

KNOW YOUR HISTORY



Regular exercise can help reduce risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke but if you are at a higher risk, consult with your doctor and a fitness professional for exercises that are right for you. The following are some general guidelines:

CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISE

- Exercise at a conversational pace
- Drink water at regular intervals
- Take rests whenever necessary

RESISTANCE TRAINING

- Don't hold your breath!
- Choose lightweight dumbbells or resistance tubes
- Work one muscle or one side of the body at a time (eg. lunges)

FLEXIBILITY TRAINING

- Engage in a full-body stretching routine 3 times per week to help reduce blood pressure. Hold each stretch for 30 seconds

Action Plan: *Consult with your health provider on ideas for a daily exercise program*

PREVENTION & INTERVENTION

A diet that includes healthy fats is good for your arteries! Research suggests that increasing unsaturated fats, eliminating trans fats, and reducing carbohydrate intake is more effective in preventing heart disease and strokes than reducing overall fat intake

Unsaturated fats include:

MONOUNSATURATED & POLYUNSATURATED FATS

- Avocado
- Olive oil
- Seed oils
- Nuts & seeds
- Peanuts



OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

- Fatty fish (salmon & mackerel)
- Walnuts
- Pecans
- Flax seeds



Action Plan: *Include 3 small servings of healthy fats each day.*

STRESS & HEART HEALTH

Chronic stress not only affects mental health, it can also increase risk of heart disease and stroke.

WHEN YOU'RE UNDER STRESS, DO YOU:

- Eat to calm down?
- Rush around but do not get much done?
- Work too much?
- Procrastinate?
- Sleep too little, too much or both?
- Try to do too many things at once?

These behaviours can lead to high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol levels.

MANAGE YOUR STRESS

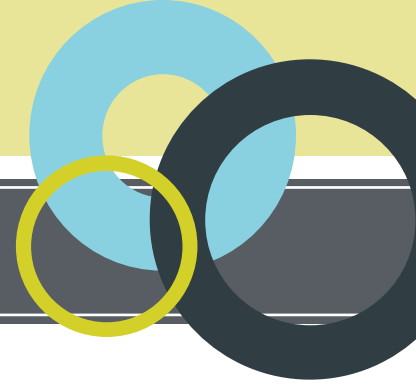
- **Try positive self-talk**—Turn “I can’t do this!” into “I’ll do the best I can.”
- **Practice stress stoppers**—Count to 10, take five deeps breaths, or go for a walk.
- **Treat yourself**—Take 15 minutes to read or call a friend.
- **Relax daily**—Meditate, practice yoga, or stretch at your desk.

Action Plan: *Take a 5 minute stretch break each morning and afternoon*

Sources:

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/StressManagement/HowDoesStressAffectYou/Stress-and-Heart-Health_UCM_437370_Article.jsp#.VuA1PEZ4lf3

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/StressManagement/FourWaystoDealWithStress/Four-Ways-to-Deal-with-Stress_UCM_307996_Article.jsp#.VuA1ZkZ4lf0



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