

get active and healthy

for life



Canadian eggs are part of the Heart & Stroke Foundation's Health Check™ program. Health Check™ is a national food information program developed to help consumers make healthy food choices.

†Enjoying a variety of foods is part of healthy eating. Eggs are a nutritious food and, like many foods, should be eaten in moderation. Canadian egg producer's financially support the Health Check™ education program. This is not an endorsement. For more information, please visit www.healthcheck.org.

Developed by the Registered Dietitians at Egg Farmers of Canada.

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For more information visit us at www.livingwellwithcholesterol.ca. To contact a dietitian or for general inquiries e-mail us at contactus@livingwellwithcholesterol.ca.

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Healthy habits lower cholesterol

It's time to start making changes in your life! You can make a BIG difference in your cholesterol levels simply by adopting a healthy lifestyle – and that's great news! The healthy habits you form today will keep you looking good and feeling better for years to come. More importantly, a healthy, active lifestyle will help you live longer and reduce your risk of developing serious health problems, like heart attack or stroke.

Take the first step

Remember that the road to success starts with the very first step. You don't have to make all your lifestyle changes at once – that can be overwhelming. Start slowly and make one small change at a time. Every healthy choice you make will bring you one step closer to controlling your cholesterol. The main lifestyle areas that you should focus on are: **physical activity, smoking and your diet.**

Be more active

Let's start with being more physically active. Fitness is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. If you aren't physically active most days of the week, you're automatically doubling your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Regular physical activity has been shown to increase HDL (“good”) cholesterol levels and to help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes and high blood pressure. Plus, you'll get the added reward of better health, increased energy and a new-found sense of vitality!

Your fitness goals

You should be physically active 4 to 7 days a week.

Aim for **at least:**

- 20 minutes of vigorous activity **or**
- 30 minutes of moderate activity **or**
- 60 minutes of light activity each day

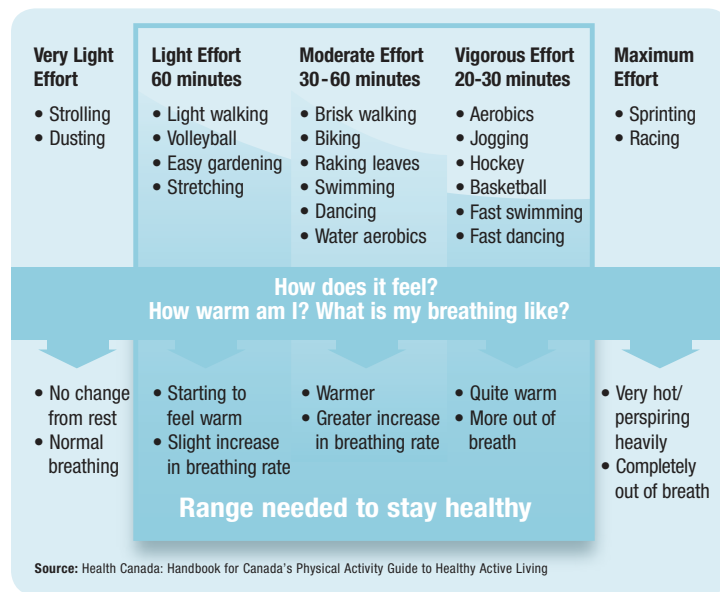
Too busy to exercise?

Like most people, you probably have a busy schedule and are just too busy to go to the gym. You don't have to follow a structured fitness program to get the health benefits of regular exercise. Research has shown that several short, 10-minute periods of physical activity, spread throughout the day, are just as good for your health as one longer exercise session.¹

Being active doesn't necessarily mean lifting weights or running on a treadmill. All it takes is a few changes in your daily routine to increase your activity levels. Go for a 10-minute walk at lunch, take the stairs instead of the elevator, go cycling with your family after work – once you start living a more active lifestyle, it won't take long before you're meeting and exceeding your daily activity targets.

The amount of time you should spend exercising depends on the effort you put in, according to the chart below:

Time vs. Effort



10 easy ways to get active today!

A busy schedule is no excuse for inactivity. Here are some quick and easy tips to add fitness to your daily routine:

1. Walk, bike or rollerblade to work.
2. If you commute to work, get off one stop earlier and walk the rest of the way.
3. Take the stairs instead of the elevator whenever you can.
4. Deliver messages or documents in person.
5. Try to start or end each day with some gentle yoga stretches.
6. Take a 15 minute walk at lunch or during your coffee break – fresh air and exercise are great stress relievers!
7. Running errands? Shop locally so you can walk to the stores.
8. At home, walk in place while you are watching TV. Take 10 minutes to walk up and down the stairs to get your heart rate going.
9. Work in your garden, mow the lawn, rake the leaves, shovel the snow or vacuum the house.
10. Enjoy a bike ride, swim or hike with your family – in the winter, lace up your skates.



Maintaining a healthy weight

Being overweight increases your total blood cholesterol and throws your cholesterol levels out of balance – it lowers your HDL (“good”) cholesterol and increases your LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Excess weight also puts you at risk for life-threatening health problems such as heart disease and diabetes. Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is an important part of an effective cholesterol management strategy.

Keep weight off for the long-term

A slow and sensible approach is the best way to lose weight and keep it off – your goal should be to lose between 1 and 2 pounds a week. Remember, there are no “quick fixes” when it comes to losing weight permanently. Fad diets only promote unhealthy eating habits and may cause you to gain weight faster than ever by slowing down your metabolism.

Eggs help with weight control

If you’re trying to lose weight, start by adding eggs to your menu. Eggs are a rich source of protein that will give you long-lasting energy. The protein in eggs has been shown to decrease hunger and help with weight loss by controlling the rate that your body absorbs calories.

What the studies tell us

In a recent study, researchers found that people who ate two eggs and toast for breakfast **lost 65% more weight**, had an **83% greater reduction in waist circumference** and had **higher energy levels** than people who ate a bagel and yogurt for breakfast.²

Look for the delicious, low-fat egg recipe cards in this kit or visit www.livingwellwithcholesterol.ca for more tips about heart-healthy eating.

Are you overweight?

Health experts now say that it's not how much you weigh but **where you carry your body weight** that affects your risk for heart attack and stroke. Fat that accumulates around your waist and abdomen is the most dangerous to your health.³ The good news is that every pound (and inch!) you lose helps reduce those risk factors and brings you one step closer to a healthier lifestyle.

Check your weight:

One of the best ways to find out if you're overweight is to measure your **waist-to-hip ratio (WHR)**. Your WHR is the circumference of your waist **divided** by the circumference of your hips.

Start by using a tape measure to measure your natural waist where it is the smallest, usually at or just above your belly button. Measure your hips at the widest part of your buttocks.

You are considered to be overweight and at greater risk of heart disease and stroke if:

- **you're a woman** and have a WHR of 0.8 or a waist circumference of 88 cm (35 inches) or more
- **you're a man** and have a WHR of 1.0 or a waist circumference of 102 cm (40 inches) or more

You can also check your weight by calculating your **Body Mass Index (BMI)**. Your goal should be a BMI of less than 25. The calculation for BMI is weight (kg)/height (m²). Visit www.livingwellwithcholesterol.ca for an easy-to-use BMI calculator.

Time to stop smoking

Stopping smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. It may not be easy, but if you have a plan, take it one day at a time and stay focused, you will achieve your goal.

If you decide to quit smoking you can reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke by as much as 36%⁴ – and the health benefits start almost as soon as you take your last puff. Smoking lowers your HDL cholesterol and damages the walls of your blood vessels, making them more susceptible to cholesterol deposits.

Don't forget that secondhand smoke can be as dangerous to your health as smoking, so try to avoid situations that expose you to secondhand smoke.

Tips for quitting

Here are some tips to help you succeed:

- **Set a “stop smoking” date** – and stick to it!
- **Choose a method of quitting that is right for you.**
- **Change your surroundings** – get rid of your cigarettes, lighters and ashtrays in your home, car and workplace.
- **Build a support network** – ask your family and friends for support and encourage them not to smoke around you.
- **Avoid smoking “triggers”** – adjust your routines and stay away from activities that you connect with smoking.
- **Reduce stress** – use relaxation techniques to cope with the anxiety of quitting.
- **Talk to your doctor** – counselling, medical support and non-smoking aids can be very helpful.

Cholesterol and your diet

Eating foods high in saturated and *trans* fat can raise your blood cholesterol levels more than anything else in your diet. The evidence linking saturated and *trans* fat with high blood cholesterol and heart disease risk is compelling – dietary fat is far more dangerous to your heart than dietary cholesterol.^{3,5,6}

One of the most effective ways to lower your cholesterol is to replace unhealthy fats with healthier fats in your diet and to eat more fibre-rich foods such as fresh vegetables, fruit and whole grains.

Learn more about healthy eating

You'll find all kinds of tips and practical advice for eating a balanced, nutritious diet in the ***Your Diet Your Decision*** booklet and online at www.livingwellwithcholesterol.ca. Don't forget to browse through the recipe section for more delicious, low-fat meal ideas.



References

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