

JUNE 2008

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## Get Up and Go On Vacation

**W**ouldn't it be nice to come back from vacation in better shape than when you left? Rather than gain weight on vacation, some people actually drop pounds – and have fun doing it! Think about this:

**Build your vacation around a physical activity.** Search online for “active vacations” or “recreation” to learn about organized activities. You'll find many options such as hiking, biking, mountain climbing, horseback riding and scuba adventures, as well as yoga retreats and physical fitness packages.

### Use your hotel fitness facility or pool.

Fit in a workout first thing before the day's events interfere. Take advantage of recreation options at your resort or hotel, such as walking tours or lessons in golf or tennis. Add a daily swim for a fun, energizing full-body workout. *Tip:* Treading water for 30 minutes can burn up to 350 calories.

### Something new in your life?

Change, whether work-related or personal, can affect your health. Any shake-up in your routine can create stress and residual physical symptoms. At these times, keep a sense of humour and be good to yourself: **Block binges.** Stress can cause you to overindulge in alcohol, caffeine or food, possibly increasing your stress and inability to cope. **Enjoy the familiar.** When you feel your world is moving out of your control, focus on something comforting that hasn't changed. Call a friend or drive to a favourite town for a weekend getaway.



**When you travel, check out your surroundings for active opportunities.** Explore nearby parks and playfields. Toss a ball or Frisbee with your family. Rent bikes or kayaks.

**Walk, walk, walk.** Enjoy the local scenery, market or mall. *Tips:* On warm days, have plenty of water handy. Carry a cell phone and map.

**Eat light to feel right.** Keep meals small and snacks healthy to sustain your energy and avoid weight gain. Order steamed, baked or broiled food, not fried.

Try new and different cuisines, but sample, don't feast. Limit alcohol – the extra calories found in cocktails, wine or beer can quickly add up. If you overindulge, balance out the extra calories with exercise!

## HEALTH notes

■ **Splash, splash! It's cool in the pool time.** Before you get wet, think safety to prevent backyard pool drownings. Advice from Safe Kids Canada: ① Close adult supervision of small children is a must. ② Install four-sided fencing, at least 4 feet/1.22m high, with self-locking and self-closing gates with latches young children can't reach. Also, check with your local building inspector about bylaws for fencing and safety requirements in your area. ③ Install sub-surface pool alarms. ④ Get poolside rescue equipment and keep a cordless, water-resistant phone poolside with emergency numbers programmed. ⑤ Have your children take swimming lessons. *Plus:* Get trained in CPR and first aid.

■ **What is your favourite thirst-quencher?** If you are trying to lose weight, choose beverages that are low-calorie and nutritious. Canada's Food Guide recommends 2 cups/500ml of milk every day to meet your vitamin D needs. If you don't drink milk, try fortified soy beverages that include vitamin D. Daily choices might include a fruit smoothie with skim milk or water with a slice of lemon.

■ **For healthy gums, say cheese?** Japanese researchers found that daily consumption of dairy products may reduce risk of developing periodontal, or gum disease. Among the 942 participants age 40-79, those who had 55-plus grams of regular (not lactose-free) dairy products (approximately 1.9 ounces/50 grams of cheese or ¼ cup/50ml of milk) every day showed a lower rate of deep periodontal pockets and lost gum tissue, symptoms that can lead to tooth loss. Gum disease has been linked to heart disease and diabetes.



# Weight Busters

**D**on't get weighed down with extra pounds. Design a permanent fitness plan that suits your lifestyle with these tried and true weight losers.

## Follow the 500 Rule:

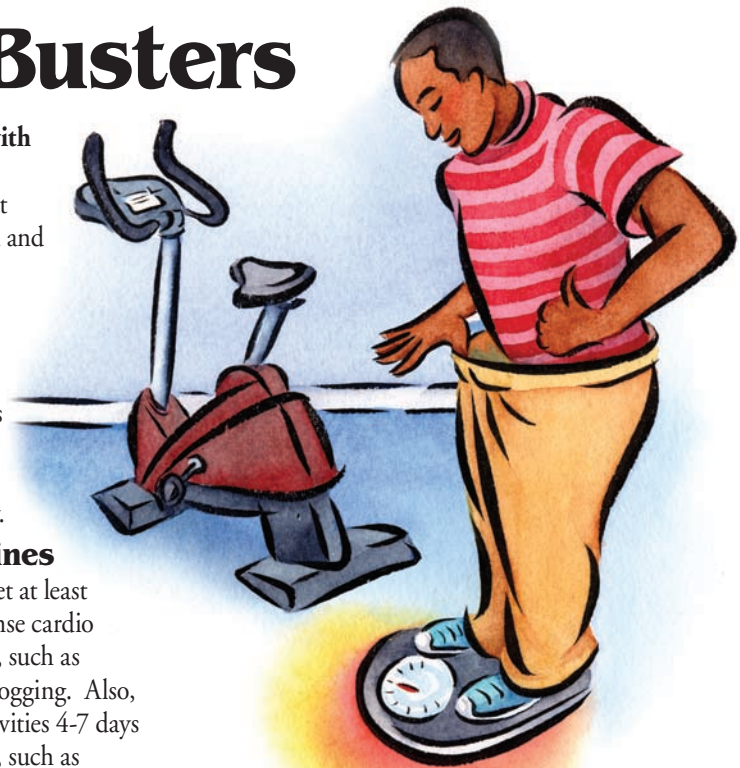
To lose weight, target one pound a week, which equals a deficit of 3,500 calories. That's 500 calories a day you can trim by eating 250 fewer calories and burning an extra 250 calories with activity.

## Follow exercise guidelines from Health Canada:

Get at least 30-60 minutes of *moderately* intense cardio (aerobic) exercise 4-7 days a week, such as swimming, dancing, walking or jogging. Also, try to include some flexibility activities 4-7 days a week to improve your flexibility, such as gardening or stretching exercises. *Tip:* To rev up your metabolism, build muscle mass with strength-training twice a week.

**Eat more to weigh less:** Fill your meals with water-heavy, high-fibre fruits and vegetables, which are calorie-light. You can eat more and feel full while you lose weight and gain nutrients.

*Examples:* apple vs. cookie; broth-based vegetable soup vs. a slice of pizza.



**Stick to it:** The key to weight control is consistency. Follow your eating and exercise plan every day – even on holidays, vacations and weekends. An occasional relapse is normal, but frequent slips can become a major setback.

*Tip:* Keep a journal of what you eat and how much you exercise to track your progress and stay motivated.

The arrival of long summer days means fun in the sun. And while most of us cope just fine with normal hot weather, even a few days of extreme heat can endanger our health.

Health Canada defines a “heat wave” as at least 3 consecutive days of unseasonably high temperatures, usually with high humidity, where the temperature does not cool down significantly at night.

Extreme heat plus high humidity disrupts your body's ability to maintain a healthy temperature. This can lead to heat stroke, when body temperature rises to life-threatening levels.

## CHILL during HEAT waves:

- **Stay hydrated** by drinking plenty of water often, even if you aren't thirsty. *Note:* Alcoholic and caffeinated drinks may contribute to dehydration.
- **Eat light** – spread your average daily calories among several small meals.
- **Stay indoors** and on a lower, cooler floor, if possible.
- **Go slow.** Do strenuous outdoor tasks only during the coolest hours, usually between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m.
- **Cool off** by an electric fan to evaporate your sweat or take a cool shower.
- **Visit** an air-conditioned mall or library.
- **Ask your health department** about emergency cooling centers – air-conditioned locations for respite from extreme heat.
- **Never leave children** or pets in cars.

**MORE INFO** ▶ Health Canada: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/environ/heat-chaleur\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/environ/heat-chaleur_e.html)



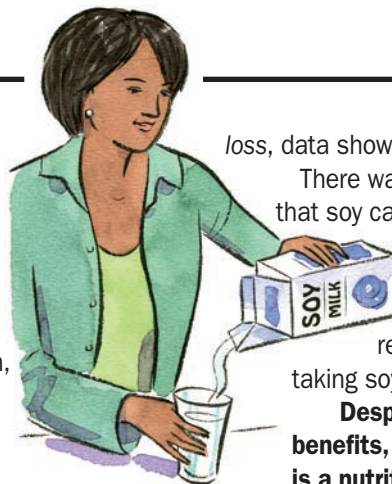
## Q & A

### Q: Is soy beneficial?

**A:** The health benefits of soy in our diet have been the subject of many studies in recent years. The latest research, including a review by the American Heart Association, does not appear to validate several claims.

Regarding *cholesterol*, the scientists found that consuming large amounts of soy protein decreased LDL (bad) cholesterol very little, only 3%. No improvements were seen in HDL (good) cholesterol, triglyceride or blood pressure levels.

Taking soy was not found to relieve *menopausal hot flashes* either. Regarding soy's ability to slow postmenopausal *bone*



loss, data showed mixed results.

There was no clear evidence that soy can prevent *cancers* of the breast, uterus or prostate. In conclusion, the committee recommended against taking soy supplements.

**Despite unproven health benefits, adding soy to your diet is a nutritious practice.** It is a

rich source of protein, a fine alternate to animal protein. Soy is naturally high in polyunsaturated fats, fibre, vitamins and minerals and low in saturated fat. For average adults, limit soy-based foods to 1-2 servings a day.

*Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP*

# Skin Screen

**Is screening for melanoma skin cancer important?** Researchers say it is worthwhile to have your provider screen you at least once for this deadly form of skin cancer.

**Background:** Melanoma is far more likely to spread to other parts of the body than other more common skin cancers. But the disease is highly curable in its early stages (at the surface layer of skin).

**Study results:** In an *Archives of Dermatology* study, researchers found that a one-time, total-body professional skin exam for people age 50-plus is a cost-effective way to detect melanoma. More frequent skin exams – every 2 years, also starting at age 50 – are worthwhile for people with a family history of skin cancer.

**Other forms of skin cancer:** The study did not assess the value of exams for common, less invasive basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma.

**Best advice:** The Canadian Cancer Society has long recommended screening for all types of skin cancer. Have you had a skin check-up?



**A monthly self-exam of your skin** can help reduce your risk of cancer death. Promptly report any suspicious skin changes to your provider.

**MORE INFO** ▶ Canadian Cancer Society: [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

# By the Way, Doctor

**Nothing beats a good relationship with your provider for feeling better.**

**Physicians see, treat and help many people in a typical day.** It requires that both provider and patients be very efficient to get the most out of each visit.

One way to help your provider help you is being prepared for your discussion in the exam room before you enter it.

**For immediate concerns,** be able to describe symptoms clearly, including when they started and what makes them worse or provides relief.

**For a checkup,** prepare for routine issues:

- thorough review of all medications, including alternative therapies prescribed by other providers
- new or persistent symptoms (such as heartburn, insomnia, constipation, headache)
- family history review, including any new diagnoses of serious disease
- scheduling tests or preventive screenings



Many providers also want to learn and record additional details at a checkup that provide a well-rounded picture of your health. These might include: if you smoke, drink heavily, feel more stress; are depressed or experiencing sexual dysfunction; or would like to lose extra weight and exercise more.

It is sometimes hard to know what information to exchange in a provider visit; it depends on the circumstances, of course. But the key is rapport and trust between provider and patient that come from building a long-term, healthy relationship.

# WAKE UP at WORK!

**If you're on the job 8 hours a day like most of Canada's work force, you might as well be awake for it!**

**Everyone has low-energy days** but if you regularly find yourself exhausted at work, take time to learn why. What are the habits or issues that could be draining your vitality?

**Getting enough rest?** Depending on your individual needs, get 7-8 hours per night. If you wake up feeling groggy, gradually add to your sleep bank in 10- to 15-minute increments each night until you wake up feeling rested and ready to go. Well-rested workers work alert, productive and safe.

**Getting enough nutrition?** Start your day with a power-packed breakfast to improve alertness and concentration. Combine high-fibre carbohydrates for energy and protein for endurance. *Tip:* For lunch, eat light – a turkey sandwich, salad, and fresh fruit is a perfect mid-day meal.

**Getting enough exercise?** Critical to staying energized all day is keeping your muscles and cardiovascular system strong. Fit in cardio workouts most days, and walk during your breaks or after lunch – the fresh air will revive you. *Bonus:* Exercise has been shown to improve sleep quality.

## ENERGY BOOSTERS

- Crack a window or use a small desk fan for good air circulation.
- Watch your posture to reduce muscle fatigue and tension. Sit or stand with your back straight, feet flat on the floor and shift positions frequently.
- Play some tunes (if safe and appropriate) to perk you up as you work through the hours.
- Caffeine? It may offer a convenient quick-fix, but consumption of high-caffeine or high-sugar beverages may create rebound fatigue. To reduce fatigue stay hydrated with water – carry a water bottle.

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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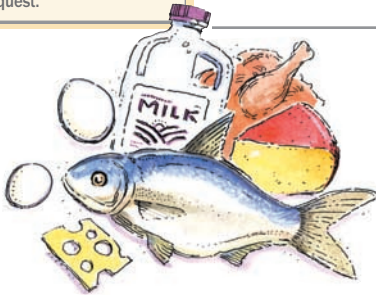
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## Chill Factor



Ever wonder whether it's safe to eat that peanut butter or package of deli turkey lurking on the back shelf of your refrigerator? Here's a storage guideline from the Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education (Fight Bac!).

### Safe Food Storage Guideline Best to eat these foods within these times:

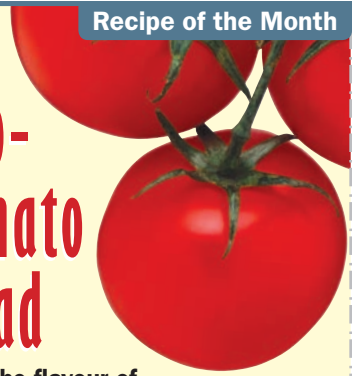
FOOD	REFRIGERATOR (40°F/4°C)	FREEZER (0°F/-18°C)
<b>EGGS</b>		
EGGS IN SHELL	3-4 WEEKS	DON'T FREEZE
RAW EGG YOLKS, WHITES	2-4 DAYS	1 YEAR
HARD COOKED EGGS	1 WEEK	DON'T FREEZE
LIQUID EGG SUBSTITUTE, OPENED	3 DAYS	DON'T FREEZE
LIQUID EGG SUBSTITUTE, UNOPENED	10 DAYS	1 YEAR
<b>MEATS</b>		
GROUND BEEF, TURKEY, PORK, LAMB	1-2 DAYS	2-3 MONTHS
RAW STEAKS	2-4 DAYS	10-12 MONTHS
RAW CHOPS	2-4 DAYS	8-12 MONTHS
RAW ROASTS	2-4 DAYS	8-12 MONTHS
COOKED MEAT, MEAT DISHES	3-4 DAYS	2-3 MONTHS
LUNCHEON MEATS, OPENED	3-5 DAYS	1-2 MONTHS
LUNCHEON MEATS, UNOPENED	2 WEEKS	1-2 MONTHS
HAM, FULLY COOKED, UNOPENED	2 WEEKS (OR PACKAGE DATE)	2-3 MONTHS
<b>POULTRY</b>		
RAW WHOLE CHICKEN, TURKEY	2-3 DAYS	1 YEAR
RAW CHICKEN, TURKEY PIECES	2-3 DAYS	6 MONTHS
COOKED POULTRY	3-4 DAYS	4-6 MONTHS
<b>FISH</b>		
RAW FISH	1-2 DAYS	2-6 MONTHS
COOKED FISH	3-4 DAYS	4-6 MONTHS
SMOKED FISH	14 DAYS (OR PACKAGE DATE)	2 MONTHS (VACUUM SEAL)
<b>SHELLFISH</b>		
CLAMS, CRAB, LOBSTER, ETC.	12-24 HOURS	2-4 MONTHS
SCALLOPS, SHRIMP, COOKED SHELLFISH	3-4 DAYS	2-4 MONTHS
<b>DAIRY</b>		
BUTTER	8 WEEKS	3 MONTHS (UNSALTED) 1 YEAR (SALTED)
CHEESE, HARD (E.G., SWISS, CHEDDAR)	10 MONTHS, UNOPENED; 3-4 WEEKS, OPENED	6 MONTHS
CHEESE, SOFT (E.G., BRIE)	1 WEEK	DON'T FREEZE WELL
CREAM CHEESE	2 WEEKS	DON'T FREEZE
COTTAGE, RICOTTA CHEESE	1 WEEK	DON'T FREEZE
MILK	7 DAYS	6 WEEKS
CREAM	3-4 DAYS	4 MONTHS
SOUR CREAM	7-21 DAYS	DON'T FREEZE
YOGURT	7-14 DAYS	1-2 MONTHS
<b>MISC</b>		
MARGARINE	4-5 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
MAYONNAISE, OPENED	2 MONTHS	DON'T FREEZE
PEANUT BUTTER, OPENED	DATE ON JAR	DON'T FREEZE
SAUSAGE, RAW	1-2 DAYS	1-2 MONTHS
PEPPERONI, JERKY	2-3 WEEKS	1-2 MONTHS
BACON	7 DAYS	1 MONTH
PIZZA	3-4 DAYS	1-2 MONTHS

**WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!**

**MORE INFO** ▶ Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education: [www.canfightbac.org](http://www.canfightbac.org)

### Recipe of the Month

## Two-Tomato Salad



Savor the flavour of tomatoes in this salad-plus-dressing.

#### Dressing - whisk together and set aside:

- 1 cup/236ml tomato juice
- ¼ cup/60ml red-wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp/15ml extra virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¼ tsp/.45g red pepper flakes
- salt and pepper to taste

#### Salad - place in a bowl:

- 2 cups/298g red grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup/133g cucumber, chopped
- 1 medium yellow bell pepper, chopped
- ⅓ cup/33g green onion, sliced
- ⅓ cup/13g fresh cilantro or basil, chopped
- 1 cup/202g cooked small shell pasta

Gently toss salad with dressing, allow to set for 30 minutes, then serve.

### Nutrition Facts

Makes 6 cups/1304g.

Amount Per Serving	Calories	65
	Protein	2.6g
	Total Fat	3g
	Total Carb	13g
	Fibre	1.5g
	Sodium	65mg

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