



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

# EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS

## June is STROKE Month

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Canada, costing the Canadian economy \$3.6 billion a year in physician services, hospital costs, lost wages, and decreased productivity (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2009). Each year, more than 50,000 Canadians have a stroke (Statistics Canada, 2010). That's one every ten minutes. When it comes to stroke, managing risk factors is important. We cannot control family history, age, gender, or ethnicity, but luckily we can do something about other factors that could increase the risk of having a stroke.

### Major risk factors include:

- **HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE** - Over time high blood pressure damages blood vessel walls causing scarring that promotes the build-up of fatty plaque which can narrow and block arteries. This can strain or weaken the heart and lead to blood vessels in the brain bursting resulting in a stroke.
- **HIGH CHOLESTEROL/TRIGLYCERIDE LEVELS** - This can cause hard plaque to deposit on the inner walls of your blood vessels, narrowing them and making it difficult for blood to flow through the body. This can lead to blood clots, which block the flow of blood to the brain, resulting in a stroke.
- **DIABETES** - Diabetes increases the risk of high blood pressure, atherosclerosis (narrowing of the blood vessels), coronary artery disease and stroke. If your blood sugar levels are poorly controlled,

it can result in circulation problems caused by damage to the blood vessels.

- **ATRIAL FIBRILLATION** - This is an irregular heart rhythm that can cause blood to pool and get stuck in the grooves of the heart. Clots can form from this pooled blood, and may get pumped up to the brain and result in a stroke.
- **ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION** - Too much alcohol consumption can increase your blood pressure and play a part in the development of heart disease and stroke.
- **SMOKING** - This adds to the build-up of plaque in your arteries (blood vessels), and can increase the risk of blood clots. As well it can reduce the oxygen in your blood, increase your blood pressure and make your heart work harder.
- **STRESS** - People who have high levels of stress or prolonged stress may have high blood pressure. These people are more likely to get atherosclerosis (narrowing of the arteries) and have high blood cholesterol.

### References:

Statistics Canada (2010). CANSIM Table 102-0529: Deaths, by cause, Chapter IX: Diseases of the circulatory system. Retrieved May 1, 2011 from [http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2010/statcan/84F0209X/84f0209x2006000-eng.pdf](http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/collections/collection_2010/statcan/84F0209X/84f0209x2006000-eng.pdf)

Public Health Agency of Canada (2009). Tracking Heart Disease and Stroke in Canada. Retrieved May 1, 2011 from <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/2009/cvd-avclsummary-resume-eng.ph>



[www.stepuptohealthieryou.com](http://www.stepuptohealthieryou.com)

**Step Up to a Healthier You** is an online learning program. This series of learning modules provides education and skill building on topics related to stroke prevention.

**Topics include:** physical activity, healthy eating, blood pressure and blood cholesterol, smoking cessation, alcohol moderation and stress reduction. This free educational series will allow you to explore information at your own pace and from the convenience of your computer.



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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

June is Stroke Month	1
Five Easy Cooler Safety Tips	2
Over the Grill	2
Vacation: Rx for Good Health	3
Upcoming Events	3
Giant Colon coming to Six Nations	4

## five easy "COOLER SAFETY" tips



1. Take perishable food in a cooler that keeps food cold at or below 4°C (40°F). Food safety experts recommend using freezer ice packs because they drip less. Loose ice or cubes can melt, then drip and possibly transfer contaminants from one food to another. If you use loose ice, store everything in sealed containers to prevent cross-contamination!
2. Refrigerate or freeze food, if possible, the day before you pack it. This way it's already cold when you put it in the cooler.
3. Place your cooler in the coolest part of your vehicle when you're travelling. On hot days, use the car's air conditioning, if you can, to keep food cool.
4. Keep the cooler out of the sun and keep the lid closed as often as you can. You may want to use two coolers - one for drinks (since it may be opened more often) and another for food.
5. Separate raw food from cooked food. Place raw meat and poultry in sealed containers and pack them at the bottom of the cooler to keep their juices from dripping onto other food. Or better yet, pack raw meat in a separate cooler.

(Canadian Food Inspection Agency, 2010)

# Over the Grill

Tired of the same old barbeque menu? Try some of these healthy, hot and delicious ideas!

- **VEGGIE KABOBS** - Thread cherry tomatoes, diced orange and green peppers, mushrooms, and red onions on a skewer. If using wooden skewers, soak them in cold water first for about 30 minutes to prevent them from burning. Grill these colourful veggie kabobs for four to five minutes on medium heat.
- **CORN ON THE COB** - Peel away the husks. Place the corn directly on the grill at a high heat for about 10 minutes, frequently rotating the cobs to prevent them from charring. Grill until the corn is slightly browned and tender.
- **GRILLED FRUIT** - Try fresh, ripe peaches, mangos, pears, nectarines, and plantains. Lightly baste fruit slices with a non-stick vegetable spray. Place large pieces directly on the grill and smaller pieces on skewers or a grill pan. Grill just until the fruit gets tender and the grill marks show. Overcooking will make the fruit turn mushy. Dice and toss into a pasta salad, or serve with low fat vanilla yogurt for dessert.
- **FISH** - Firm fleshed fish such as salmon, tilapia, or halibut are great on the grill. Sprinkle some herbs over a fish fillet, then wrap them loosely in foil paper to create a packet or tent. Place them directly on the grill for about ten minutes. The steam trapped in the foil packet essentially cooks the fish and the flavour locks in. Bonus – the fish doesn't stick to the grill either, making clean up a breeze! If you prefer barbequing fish directly on the grill, place it skin-side up. The skin helps to hold the fish together.
- **STIR-GRILLED VEGGIES** - This is a cross between stir-frying and grilling. Stir-fry veggies in a grilling basket on the BBQ. Try stir-grilling shrimp and scallops too.
- **TOFU** - Buy extra firm tofu and soak it in your favourite marinade overnight. Cook on a lightly greased grill for about four or five minutes a side, or until browned. You can even buy pre-marinated diced tofu, ready to be threaded on your veggie kabobs.
- **GRILLED PANINI SANDWICHES** - Cut panini buns in half lengthwise and place them face down on the grill until toasted. Stuff the bun with grilled zucchini, eggplant, red pepper and provolone cheese. For a meat-lovers' version, add grilled chicken breast. Easy and simply delicious.

(Eat Right Ontario, 2011)





# VACATION: Rx for Good Health

According to a 2009 Harris/Decima research study for Expedia.ca, nearly 25% of all Canadian workers are failing to take full annual vacations, resulting in an estimated 34 million dollars in unused vacation days every year.

The Harris/Decima (2009) survey further indicated that although many Canadians understand the health benefits of taking a vacation, financial concerns, time restraints and stress cause considerable barriers to taking one. Many respondents reported that given the current economic climate it was important to put any money available into savings as opposed to spending it on vacationing. Many more reported that they did not have the time to get away. For those that could find the money and time, the stress of preparing for the vacation and racing to catch up at work afterwards made it easy to simply skip it altogether.

Vacation time is essential for employee health and wellness. Taking a vacation reduces stress, heart disease and death. Stress-related mental health claims are one of the leading costs of short- and long-term disability claims. A study from the State University of New York at Oswego (Gump and Matthews, 2000) found that regular vacations lowered risk of death by almost 20 percent in 35-57 year-old men. As well, information collected from the Framingham Heart Study showed that women aged 45-64 who took a vacation once every six years or less were almost eight times more likely to develop coronary heart disease or have a heart attack than those who took at least two vacations a year (Eaker, 1992).

Furthermore, vacationing leads to increased productivity and better job satisfaction. Vacations leave us feeling rejuvenated. A 2006 report released by Alertness Solutions, a research group hired by Air New Zealand confirms this. They reported that after two weeks off, workers got an extra hour of quality sleep each night and had reaction times at work that were 30-40% faster than before they left. These benefits were still felt three months following the vacation.

#### References

Alertness Solutions (2006). *Science Proves the Value of Vacation*. Retrieved May 9, 2011 from <http://www.airnewzealand.com/press-release-2006-science-proves-the-value-of-holidays-dec06>

Brooks B. Gump, PhD, MPH and Karen A. Matthews, PhD (2000). *Are Vacations Good for Your Health? The 9-Year Mortality Experience after the Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trial*. Retrieved May 9, 2011 from [http://courses.umass.edu/econ340/vacations\\_health.pdf](http://courses.umass.edu/econ340/vacations_health.pdf)

Elaine Eaker (1992). *New York Times*, Retrieved May 8, 2011 from <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/07/business/yourmoney/07shortcuts.html>

Harris/Decima (2009). *Vacation Deprivation Continues but Canadians Still Value Vacations in Today's Economy, Expedia.ca Survey Finds*. Retrieved May 9, 2011 from <http://www.expedia.ca/daily/enc4105/service/press/releases/2009/0509-vacation-deprivation.asp>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Giant Colon Tour May 25, 2011**

Learn about colorectal cancer and how to prevent it.  
1:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Six Nations Community Hall Ohsweken Fair Grounds  
1738 Fourth Line Rd.  
(Beside Gaylord Powless Arena)

### **World No-Tobacco Day May 31, 2011**

The World Health Organization (WHO) selects "The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control" as the theme of the next World No Tobacco Day, which will take place on Tuesday, May 31, 2011. For more information visit <http://www.who.int/tobacco/en/>

### **Relay for Life**

This event is hosted by the Canadian Cancer Society and will take place in the following communities:

- Caledonia – May 27, 2011
- Port Dover - June 3, 2011
- Jarvis – September 16, 2011

For more information visit [www.cancer.ca/relay](http://www.cancer.ca/relay) or call 1-800-268-8874

### **Stroke Awareness Month - June**

To learn more about Stroke and how to reduce your risk visit [www.stepuptohealthieryou.com](http://www.stepuptohealthieryou.com)

### **World Blood Donor Day June 14, 2011**

To participate visit <http://www.wbdd.org>. This site includes information, resources, events and activity ideas.

# GIANT COLON

## coming to Six Nations

The **GIANT COLON** is impossible to miss or ignore – a state of the art 40-foot long by 8-foot high, pink inflatable walk-through reproduction of the human colon.

The **GIANT COLON** exhibit has been created to inform the public about the signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer as well as the other diseases of the colon. This fun and interesting multimedia experience provides important health information, helping to encourage colorectal cancer primary prevention and screening.

#### WHEN:

Wednesday, May 25, 2011; 1-8pm

#### WHERE:

Six Nations Community Hall  
Ohsweken  
Fair Grounds  
1738 Fourth Line Road  
(Beside Gaylord Powless Arena)



**A MUST SEE for people aged 50+**

Chats Close

Did you hear that the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit is on Facebook??

That's great news! I'll have to check it out!

[www.facebook.com/hnhealthunit](http://www.facebook.com/hnhealthunit)