

10 Ways To Love Your Heart



As the **leading, cause of death in Canada**, cardiovascular disease will affect all Canadians at some point in their lives. The important fact, however, is that many of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease are preventable.

Here are 10 simple and effective ways to reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke:

- 1 Consume 35 grams of dietary fibre each day. High fibre diets have been shown to help reduce blood cholesterol levels and high blood pressure, two risk factors for heart disease and stroke.
 - 2 Include fish meals three or more times per week—e.g., sardines, salmon, mackerel, herring, and halibut. The omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids found in fish help reduce the risk of heart disease.
 - 3 Choose a whole foods diet. Whole natural foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains are high in disease fighting, nutrients, antioxidants and fiber.
 - 4 Decrease alcohol consumption. Women who drink greater than nine drinks per week and men who drink greater than 14 drinks per week have increased risk of heart disease and stroke.
 - 5 Avoid fried foods. Instead grill, poach or bake.
 - 6 Exercise 30-minutes every day. Choose an activity that you enjoy, that excites you and makes you feel good.
 - 7 Quit smoking and avoid second hand smoke. If you are a smoker you have twice the risk of heart attack as non-smokers and are much more likely to die if you suffer a heart attack. Talk to your ND about smoking cessation strategies.
 - 8 Maintain a healthy blood pressure. High blood pressure is the most common heart disease risk factor. Strategies to lower blood pressure include maintaining a healthy body weight, stopping smoking, reducing stress, participating in regular exercise, and eating a diet high in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fiber.
 - 9 Lose weight. Excess body weight puts a significant strain on the heart and worsens the risk factors for heart disease as well as cancer and diabetes.
 - 10 Learn ways to manage stress. Try practicing deep breathing, meditation, or take up a hobby such as painting, arts and crafts, knitting, reading, qigong, yoga— even things as simple as laughter, adequate sleep, massage therapy, a hot bath, and taking time for you each day help to manage stress.
- It is within your power to make heart healthy choices a part of your everyday life. Your heart will love you for it!

i  **my** 