

ACTIVE LIVING

Making physical activity a part of your every day life, whether you're at home, work, school or play, is key to your heart health. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity each week. Add up 10 minutes of activity at a time throughout the day until you reach this goal. Check with your doctor before starting any exercise program.

- Find an activity that fits into your schedule and stick with it – an early morning fitness class, a power walk at lunch, or an evening game of indoor volleyball.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- Schedule a stretch break during meetings. Roll your shoulders and neck when sitting at your desk or computer.
- Roller-blade, bike or walk to the mailbox, library, grocery store or work.
- Join a yoga, T'ai chi or Pilates class.
- Wash the car by hand, and wax it too!
- Mow the lawn with a push mower rather than a power mower.
- Work up a sweat by dancing to your favourite tunes.
- Go skating or snowshoeing in the winter.
- Make a regular fitness commitment with a friend or two. It'll keep you motivated!

Getting active with Heart and Stroke Foundation

Foundation offices across the country offer many events that promote active living for adults, children and families. Log on to heartandstroke.ca and choose EVENTS from the main menu for more information about activities in your area.



Are your children at a healthy weight?

As a parent, you want your children to be healthy. You do your best to feed them nutritious foods and hope that they are getting enough physical activity. Lately, though, there's been so much news about children in Canada being overweight and obese that you may be wondering whether your child fits into that category.

Take stock

If you have noticed that your child is growing larger around the middle and other areas of the body faster than he or she is growing taller, then you may want to discuss this fact with your family doctor or pediatrician. Your doctor can access Child Growth Standard charts and inform you if your child is at a healthy weight, overweight or obese.

All children need to eat nutritious foods and require 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity a week. But how can you make those changes? Here are some food and activity tips:

Food tips

- Do an inventory of your pantry and fridge. Do they contain high-calorie, low nutrient foods such as chips, cookies, and frozen pizzas? **Turn it around:** Make your own pizzas by buying ready-made, whole-wheat crusts, jars of pizza sauce, lower-fat cheese and sliced toppings such as green peppers, mushrooms, onions and lean meats such as ground chicken or turkey.
- Do you find that dinners consist of fast food such as burgers and fried chicken one or more times per week? **Turn it around:** Buy a roasted chicken or toss a few lean burgers on the grill.
- Do you give your child lunch money instead of packing a homemade lunch? **Turn it around:** Buy whole-wheat pitas and tortilla wraps and stuff them with yummy tuna or egg salad.
- Do you or your children often skip breakfast? **Turn it around:** Start slowly by eating a yogurt or a banana and then move on to cold, whole-grain cereals, whole-wheat bagel and peanut butter, whole-grain waffles and hot cereals such as oatmeal or cream of wheat.

Activity tips

- Does your child spend more than an hour a day watching TV or playing video or computer games? **Turn it around:** For every hour they watch TV, have them play outside tobogganing or playing baseball for the same amount of time.
- Does your child get less than 60 minutes a day of physical activity? **Turn it around:** Sign your child up for classes – ballet or swimming – or join soccer or baseball teams.
- Do your children avoid sports? **Turn it around:** Sign up for our He@lthline for Parents e-newsletter to get great fun activity ideas (heartandstroke.ca/subscribe).



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HELPING CANADIANS MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

More Canadians are overweight and obese than ever before. Given that work, home, school and community environments all affect the food choices we make and the level of physical activity we engage in, this challenge requires solutions beyond eating right and getting active.

In search of answers, the Heart and Stroke Foundation is working with all levels of government and in communities, workplaces and schools across the country to build our knowledge of the most effective ways to address unhealthy weight and obesity through research, policy, social change and health education.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation believes that by working together, we can encourage Canadians to maintain a healthy weight, give them the tools to succeed, and prevent heart disease and stroke.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation Web site offers a wealth of information and tools to help you and your family prevent and manage heart disease and stroke. Find:

- Delicious heart-healthy recipes
- Tips to get and stay active for life
- Current heart disease and stroke patient information
- Breaking news on Foundation funded research
- Free newsletters, Heart&Stroke He@lthline and He@lthline for Parents
- How to get involved and make a difference in your community

heartandstroke.ca
or call

1-888-HSF-INFO (473-4636)

This publication **Your Health, Your Weight: Simple steps to making healthy choices** is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be considered or relied upon as medical advice or a substitute for medical advice, a medical diagnosis or treatment from a physician or qualified healthcare professional. You are responsible for obtaining appropriate medical advice from a physician or other qualified healthcare professional prior to acting upon any information available through this publication.

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YOUR HEALTH YOUR WEIGHT

Simple steps to making
healthy choices



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WEIGHT AND YOUR HEALTH

Excess weight and extra body fat may lead to problems such as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and type 2 diabetes and may raise the risk of heart disease and stroke. Maintaining a healthy weight plays an important role in the prevention of developing these diseases. Together, healthy eating and active living are the best ways to reach and maintain a healthy weight.

Can you spot a fad diet?

Fad diets tend to eliminate or severely limit certain essential and nutritional food groups such as carbohydrates or fat. The bottom line is fad diets don't work. Most people can't keep up a fad diet forever. More importantly, there is little research about the long-term health effects of fad diets. Ditch the fad diets and, instead, focus on eating well-balanced meals with sensible portion sizes.

Smoking and your weight

When you quit smoking, you may gain weight. Research shows that the average weight gain is about 8 pounds. You may use this fact as an excuse to keep smoking. But think about it: You would have to gain as much as 100 pounds to counteract the health benefits of quitting smoking.

What is your Body Mass Index?

From a health standpoint, there is no one ideal weight for anybody. Instead, there is a range of weights that can be healthy for you. The Body Mass Index (BMI) tells you whether you have a high or low risk of developing health problems. It is a ratio of your height and weight. The BMI does not apply to you if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, very muscular or under the age of 18.

Follow these steps to figure out your BMI:

Step 1	Find your current weight and draw a horizontal line across the BMI chart.
Step 2	Find your height and draw a vertical line from the top to the bottom of the chart.
Step 3	Find the point where these two lines cross.
Step 4	The number on the dashed line is your current BMI.

If your BMI is between 18.5 to 24.9, you are at a normal weight and have the least risk of developing health problems. You're considered underweight if your BMI is under 18.5, and overweight if your BMI is over 25. Find out more about your BMI by logging on to heartandstroke.ca/healthyweight.

Take a look at your shape

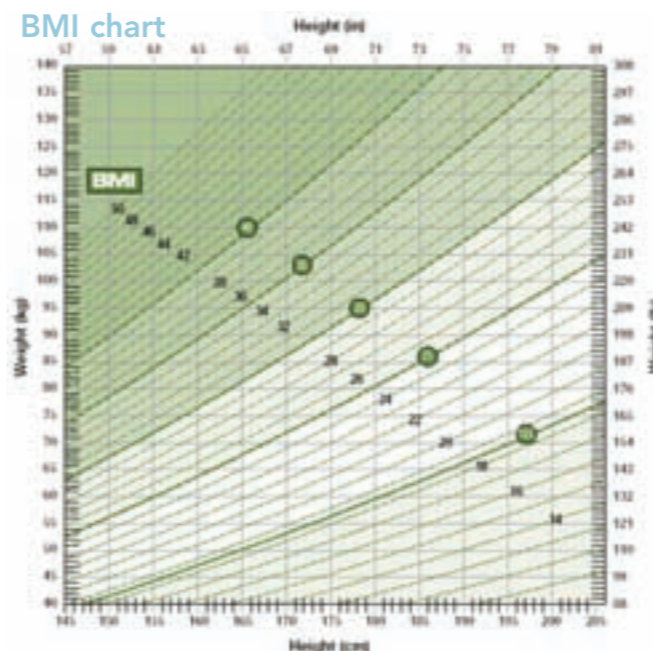
When it comes to your health, where you carry your weight can be just as important as how much weight you carry. Fat stored around the waist (apple shape) can put you at increased risk for heart disease, high-blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and type-2 diabetes. Measuring your waist circumference is the best way to know your risk. It is not the same as your pant size. Follow instructions on how to properly measure your waist at heartandstroke.ca/healthywaists.

Waist circumference chart by ethnicity and gender*

Ethnicity	Male	Female
European/Caucasian, Sub-Saharan Africans, Eastern Mediterranean, Middle Eastern	102 cm (40 in.)	88 cm (35 in.)
South Asian, Malaysian, Asian, Chinese, Japanese, Ethnic South and Central Americans	90 cm (35 in.)	80 cm (32 in.)

* Waist circumference measurement does not apply to pregnant or nursing women, people under the age of 18 or over the age of 65. Persons of ethnicities not listed here should speak to their healthcare provider.

If your waistline measurement is within 8 cm/3 in. of, or greater than, the cutoff according to your ethnicity and gender, speak to your healthcare provider right away about how to achieve a healthy weight through regular physical activity and healthy eating.



Source: Health Canada. Canadian Guidelines for Body Weight Classification in Adults. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada; 2003.



Achieve your healthy weight for life!



Developed by experts and based on research studies, the Heart&Stroke Healthy Weight Action Plan™ is an online program featuring:

- 12 weekly sessions to help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Interactive tools to track your progress.
- A program that is tailored to you.

Start today! Register for your FREE Heart&Stroke Healthy Weight Action Plan™ at heartandstroke.ca/hwplan

Healthy eating

- Eat sensibly. Fill 3/4 of your plate with high-fibre foods such as whole grains, vegetables, fruit and legumes. Choose lower-fat milk products and leaner meats for the remaining 1/4 of your plate.
- Watch the portion size of foods. Measure the amount of food you eat and compare it to the serving sizes in *Canada's Food Guide*. Find out more about the Guide at heartandstroke.ca/healthyliving.
- Don't skip breakfast. People who eat breakfast regularly tend to have a healthier weight than those who skip breakfast.
- Munch on healthier snacks such as fruit, veggies with a low-fat dip, unbuttered popcorn or whole grain crackers with lower-fat cheese.
- Tune in to your eating habits. Do you reach for food as a way of coping with stress or boredom? If so, try heading out for a brisk walk, taking a hot bath or calling a friend instead.
- Try some of the Foundation's heart-healthy recipes by subscribing to our free monthly e-newsletter by logging onto heartandstroke.ca/subscribe.

