

wellness matters



Choices for healthy living • nutrition • fitness • well-being • health



Canadians in Good Health

New data shows that the overall health of Canadians is good but we still have room to improve. Even though our life expectancy is about the same as that in similar countries in North America, Europe and Australasia, the number of deaths due to lifestyle choices continues to rise.

Results from the Global Burden of Disease Study published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* examined the trends in diseases from 1990 to 2016 and discovered that leading causes of death and disability were non-communicable diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular and musculoskeletal diseases, plus mental-health and substance-abuse disorders.

All of these diseases and disorders account for more than half of what is termed disability adjusted life years, which is a measure that looks

at both mortality and the impact of having a disease, or being in a poor state of health.

The data also show that the age-standardized death rate increased by 11 percent from 2006 to 2016—a trend that experts suggest may continue as the opioid crisis continues to claim lives across the country.

As well, disease trends reflect the aging population of Canada and for the first time in history, people over the age of 65 now outnumber younger Canadians.

Dr. Justin Lang, lead author of the study, said that as the population ages, the health loss shifts from mortality to disability. And the study points to a need to both plan and deliver health care that will take these factors into account.

10 FAST FACTS

- 1. Drinking cold water** after a workout helps bring your heart rate down and increase your circulation, which can reduce recovery time.
- 2. Walking at a medium pace** can increase your resting metabolic rate by a factor of five.
- 3. Nine out of 10 women** wear shoes that are too small for their feet.
- 4. Canadians drink 70 to 80 percent** of their alcohol in the form of beer.
- 5. A cough travels** at nearly 100 km/h.
- 6. If you train** with weights, you should see muscle gains within about 15 weeks.
- 7. The average person** will dream about one to two hours a night and have between four and seven dreams.
- 8. Using feet or ankle weights** increases energy expenditure during walking, but may result in strain or injury.
- 9. One cup of bubble tea** can contain as much as 54 g of sugar.
- 10. Twenty percent** of Canadians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.

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Salads get the golden touch

A food ingredient on trend this year, something we'll no doubt keep hearing more about, is nutritional yeast.

For those who've long followed a vegan or vegetarian eating style, nutritional yeast, or nooch as it's affectionately known, won't be new.

Originally found only in natural food stores, nutritional yeast it's also now widely available in regular grocery stores generally where you'd find the flaxseed, steel-cut oats and barley.

Nutritional yeast is a golden yellow colour, unlike the more familiar yeast used for bread baking or the brewer's yeast used in beer production.

The bag of one popular brand of nutritional yeast described this product as "a unique vegetarian food with a pleasantly cheesy flavour and a powerful nutritional punch.

For a rich, savoury flavour, add it to

sauces, scrambles, kale chips and crackers or sprinkle over vegetables, baked potatoes or popcorn."

Nooch is gluten-free and made of a dried yeast along with B vitamins. This makes it an exceptionally high source of the B family of nutrients, including vitamin B6 and B12. These are nutrients that can run low if a person eats few foods of animal origin. More specifically, the yeast is considered a healthy food additive made from a single-celled organism called *saccharomyces cerevisiae*, which is grown on molasses and then harvested, washed and dried with heat to deactivate it so it has no rising ability like traditional yeast. It is a fully plant-based food. Enjoy it in salad dressings for this summer's bounty of fresh leafy greens or as dip for a colourful platter of fresh cut vegetables. It even makes a wonderful marinade for fish, chicken and vegetables.

The recipe at right works great in all three applications.

summer recipe

Glorious Salad Dressing

From the recipe collection of dietitian PatriciaChuey.com, inspired from Whitewater Cooks, by renowned B.C. chef Shelley Adams.

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp water
- 1/3 cup nutritional yeast flakes
- 2 Tbsp sodium-reduced soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 Tbsp tahini, peanut or almond butter

Instructions

In a food processor or blender, combine water, yeast flakes, soy sauce, cider vinegar and garlic. Add oil in a steady stream. Enjoy!

"There are only 10 minutes in the life of a pear when it is perfect to eat."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, poet

Good News About Eggs

Consumption of one egg every day is associated with a lower risk of Type 2 diabetes, according to a new study conducted at the University of Eastern Finland. The findings were published in *Molecular Nutrition and Food Research*.

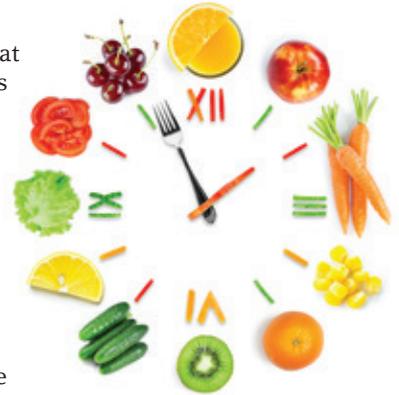
A high intake of eggs traditionally has been discouraged because of their reported high cholesterol content. But eggs are a rich source of beneficial bioactive compounds, which are often overlooked due to the cholesterol content.

The study showed that the consumption of one egg per day was associated with a lower risk of developing Type 2 diabetes among the men who participated in the Kuopio Ischaemic Heart Disease Risk Factor Study in Finland.

The study also found that the blood samples of men who ate more eggs included some molecules that were present in the blood profiles of men who did not have Type 2 diabetes. Further studies likely will explore this link between egg intake and a lower risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

A Time-restricted Eating Trend

A study by researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) shows that time-restricted eating resulted in participants who ate less lost on average three percent body fat and also saw their systolic blood pressure decrease after undertaking this unique approach to eating habits.



Participants could eat any type of food in any amount between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. but in the remaining 16 hours they could only drink water or calorie-free beverages.

One of the study authors, Krista Varady, who is associate professor of kinesiology and nutrition in the UIC College of Applied Health Sciences, noted that this presents another option to the typical diet practice of counting calories and the restriction or elimination of specific foods.

How to Get the Most out of Spinach

Eating your spinach in the form of a smoothie or juice is the best way to obtain the antioxidant lutein, according to research from Linköping University, Sweden, and reported in ScienceDaily.com.

High levels of lutein are found in dark green vegetables, and researchers at the university have compared different ways of preparing fresh spinach in order to maximize the levels of lutein in finished food. The findings are published in the journal *Food Chemistry*. Researchers investigated the best way of obtaining lutein, which is degraded by heat.

Researchers examined varying cooking

methods, such as boiling, baking, frying and steaming.

It turns out that the heating time is important when spinach is boiled, as the longer it is cooked, the less lutein the spinach retains. When fried, a large fraction of the lutein is degraded after only two minutes.

Researchers concluded that it's best not to heat spinach at all, but chop it into small pieces for a smoothie, for example, as this releases more lutein.

And the fat content of added dairy products, such as cream or yogurt, increases the solubility of the lutein.



“Being entirely honest with oneself is a good exercise.”

Sigmund Freud, psychologist



More Parks = Healthier Residents

Improvements to any city's parks system—which measures the effectiveness of a city's park system for those who live there—can help residents become more fit, according to a study by Penn State University researchers.

Even small changes to improve parks or increase their numbers can lead to increased physical activity for residents. Researchers found that even a 10-point increase in the ParkScore measurement—similar to Canada's Walk Score rating—for a city of about 400,000 would translate to more than 2,600 people engaging in leisure activities. Researchers published the findings in *Preventing Chronic Disease*.

What researchers found was that the higher the ParkScore, the larger the proportion of the population that was engaged in physical activity. A small and positive change in the score can help residents take part in physical activity, said Lauren Mullenbach, a Penn State doctoral candidate in recreation, park and tourism management.

According to the researchers, city planners don't need to undertake dramatic programs to improve their parks to increase residents' physical activity, but could spend more money on parks and programming, expand the size of parks and increase walking access.

Pumping Iron is Good for Your Heart

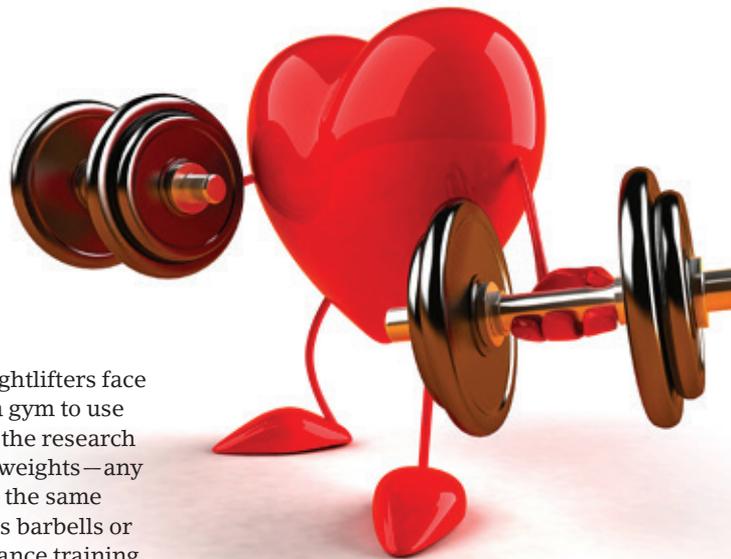
Forget about Arnold Schwarzenegger and his monster muscles—lifting weights in moderation turns out to be great for your health. And the best part might be that there's no real advantage in overdoing it.

According to a new Iowa State University study published in *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, less than an hour of weight lifting per week may reduce your risk for a heart attack or stroke by 40 to 70 percent.

A team led by D.C. Lee, an associate professor of kinesiology, analyzed data of nearly 13,000 adults with several outcomes, including non-fatal cardiovascular or fatal cardiovascular events, plus any type of

death. The study found weight lifting reduced the risk for all three. As well, spending more than an hour in the weight room did not yield any additional benefits than a lighter workout.

One of the issues that weightlifters face is getting motivated to go to a gym to use professional equipment. But the research team found that weights are weights—any sort of heavy lifting can have the same beneficial effects, whether it's barbells or grocery bags. Effective resistance training can be as simple as carrying a sack of potatoes home from the supermarket.



“Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavour.”

Truman Capote, author



Aerobic Exercise has Antidepressant Effects

Joggers and marathoners talk about “runner's high,” and there are many anecdotal reports of people who claim exercise helps banish the blues. Now a new study suggests that exercise can indeed help to improve mental well-being, even for people who have been diagnosed with major depression.

The study, published in the journal *Depression and Anxiety*, focused on supervised aerobic exercise. Lead author Dr. Ioannis D. Morres, of the University of Thessaly in Greece, conducted an analysis of previous studies on the subject then focused on 455 adult patients between the ages of 18 and 65, all of them suffering from major depression.

Participants undertook moderate supervised aerobic activity for about 45 minutes three times a week for nine weeks. The results confirmed that supervised aerobics did help to combat depression.

What's more, when compared with other approaches such as antidepressant medication, psychological therapy, or a combination of both, supervised exercise resulted in greater improvement.

Even shorter trials of up to four weeks showed benefits. Whether it's those endorphins athletes mention, or another factor, getting active seems to benefit those suffering from serious depression.

How Kids Outperform Adults

Who would you bet on in a test of endurance—an elite, trained athlete, or an eight-year-old? A new study reported on ScienceDaily.com confirms what most parents have probably already guessed.

In a new study published in *Frontiers in Physiology*, Sébastien Ratel, Associate Professor in Exercise Physiology at the Université Clermont Auvergne, France, and Anthony Blazevich, Professor in Biomechanics at Edith Cowan University, Australia, compared the energy output and post-exercise recovery rates of several groups: young boys aged eight to 12, untrained adults and highly trained adult endurance athletes.

The study showed that the muscles of youngsters are not only fatigue-resistant, they also recover very quickly from high-intensity exercise. The children outperformed untrained adults on every test and even bested the endurance athletes in some categories.

According to the authors, even though the children outperformed the adults, they also has some disadvantages to overcome. Not surprisingly, children were not very efficient, rarely taking straight lines to their destination. And with less cardiovascular capability, they were likely to tire quickly but then bounced back faster thanks to fatigue-resistant muscles that allowed them to recover their energy very quickly.

The authors of the study suggested that their findings might have implications for both parents and coaches of young athletes.

Since kids possess so much natural resilience, it might be best to shift focus away from endurance training toward a focus on skills, techniques and strength.



“Life is too short for self-hatred and celery sticks.”

Marilynn Wann, author

The Science Behind Face-massage Rollers

There are a lot of unusual beauty products out there, and not all of the promised benefits would survive rigorous testing. But at least one beauty device seems to have some science behind it. Facial massage rollers have become popular and a Japanese study suggests they really can temporarily increase blood flow to the face, and may even have long-term benefits, although scientists have yet to determine what those are.

Naoyuki Hayashi of the Institute for Liberal Arts, Tokyo Institute of Technology (Tokyo Tech) and colleagues at Tokyo Healthcare University and the Research and Development Center, MTG Co. Ltd., examined the effects of using a massage roller on blood flow to the face. The study was published in *Complementary Therapies in Medicine* and confirmed that blood flow to the face increased by up to 25

percent. The effects of the increased blood flow lasted for about 10 minutes, which is longer than the researchers had expected.

Those with certain skin conditions should consult their physician first because some conditions like acne and rosacea may worsen with such treatment.

As well, there may be potential negative effects if too much force or duration is used, which may cause bruising in some cases.



A Weigh-in May Help in Weight Loss

Lots of people want to avoid depressing news. But when it comes to weight loss, a new study suggests that bravely facing the unpleasant facts can lead to good news in the end.

The study, conducted at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing and University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine, compared the strategies of people who were seeking to lose weight.

One group weighed themselves on a daily or near-daily basis; the other group either did not weigh themselves at all or did so rarely.

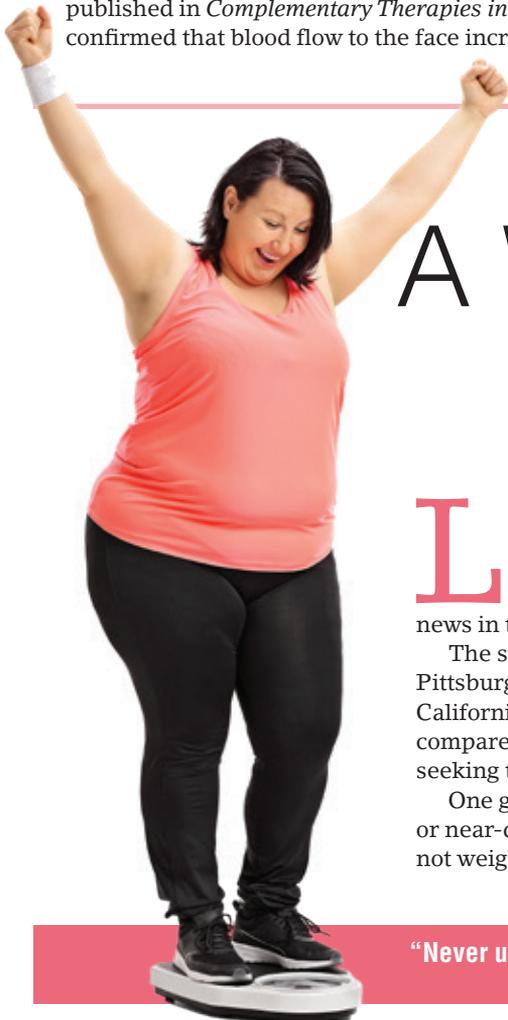
Participants had no intervention from the researchers as they were free to weigh themselves or not.

The results showed that those who never weighed themselves, or only weighed themselves once a week, did not lose weight in the following year. But those who weighed themselves six to seven times a week had significant weight loss.

Constant weighing could suggest that weight loss remains a top priority for those who weighed themselves frequently. The results could also point to an increased awareness of dietary choices and behaviours.

"Never under any circumstances take a laxative and a sleeping pill on the same night."

Dave Barry, writer



The Best Choice for Late-night Snacking



Are you a late-night snacker? A new study shows real benefits from this habit. A Florida State University (FSU) study, published in the *British Journal of Nutrition*, looked at whole food snacks as opposed to shakes and supplements. And the study looked at one specific late-night snack—cottage cheese. And the results of the midnight munching were positive. The study participants, active young women in their early 20s, ate cottage cheese 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime.

The researchers discovered that the snack appeared to have a positive effect on muscle quality, metabolism and health — and with no gain in body fat.

The researchers noted that this is important because it indicates that whole foods work just as well as protein supplementation and increase the options for pre-sleep nutrition. Low-fat cottage cheese is a good source of protein and calcium, making it a perfect snack any time of the day.

A Social-media Downside

By now the idea that social media can ultimately make people anti-social is well established. But is there a scientific basis for the contention that too much screen time makes people feel blue? A new study published in the *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* and reported in ScienceDaily.com suggests the answer is yes.

Psychologist Melissa G. Hunt, associate director of clinical training at the University of Pennsylvania's Psychology Department, studied the use of three social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. She and her team collected data automatically tracked by iPhones for active apps.

At the beginning of the study each of 143



participants (ages 18 to 22) completed a survey to determine mood and well-being.

Participants were then separated into two groups—one that continued on with their regular social media usage, and one that was limited to 10 minutes of Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram per day.

After three weeks Hunt looked at seven outcome measures, including a fear of missing out, anxiety, depression, and loneliness. She found that less amount of time spent on social media correlated with a significant decrease in depression and loneliness.

People who indicated greater depression at the beginning of the study showed the highest levels of improvement.

Although the study didn't specify a healthy amount of time spent on these platforms, or the best way in which to use them, Hunt reported that the findings back up the contention that too much social media time can ultimately have harmful effects.

"Character is much easier kept than recovered."

Thomas Paine, author



Baby boom

Among the findings:

- ICSI is favoured over IVF by about two to one in European clinics.
- Pregnancy rates are at about 36 percent for IVF and ICSI.
- Pregnancy rates from donated eggs are on the rise.
- Pregnancy rates are higher with five-day old embryos rather than three-day old embryos.
- The rate of single embryo transfer has increased from 11 percent in 1997 to 38 percent in 2015.
- Embryos in 15 percent of all treatment cycles in 2015 had been frozen.

Forty years after the first test-tube baby was born in 1978, the International Committee for Monitoring ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology) estimates that globally more than eight million babies have been born with the use of assisted reproductive treatments.

The number of babies born each year from either IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) or ICSI (Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection) is estimated at more than half a million from more than two million treatment cycles. In Europe, Spain tops the list of most active countries in assisted reproduction. The European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology reports that since 1997 there have been a record number of 119,875 treatment cycles—ahead of Russia at 110,723 and Germany at 96,512.

Strategies for Allergy Sufferers When Dining Out



People with food allergies who like to dine out may benefit from new research from the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI), which was revealed at a recent annual scientific meeting.

The research involved a 25-question survey that detailed specific behaviour with members of a food-allergy network.

By far, the most effective strategy was to speak to a waiter on arrival at the restaurant, followed by ordering dishes with

simple ingredients, and then double-checking on ingredients before eating. The research showed that those who used multiple questions when ordering—or multiple strategies—suffered fewer allergic reactions. Results also showed that those who suffered the most severe reactions also used the fewest strategies.

The most used strategies include: Speaking to a waiter on arrival; ordering food with simple ingredients; double

checking food before eating; avoiding restaurants with higher likelihood of contamination; and taking the time to review all menu ingredients on a restaurant website.

The least used strategies include: placing food allergy order; using a personal allergy card; no longer eating at restaurants; choosing a chain restaurant; and going to a restaurant during non-peak hours.

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For sales and subscriptions please contact Andrea Burgers at 604.473.0305 or aburgers@canadawide.com.

For administration inquiries please contact Tracy McRitchie at 604.473.0388 or tmcrichtie@canadawide.com.

Editor: L. Mitges

Art Director: Kim McLane

Publisher: Brad Liski

Contributing Writers: Patricia Chuey
Steve Burgess
L. Mitges

Advisory Board: Patricia Chuey, R.D.,
Chris Cunningham, M.D.,
Lori Yarrow, D.C., P.M.P.

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