

Know Your Numbers

Heart Disease is one of the leading causes of death for Canadian men and women, responsible for 36% of deaths among men and 39% of women.
One risk factor will increase a person's chances of developing heart disease. People with two or more risk factors are far higher risk for Heart Disease than other people.

Risk Factor	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Higher Risk
History of heart disease- Angina, heart attack, high blood pressure	No family history of heart disease	Father or brother older than 55 with heart disease Mother or sister older than 65 with heart disease	Father or brother aged 55 or less with heart disease Mother or sister aged 65 or less with heart disease
Age			Female 55+ Male 45+
Physical Activity of moderate intensity , leaving you shortly out of breath for a period of 30 minutes.(Can be broken up into 10 - 15 minute segments)	Active 4 or more times per week, regularly all year.	Active 2, 3, 4, or more times per week, irregularly throughout the year	Active ≤ once a week, irregularly throughout the year
Smoking	Never smoked	Exposed to second hand smoke.	Smoker
Chronic Disease			Diabetes
Waist			Women >35 inches, 88 cm. Males > 40 inches 102 cm
Weight- Based on adult men and women aged 20-65. If you are muscular or over 65, you may slightly exceed the suggested limits without necessarily increasing your risk level.	BMI 18.5 to 24.9	BMI 25 to 29.9	BMI 30 or more
Blood Pressure	120/80 to 139/89	140/90- 159/99	160/100 or greater
Total Cholesterol	5.2 or less		Greater than 5.2
HDL Cholesterol H is for happy and happy is good	1.0 or more		Less than 1.0
LDL Cholesterol L is for lousy and lousy is bad	3.4 or less		Greater than 3.4
Triglyceride	Less than 1.7		Greater than 1.7

Total Cholesterol, LDL, HDL, Triglycerides, Blood Pressure, BMI, and Waist measurement are all risk factors associated with heart disease and when they are outside of their normal limits, they can increase your risk. There are many things we can do to have a positive impact on these risk factors. If your triglycerides are too high you can reduce your sugar and alcohol intake, eat sources of omega-3 fat every day (found in fatty fish like salmon, trout , mackerel, sardines, herring , nuts, seeds and whole grains as well omega-3 enriched food) and maintain a healthy weight. LDL can be reduced by increasing physical activity and lowering saturated fat and Tran's fat in your diet. HDL can be increased with physical activity, eating good sources of omega-3 fats daily and by smoking cessation. Blood pressure can be lowered by increasing your physical activity, controlling you salt intake, smoking cessation, maintaining a healthy weight and lowering your alcohol intake to one drink / day for female and two drinks / day for males.

Next time you speak with your Doctor ask for your cholesterol, blood pressure, BMI and waist measurements. Use these numbers as your baseline. When you decide to make an improvement in your health such as reducing your weight, alcohol consumption, smoking cessation or improving physical activity and nutrition, you can use your baseline for measurement of the success of your efforts. Can you imagine starting a diet and not knowing your weight!

You can't manage what you don't measure.

