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Heart Health Awareness Month

Every seven minutes in Canada, someone dies from heart disease or stroke. This year in Canada, there will be an estimated 70,000 heart attacks, 40,000 cardiac arrests, and 62,000 strokes. Heart disease is preventable and manageable. Your best defense is controlling the risk factors that could lead to coronary artery disease, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, stress, excessive alcohol consumption, physical inactivity and being overweight. If you've been diagnosed with a heart condition, there are treatments to help you manage your illness. You can further reduce your risk by considering these heart-healthy steps:

- Be smoke-free.
- Be physically active.
- Know and control your blood pressure.
- Eat a healthy diet that is lower in fat, especially saturated and trans fat.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Manage your diabetes.
- Limit alcohol use.
- Reduce stress.
- Visit your doctor regularly and follow your doctor's advice

The Heart Month campaign began in 1958 when the Foundation, led by Dr. Wilfred Bigelow, committed to raise \$600,000 to fund heart research. In Ontario, volunteers in Hamilton, Kingston, Lakehead, London, Oakville, Oshawa, Peterborough and Port Hope launched a modest door-to-door campaign to raise a provincial goal of \$250,000. By the end of the campaign, they had exceeded goal and raised \$320,000.

Today, the February Heart Month canvass is a national, community-based fundraising campaign. The success of this program depends on its 100,000 volunteers, who make friendly, personal requests to their neighbours and online networks. Volunteers canvass for donations through the month of February, to support life-saving research and raise awareness of heart disease and stroke within their communities.

Today, heart disease and stroke take one life every 7 minutes and 90% of Canadians have at least one risk factor. Heart Month is the Heart and Stroke Foundation's key opportunity to reach millions of Canadians in February and alert them to the risks of heart disease and stroke. Volunteers are the face and the voice of the Heart and Stroke Foundation and Heart Month is a critical time when we depend on you to share our message.



**HEART &
STROKE**
FOUNDATION

Information taken from the

Love is all around



Happy Valentine's Day!

February 14, 2016

Aging Cartoons



Health Benefits of Smiling

As humans, we first begin smiling in the womb. As children, we smile more than 400 times a day. Yet as we age, our faces begin to show more blank expressions and even frowns. The happiest of adults smile an average of 40–50 times a day, while the average adult only smiles 20 times a day. Fortunately, there is good news about smiling that may inspire us to change our ways. Besides others viewing us as more attractive, confident and relaxed when we smile, growing research finds that smiling elicits a plethora of health benefits, including less stress and a happier, longer life.

Genuine smiling involves both mouth and eye muscles in which the cheeks rise and the skin around the eyes crinkle. Authentic smiles convey a positive self-image and lighter mood. A study testing people's behaviors under pressure-filled tasks showed that genuine smiles lowered both stress responses and heart rate. Individuals who smile even through tough situations are found to feel better emotionally and physically. In addition, research on European smiles concludes that smiling varies among different cultures and women tend to smile more than men.

A study of American baseball card photos taken in 1952 revealed that the smiling baseball players outlived their non-smiling counterparts by seven years. The conclusion: Cracking a smile can add years to your life. Research on the effects of turning a frown upside down reports that smiling is similar to getting restful sleep and actually awakens your brain with feel-good neural messaging. Smiling is shown to enliven the orbitofrontal cortex, the sensory reward center in the brain, which means when you see another person smiling, you actually feel rewarded. Grinning from ear to ear, or even cracking a slight smile, boosts physical health in many specific ways:

- Fortifies the immune system. From grinning to beaming, a happy face makes for an upbeat mood and relaxed body, which enhances immune function. Smiling literally aids in the prevention of flu and colds. Plus, China's Modern Cancer Hospital Guangzhou is one of many health institutions worldwide that credits smiling in the treatment of cancer.
- Produces stress-reducing hormones like cortisol, dopamine and adrenaline. Even a shy grin activates the brain to counter high levels of stress hormones that increase the risk of heart disease, heart attack, stroke and structural changes in the brain's memory.
- Releases the body's natural drugs. With a happy face, the body releases pain-reducing endorphins to relax the body, reduce heart rate and lower blood pressure.
- Positively changes mood. Psychologists note that if a person grins for 60 seconds, even if the grin is faked or forced, the body releases mood-lifting serotonin that helps the body feel content again. The British Dental Health Foundation concludes that smiles are naturally sweet and can produce the same emotional response as a person eating 2,000 chocolate bars.
- Uplifts the face for a more youthful look. Smile muscles physically draw up the face, making a person look younger and more vibrant.

Flashing the pearly whites significantly improves overall physical and emotional health at every age - and that is something to smile about.

Recipes From Home

Heart Healthy Chicken Vegetable Stirfry

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, chopped (about 14 oz/425 g)
- 1 tsp (5 mL) ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) curry powder
- Pinch fresh ground pepper
- 2 tsp (10 mL) sesame oil
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups (1 L) fresh or frozen cut vegetables
- 3/4 cup (175 mL) no salt added chicken broth
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) hoisin sauce
- 1 tsp (5 mL) cornstarch
- 1 tsp (5 mL) sesame seeds, toasted (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a bowl, toss chicken with ginger, curry and pepper.
2. In a nonstick skillet heat, 1 tsp (5 mL) of the oil and brown chicken. Remove to plate.
3. Return skillet to medium heat and add remaining oil. Cook onion and garlic for 2 minutes to start softening.
4. Add vegetables and chicken.
5. In a small bowl, whisk together broth, hoisin and cornstarch. Pour into skillet and bring to a simmer.
6. Cover and cook for about 5 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink inside.
7. Sprinkle with sesame seeds (if using).

Tip: Enjoy this over steamed brown rice or quinoa.



Source: http://www.heartandstroke.com/site/c.iQIL-cMWJtE/b.9247453/k.53B/Recipes__Chicken_and_vegetable_stirfry.htm