurred or garbled? **T**ime: Call 9-1-1 immediately!

Learn the warning signs of a heart attack.

There's no snappy acronym for this one, so know the symptoms and listen to your body: **discomfort, pain, or burning in the chest or upper body; shortness of breath; sweating; nausea; light-headedness; tingling or numbness in the arms, mouth, or lips (this one may be especially critical for women)**. Heart attacks can strike at every age. If you detect signs of cardiac distress, call 9-1-1 immediately. **When seconds count, don't waste them second-guessing yourself.**



Life's brighter under the sun

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