

BODY

B · U · L · L · E · T · I · N
CANADA

SEPTEMBER 2011

MORE STEPS for Better Health

A brisk daily walk can not only make you look and feel better, it may also help prevent heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and depression. So get started:

Gear up. Wear comfortable footwear that fits firmly at the heel and with arch support and flexible soles. Wear layered, loose-fitting clothing that you can adjust when the temperature changes.

Prepare. Walk slowly for about 5 minutes to warm up your muscles. Then stretch your calves and thighs before starting your walk. Never stretch cold muscles.

Start easy. If you tire easily, start by walking only as far or fast as you're comfortable, and use that as a starting point. Slowly build up to longer strolls. For maximum benefit, eventually aim for 30 to 60 minutes on most days.

Set goals and track progress. Goals should be realistic. You don't need to do 30 minutes nonstop; you can do three 10-minute walks instead. Counting your steps (with a pedometer), kilometres or time walked can keep you motivated. If you miss a few days, don't stress about it — just resume walking as soon as possible.



Make it fun. Walk with a friend, bring music or vary your routes — whatever makes it enjoyable.

Tip: Report to a friend or record what you do so you feel responsible for keeping to the walking plan.

Best foot forward: Starting a new routine can be hard — so keep your health goals in mind and just make the first move, no matter how small. Baby steps are better than not doing it at all.

If you love dining out at restaurants with ethnic dishes on the menu, read "World on Your Plate: 3 Continents, 3 Flavours" on page 4.

HEALTH NOTES

◆ **Tummy troubles:** Gastritis — inflammation or irritation of the stomach lining — has many causes, including infection, injury, radiation, certain medications and immune disorders. A very common form of gastritis involves an infection of *Helicobacter pylori* bacteria, leading to indigestion, pain and discomfort in the upper abdomen (or sometimes no symptoms). Luckily, *H. pylori* is easy to detect and treat with medication — a proton-pump inhibitor to reduce acid and antibiotics to treat the infection.

◆ **Take these steps to fight the flu.** ❶ Get a flu shot every year (recommended for most everyone). ❷ Practice prevention. Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizers. Use a tissue or your elbow to cover coughs and sneezes. ❸ If you get the flu, stay home. Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes. ❹ Use antiviral flu drugs with your provider's OK; take within 2 days of symptoms.

◆ **Get fresh.** Recent research in the *British Medical Journal* confirms that good food isn't cheap. When prices go up, many families choose sweetened, fattening processed foods. What's best for your health might cost a bit more. So look for locally grown produce that's in season — it will be fresher and less expensive. Try out new recipes, too. This approach will benefit your pocketbook and your health. — Zorba Paster, MD

INSIDE

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■ PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST ■ PREVENT OSTEOARTHRITIS ■ 3 CONTINENTS, 3 FLAVOURS

BOOST Your Credit Card Savvy



If you have a relatively low credit card interest rate, you should be thankful. But if you read the fine print in your card agreement (and we suggest you do), you may find additional perks beyond rebates and reward points. Here are some features you may be missing:

❶ **Travel perks.** In addition to earning miles, many credit cards offer hotel room upgrades, car rental discounts and special concierge services.

❷ **Consumer protections.** Many card issuers offer price protection and purchase protection. If you find a lower price on an item in Canada over a certain time period (typically 60 days), many card issuers will credit the price difference (for example, up to \$100) on the same item in Canada. Purchase protection guards your eligible purchases against theft, loss or damage for up to 90 days from the purchase date.

❸ **Car rental loss/damage insurance.** When you rent a car, you often have the option of getting added insurance. Before you buy, find out if your credit card carrier offers car rental insurance. Note: Also check to see if your car insurance already provides that coverage.

In the market for a new credit card? Use the Financial Consumer Agency's Credit Card Selector Tool at www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca/eng/resources/toolCalculator/creditCard/selectorTool/index-eng.asp.

Healthful Eats for Back to School

If you're a busy working parent, it can be hard to fit in good nutrition with school and work.

Did you know? Good nutrition has been linked to better grades and fewer behavioural problems in children. Remember these basics:

Focus on serving balanced, fresh, simple and portable meals. Wraps work well for a combination of nutritious foods. Convenient and easy to handle, they are a nice change from the standard sandwich.

Emphasize breakfast. Include whole-grain cereal or no-sodium oatmeal with a dash of brown sugar. An egg, whole-wheat toast, fruit, orange juice and milk are favourites.

Plan ahead. Stay on track by posting menus on the refrigerator. Use them to make your shopping list.



Get kids involved in meal planning and preparation. They can even help with cooking when time allows. Even if it's just once a week, kids love quality time. Why not make a healthful meal together at home?

Treats have their place → Make treats a special event versus a regular choice, and then try to stick to a plan.

Cholesterol Update

High cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease, the nation's number one killer. The Heart and Stroke Foundation recommends keeping your total cholesterol below 5.2 mmol/L; LDL ("bad" cholesterol) under 3.5 mmol/L; HDL ("good" cholesterol) over 1.0 mmol/L (men) and over 1.3 mmol/L (women); and triglycerides under 1.7 mmol/L.

Risk factors for unhealthy cholesterol include age, diabetes, family history, poor diet and obesity. While you can't control some factors, you can reduce your risk with these steps:

Eat right. Limit saturated fat, trans fats, cholesterol and alcohol. Load up on vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Monounsaturated fats — from nuts, avocados and olive oil, for example — can help improve your cholesterol profile.

Slim down. If you are overweight, losing weight may help improve your cholesterol. Even a 2.27- to 4.5-kilogram (5- to 10-pound) reduction can make a difference.



Get moving. Exercise can raise your HDL ("good") cholesterol.

Quit smoking. You may raise your "good" cholesterol by about 5 percent. Watch out for secondhand smoke as well.

Get treatment. When lifestyle changes aren't enough, medication can help improve your cholesterol numbers.

Take heart → High cholesterol may be scary, but there's a good chance you can lower it into a safer range with some changes.

Preparedness Checklist

This year's earthquake and tsunami in Japan were devastating and eye opening. Are you prepared for an emergency?

■ **Know your workplace and neighbourhood's evacuation routes.**

If instructed, leave immediately and follow the route; don't take shortcuts.

■ **Keep at least a half tank of gas** in your car at all times. In an emergency, gas stations could be closed.

■ **Develop an emergency plan** that includes a place for family members to meet in case of disaster, how to contact one another, a home evacuation plan, "safe" spots in your home and emergency numbers.

■ **Create a three-day emergency survival kit** for home and work containing non-perishable food, water, batteries, a battery-operated radio, medications, flashlights, matches and a blanket.

■ **Don't forget your pets.** Prepare a survival kit for them, too, stocked with food, medications, leash and bedding. Know what accommodations accept pets if you need shelter in an emergency.

■ **Learn first aid and CPR.** You can help yourself or others in case emergency vehicles can't get to you.

■ **Keep an emergency cash fund.** When power outages occur, access to cash or businesses that accept credit or debit cards may be unavailable.



Learn more about preparing for emergencies by visiting **Get Prepared** at www.getprepared.gc.ca or your provincial or territorial emergency management organization.

EXPERT Advice – Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FRCPC

September is National Arthritis Month.

Q: What prevents osteoarthritis?

A: Degeneration of the cartilage that cushions the ends of your bones can result in osteoarthritis, also known as "wear-and-tear" joint disease. Some causative factors such as heredity, age and gender are out of your control. The risk of osteoarthritis goes up after age 45 and is higher in women than men.

Fortunately, changing some risk factors can help you prevent degenerative joint disease. **Three helpful tips:**

① **Keep your weight down.** Even overweight young adults are more likely to develop osteoarthritis as they grow older.

Regardless of your age, however, losing as little as 2.27 to 4.5 kilograms (5 to 10 pounds) can significantly reduce your risk.

② **Strengthen your thigh muscles.**

Exercises that strengthen the quadriceps muscles in your upper legs can help prevent knee arthritis.

③ **Avoid joint injuries.** Use proper equipment and protective gear during sports. And learn how to safely do work tasks that involve repetitive motion or lifting.



PRODUCE PICK of the Month

Peaches

Did you know ... peaches belong to the rose family. Look for fragrant, unblemished, soft peaches in the produce section. One medium peach has 40 calories — try them in smoothies, salads and salsa, or for dessert. If you prefer the convenience of canned, select peaches canned in their own juice or with no sugar added.



KNOW YOUR Numbers

"Fat Free"

Less than 0.5 grams of total fat per serving

Products that contain less than half a gram of total fat can use the claim "fat free." But watch your servings: Fat free foods still have calories, sugar and sodium. Note: Not all fats are bad. Just remember to replace artery-clogging saturated and trans fats with heart-friendly mono- and polyunsaturated fats.



STAY IN TOUCH

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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World on Your Plate: 3 Continents, 3 Flavours

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

This month we explore three cuisines from around the globe that have two things in common: intriguing flavours and spice blends.

ETHIOPIAN

Ethiopian food is served atop injera, a thin pancake made from teff flour, instead of on a plate. Fragrant stews called “wat” are scooped onto the injera, which you rip apart and eat with your hands. Wat is made from meat, poultry, lentils or chickpeas and can include berberé, a mix of cayenne pepper, fenugreek and up to 15 other spices. Vegetables may include mushrooms, onions and carrots. Food portions tend to be small, making moderation easy.

CAJUN

Cajun food is the traditional cuisine of Acadians (or Cajuns) in Louisiana and Canada’s Maritimes. Cajun meals involve a main dish with rice and a local vegetable. Bell peppers, onion and celery are the base of well-known dishes such as gumbo and jambalaya. Cajun food is often loaded with butter and cream, but can be prepared in healthier ways. For example, gumbo can be thickened with a butter-based roux, or with high-fibre okra, a vegetable which may help lower cholesterol levels. Opt for low-fat crawfish or shrimp instead of sausage to reduce fat.

KOREAN

If you’re new to Korean food, start with Bibimbap, a mixed dish of rice, vegetables, chili paste and egg, with optional additions of meat, chicken, seafood or tofu. Though heavy on noodles and rice, Korean food is also loaded with vegetables such as spinach, mushrooms and daikon radish, which boost the health value. Kimchee, a fermented cabbage spiced with garlic, ginger and chili pepper, is very popular, as are Korean barbecued meats called bulgogi. This healthy cooking method produces lean meats, but they may be high in sodium from the soy sauce-based marinades. For a healthy meal, choose lots of vegetables and go easy on the salty sauces.



Arugula with Peaches & Chili Peppers

- 
- 45ml (3 tbsp) fresh lime juice
 - 20ml (1 tbsp + 1 tsp) honey
 - 15ml (1 tbsp) extra virgin olive oil
 - 1ml ($\frac{1}{4}$ tsp) salt
 - 125ml ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) sliced mild chili peppers (such as Anaheim or poblano)
 - 2 medium peaches (ripe but firm)
 - 5ml (1 tsp) fresh lime juice
 - 2L (8 cups) arugula leaves, loosely packed
 - 25ml (2 tbsp) cilantro leaves

1. Toss first 4 dressing ingredients together in mixing bowl. Slice chili peppers into rings, add to dressing; toss and let stand 30 minutes.
 2. Meanwhile, wash peaches, rubbing to remove fuzz; slice into wedges and splash with 5ml (1 tsp) fresh lime juice.
 3. Spread arugula leaves and peach slices evenly among 4 salad plates.
 4. Spoon dressing over each salad and garnish with cilantro leaves.
- Tip: Nectarines can stand in when fresh peaches are out of season.

Nutrition Facts

MAKES 4 750ML (3-CUP) SERVINGS.

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 80	
Total Fat 3.7g	Total Carbohydrate 11.7g
Saturated Fat .4g	Dietary Fibre 2g
Cholesterol 0mg	Sugars 8g
Sodium 151mg	Protein 2g

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