

Heart and Stroke Month

February is Heart and Stroke Month.

This month is dedicated to raising awareness on cardiovascular diseases, promoting heart-healthy lifestyles, and encouraging preventive measures. It's an opportunity for individuals to assess their lifestyle choices and adopt healthy habits that promote heart health.

Cardiovascular diseases, including heart disease and stroke, are one of leading causes of death in Canada. Heart disease affects approximately [2.6 million](#) Canadians.

Here are some key measures to prevent heart disease and stroke, including lifestyle decisions and habits that contribute to overall cardiovascular wellbeing:

- 1. Make healthier diet choices:** Try to consume a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Limiting your intake of saturated and trans fats, salts, added sugars and refined carbohydrates is also beneficial. You will find lots of heart-healthy recipes [here](#).
- 2. Engage in regular exercise:** It is clinically recommended to aim for about 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week but try to remember that some is better than none. Walking outside, doing some jumping jacks, participating in an exercise class, or learning a new skill like yoga or Pilates, can all be beneficial for your health.
- 3. Manage stress:** Chronic stress can contribute to heart disease. Practice stress-reducing techniques, such as meditation, deep-breathing, and self-care that makes you feel rejuvenated and relaxed.
- 4. Limit alcohol consumption:** Try to avoid excessive alcohol consumption, as it raises blood pressure and increases the risk of developing an irregular heart rhythm, which can further lead to the risk of a heart attack.
- 5. Reduce smoking:** Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease. Quitting or reducing your smoking habits significantly improves heart health.
- 6. Prioritize regular health check-ups:** Regular screenings for blood pressure and cholesterol levels provide valuable information on your cardiovascular wellbeing. Prioritizing these check-ups offers early detection and intervention opportunities, essential for preventing and managing heart disease.
- 7. Aim for higher sleep quality:** Poor sleep patterns have been linked to an increased risk of heart disease. Ensure a healthy routine by having 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep each night.

As we embrace Heart and Stroke Month, let's make heart-healthy choices that resonate not only in February but throughout the entire year. Small changes in lifestyle can have a profound impact on cardiovascular wellbeing, contributing to a longer and healthier life.

For information on healthy living, risk factors and prevention of heart disease and stroke, please visit the [Heart and Stroke Foundation](#).



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