



RPAW Active Workplace News

February is Heart Health month. Read the Heart and Stroke Foundation's "Ten ways to improve your heart health" (visit www.heartandstroke.ca for more information)

1. Eat 10 fewer restaurant, fast-food or takeout snacks or meals this month. By cooking for yourself at home or packing a lunch for work, you exercise greater control over ingredients, cooking methods (grilling, poaching, baking) and, vitally, smaller portion sizes. "We're still overdoing it when dishing out servings," says Bonnie Stern, author of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada's HeartSmart™ (Random House) series of cookbooks. "Restaurants make large portion sizes seem normal. And you have no idea what goes into each dish." [See our recipe files online for some great meal ideas](#)
2. Take 10 seconds to read the new nutrition panel before you buy a food product. New labelling regulations introduced last December mean you can spot trans fats in foods quickly. Trans fats are an unhealthy fat that increase your blood cholesterol. Try to minimize your intake of trans fats as much as possible. Or, simply look for the Heart and Stroke Foundation's Health Check™ symbol, now on more than 500 items, to ensure that the products you buy are healthy choices. [See the full list here](#)
3. Spend 10 minutes with your mom, father, aunt or uncle on both sides of the family discussing your history of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. Although you can't change your genes, knowing

your family's health history will help you and your doctor tailor an appropriate prevention plan for you.

4. Increase your intake of vegetables and fruit by 10 servings per week. These foods are chock-full of disease-fighting antioxidants and heart-healthy fibre. Five to 10 servings a day is your ultimate goal, but if you're not hitting that target, [read about some simple ways to make them part of your daily diet here](#)
5. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Consider this: a weight loss of only 10 pounds (4.5 kg) over five to ten weeks – that's 1 to 2 pounds per week – can result in as much as a 7 point reduction in systolic blood pressure (the top number) and a nearly 6 point reduction in diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number), which will lower your risk of stroke and heart disease. A healthy blood pressure reading is lower than 120/80. [Read about healthy eating here](#)
6. Take 10 seconds to measure your waist circumference. Maybe you've figured out how much extra weight you carry, but where do you carry it? Are you an apple or a pear? Studies show that those who carry weight around the middle tend to have higher blood pressure and cholesterol – two risk factors for heart disease. "I like to see my female clients measuring less than 88 centimetres around the waist and the men less than 102 centimetres," says cardiologist and Heart and Stroke Foundation spokesperson Dr. Beth Abramson. "If you



haven't already got one, get a tape measure. It's as vital to your health as a scale." The best way to whittle down your middle is to be physically active – walking, hiking, jogging, biking as often as you can. [Read about getting active here](#)

7. Increase your physical activity by 10 minutes per day. While a healthy goal is 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week, you can get there by increasing your activity level by 10 minutes daily. And you don't have to run a marathon or become a triathlete; modest levels of physical activity will help to lower blood pressure, keep weight off and reduce your risk of developing coronary artery disease. So walk, play with the kids or dance to your favourite CD. [Read more tips on getting active here](#)

8. Set aside 10 minutes a day for a time-out. Leave your desk and walk around the block. Close your door at work or at home, then sit in a comfortable position and breathe in and out slowly. Stress is often associated with unhealthy activities such as smoking, overeating, excessive drinking, worrying or outbursts of anger [Read about more ways you can reduce your stress](#)

9. Think about your alcoholic consumption for 10 seconds. Research shows that drinking more than nine (for women) and 14 (for men) standard drinks of beer, wine or liquor a week increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Choose other beverages instead – sparkling mineral water or low-sodium tomato juice makes for a delightful, heart-healthy change. [Read more about alcohol consumption here](#)

10. Read and then send the risk factors for heart disease and stroke to 10 friends and members of your family. Your age, gender, ethnicity and genetic makeup can't be modified. But you can do something about smoking, inactivity and being overweight, among others, to reduce your risk. Read the list of risks for [heart disease](#) and [stroke](#)

[Workplace Health Links](#)

[Canadian Health Network](#)

[Yukon Worker's Compensation Health and Safety Board](#)

[Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)

Read about one very good reason to invest in workplace health.....

In 2000, Statistics Canada reported that each full time worker in Ontario missed an average total of 7.1 days of work. Reductions in absenteeism can translate into very significant savings for an employer. For example, consider a company with 500 employees at the average wage of \$150 per day with an average absenteeism rate of 7 days per employee per year. Reducing absenteeism by only 10% would represent a payback of \$52,500 or \$105 per employee per year. In one Canadian company, workplace wellness programs resulted in a 50% reduction of absenteeism.



EAT SMART!

Long working hours are associated with poor eating habits that can lead to unhealthy weight gain. Incorporating a nutrition program into your workplace can help combat health risks such as cardiovascular disease and obesity.

A recent study of Canadians' eating habits show that adults' intakes of fruits, vegetables and milk products are generally lower than the recommended levels. Statistics from the Canadian Community Health Survey, conducted between September 2000 and February 2001, show that on average, Canadian men and women only eat fruits and vegetables 4.2 and 4.9 times a day. While information about the actual number of servings was not measured, the researchers found that the frequency of fruit and vegetable consumption among men and women is positively related to being physically active, not smoking and not being overweight¹.

RPAY has put out a resource including tips and recipes on how to eat healthy when "on the go". Here's a sample of what's inside:

Time Saving Tip:

Put a lunch together the night before – this allows more time for creativity.

Sandwiches – New Twists on Old Favourites:

Pita Pockets – fill pita bread with your favourite sandwich fillers or last night's leftovers.



Feature Recipe

Hurry-Up-Fill-Me-Up Burritos: great for dinner, or to make ahead of time for lunch.

1 cup cooked rice
1 – 14 oz. can of kidney or black beans
1 cup corn kernels
¾ cup prepared salsa
10 large flour tortillas, warmed
1 ¼ cups shredded cheddar cheese

In a non-stick pan over medium heat, cook rice, beans, corn and salsa, stirring until hot. Divide evenly among tortillas. Sprinkle with cheese and roll up.

Per burrito:
Carbs: 47 grams
Dietary fibre: 5 grams
Protein: 12 grams
Fat: 9 grams



For more information on this healthy eating resource and healthy lifestyles, visit www.rpay.org or call our Active Living Coordinator at 668-2328.

1 – *Guide to Nutrition Promotion in the Workplace*. Nutrition Resource Centre. June 2002

<http://action.web.ca/home/nutritio/attach/Nut%20Promo%20Guide.pdf>

