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Self-Management *British Columbia*

In the Loop

Issue 118 - June 3, 2015



Sun Awareness Week June 1 to 7

The Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) marks June 1 to 7 as Sun Awareness Week, with the purpose of educating Canadians on reducing the incidence of skin cancer. During this week the association offers free community skin screenings and visits schools. Take a "[Sun Sensitivity Test](#)" to find out your risk of developing skin cancer. One strategy to reduce the incidence of skin cancer is to use sunscreen to absorb or reflect the sun's UV rays away from the skin. **A variety of sunscreens are available** including water-resistant varieties for

participating in sports, and chemical free varieties for people who have sensitive skin. Sunscreen comes in sprays, lotions, creams, gels, and sticks. Look for the CDA logo which means the product is safe and effective. Here are some tips regarding sunscreen:

- The CDA recommends a broad spectrum **30 SPF minimum** to protect against UVB (burning) rays as well as protection from UVA (ultraviolet A) rays which penetrate more deeply into the skin, and cause skin cancer and wrinkles. SPF is the sun protection factor and is numbered based on the time it takes for your skin to burn if you did not wear protection. SPF 15 filters out approximately 93 percent of all incoming UVB rays, SPF 30 filters out 97 percent and SPF 50 filters out 98 percent. According to the FDA, you don't need a sunscreen with an SPF higher than 50 because there is no evidence that anything above offers additional protection. Currently, no standard exists for measuring UVA protection.
- **Apply sunscreen evenly and generously about 20 to 30 minutes before exposure** to the sun. The amount of sunscreen should be one palm-full for each arm and each leg. Don't forget the tops of your feet, and don't forget to use lip balm with SPF 15. Ask for assistance to apply to the hard to reach areas. You can view a [video](#) from the American Dermatology Association on how to apply sunscreen.
- **Reapply sunscreen at least every two hours** to remain protected, or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating. According to a recent survey by the CDA, only 49 percent of those surveyed reported reapplying sunscreen after swimming, and only 32 percent reapplied sunscreen after two hours in the sun.
- The sun's rays are strongest at midday and sunscreen should be worn from **11 am to 3 pm**. Be aware that UV radiation increases about 10 percent for every 1000 m of elevation gain, and sand, snow or water reflect 85 percent of the sun's rays. Since UV light can pass through clouds, use sunscreen even when it's cloudy.
- **Use sunscreen prior to its expiry date.**
- **Do not allow sunscreen to get extremely hot** as this will accelerate its deterioration.

- **People who get sunburned** usually didn't use enough sunscreen, didn't reapply it after being in the sun, or used an expired product.
- As the Berkeley Wellness newsletter notes, don't let sunscreen give you a false sense of security, since no product blocks 100 percent of the sun's rays. **Sunscreen is part of a sun protection plan** that also includes wearing a wide-brimmed hat or visor, staying in the shade and wearing clothing to cover your body. You can find clothing rated with an Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF), a rating system much like SPF that measures blockage of both UVA and UVB rays for clothing.
- In addition to your skin, your **eyes need protection**. Sun exposure can cause both short and long-term damage to the eyes, eyelids and area surrounding the eyes (periocular areas). Wear lenses with UV protection.

Source: Canadian Dermatology Association [website](#), Canadian Cancer Society [website](#), Berkeley Wellness Letter, [13 Ways to Cut Cancer Risk](#)

National Health and Fitness Day June 6

Did you know that less than five percent of children and 15 percent of adults are meeting the recommendations in the [Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines](#)? National Health and Fitness Day was developed from the Vancouver 2010 Olympics as a way to mobilize the spirit of the games and create a legacy of improved health for all Canadians. The day became law in December 2014 and will be recognized annually on the first Saturday of June. Canadians are urged to make physical activity a personal priority and show their support by getting up and getting active. The objective is to inspire Canadians to become fitter and more active, thus reducing health care costs attributed to preventable disease and making Canada the "Fittest Nation in the World". Communities throughout Canada are holding events. For more information, visit the ParticipACTION [website](#).



**June 6th
is
National
Health
&
Fitness
Day**



Canadian Men's Health Week June 15 to 21

The goal of the Canadian Men's Health Foundation's **Canadian Men's Health Week** is for men to commit to simple lifestyle changes that can help them feel better and live healthier lives. Examples of simple lifestyle changes include choosing a salad as a side dish, opting for whole wheat, getting off the bus one stop earlier and eating broccoli. Men are asked to click on the website Canadianmenshealthweek.ca to make a pledge. They can also enter to win a Father's Day golf trip, and download a free ebook entitled "The Insanely Fun Father's Day Guide". Another helpful resource is the "[5-Minute Man's Workout](#)", a free ebook that outlines five body weight exercises that can be done anytime, anywhere without equipment.



A menopause-weight gain connection?

While research does not support a direct link between menopause and weight gain, menopause may play an indirect role.

- Poor sleep, which many menopausal women experience, can lead to weight gain. Lack of sleep may alter the hormones that regulate hunger. If you're not sleeping well, you may feel hungrier before meals and less full after meals.
- Stress can also play a role in weight gain. At menopause, the body stops making the hormone estrogen. This reduces the body's ability to regulate the hormone cortisol, which helps to manage stress. Higher cortisol levels may trigger an increase in appetite.

Aging also contributes to weight gain.

- Metabolic rate slows with age. Unfortunately, eating the same amount of calories at 20 years of age will result in weight gain at 50 years of age.
- Insulin sensitivity decreases with age. As women hit mid to late 40s they need 200 less calories per day.
- Loss of muscle mass decreases the rate at which the body uses calories, which can make it more challenging to maintain a healthy weight.
- Change in lifestyle (e.g., children leaving home) may lead to eating infrequently or skipping meals, which can slow metabolism, further interfering with your body's ability to burn calories.

Steps you can take to address weight gain include:

- Be proactive and start addressing weight gain before it happens.
- Increase your physical activity. Do some physical activity regularly 4 to 5 times per week. Walking briskly for an hour a day can cut the genetic influence toward obesity in half, according to a [study](#) from the Department of Nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health. If you are sedentary e.g., watch

TV for four hours a day, this increases the influence of your genes on weight gain by 50 percent.

- Participate in strength training to boost metabolism and build muscle mass.
- Look at what you consume. Limit alcohol, refined carbohydrates and fat. Reduce portion sizes.
- Check your thyroid as some women develop hypothyroidism at midlife, and this can contribute to weight gain.
- Address your stress levels through relaxation techniques or exercise.
- Make sleep a priority and address any sleep problems.


Source: Everyday Health [website](#), Ask Dr. K, Harvard Medical School [website](#)



New tools to help consumers understand food labels


Beginning this fall, the Federal government is implementing the second phase of the Nutrition Facts Education Campaign. In this phase 21 leading food companies are adding new colour-coded icons on manufactured products. The theme of the campaign is "Focus on the Facts" to encourage consumers, especially parents of children aged 2 to 12, to use a three step process to make an informed food choice. First, start with the "Serving Size" (information in the table is based on the serving size listed). Use the "Percent Daily Value" to see whether the serving size has a little or a lot of a nutrient (a little is considered 5 % daily value or less, while a lot

is 15 % daily value or more). Look at nutrients and choose those packaged foods that have more of the nutrients you would like to consume, such as fibre and calcium, and less of those you do not want, such as saturated and trans fat and sodium. You can download the "Focus on the Facts" [fact sheet](#). Visit Health Canada's "Focus on the Facts" [webpage](#) for more information. If you are living with a chronic health condition(s), and you are interested in learning more about healthy food choices, along with other healthy lifestyle changes, consider taking the **University of Victoria's Chronic Disease Self-Management Program**. This free program is available throughout BC in-person or online. Call toll-free 1-866-902-3767 or email selfmgmt@uvic.ca or visit www.selfmanagementbc.ca.




Focus on the Facts


How to use Serving Size and % Daily Value




1 START with Serving Size
You can find the Serving Size under the header 'Nutrition Facts'.
Information in the Nutrition Facts table is based on this quantity of food.




2 USE % Daily Value
You can find the % Daily Value on the right side of the Nutrition Facts table.
Use the % Daily Value to see if the Serving Size has a **little** or a **lot** of a nutrient.



3 LOOK at a Nutrient
Choose packaged food that has more of the nutrients you want and less of the nutrients you don't want.



MAKE an informed food choice



5% Daily Value or less is a **little**
15% Daily Value or more is a **lot**

When making an informed food choice here are some nutrients you may want...

a little of

- Saturated and trans fats
- Sodium

a lot of

- Fibre
- Vitamin A
- Calcium
- Iron

This applies to all nutrients with a % Daily Value

Heart and Stroke Foundation gets boost in promoting FAST Signs of Stroke campaign

On May 26, the provincial government announced \$500,000 in funding to support the Heart and Stroke Foundation's FAST Signs of Stroke campaign. The goal of the campaign is to educate British Columbians on how to recognize and get help for someone having a stroke. Featured in a previous "In the Loop" issue, the three signs are worth repeating, along with the need to call 9-1-1 right away:

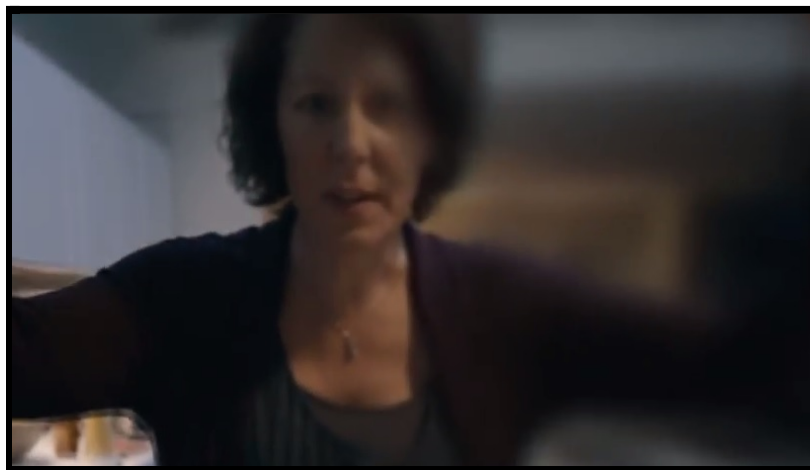
F - Face, is it drooping?

A - Arms, can you raise both?

S - Speech, is it slurred or jumbled?

T - Time to call 9-1-1 right away.

In BC, more than 6,500 patients end up in hospital each year from having a stroke or mini-stroke (transient ischemic attack). The sooner treatment is initiated, the better the outcome. For more information on this campaign, please visit www.heartandstroke.bc.ca. Watch the 30 second [video](#) on signs of a stroke.



A diet soda and belly fat connection?

A new long-term study following 375 seniors aged 65 and older for an average of 9.4 years has shown a relationship between diet soda consumption and abdominal

obesity. When regular diet soda drinkers (1 to 2 diet sodas per day) were compared with non-drinkers over this time period, waist circumference increased four times more or 3.16 inches compared to 0.8 inches. Those who drank occasionally fell in between, with an average waist increase of 1.83 inches over nine years.

Researchers adjusted for factors like diabetes, smoking and levels of physical activity. Belly fat was most pronounced in subjects who were already overweight. These findings add to the evidence of the association between frequent consumption of diet soda and greater body mass index, obesity and metabolic syndrome. Why this occurs is not known, but one hypothesis is that artificial sweeteners change the balance of bacteria in the gut favouring the microbes that induce glucose intolerance. The authors recommend that older individuals who drink diet soda daily, particularly those at high cardiometabolic risk, should limit consumption. Harvard School of Public Health notes that long-term follow-up studies of “abdominal obesity” have found a strong association with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and death, even after controlling for body mass index (BMI). If you find yourself addicted to soda, here are some tips to break the habit:

- Wean off slowly. Set up a schedule with goals. Let others know so they can support you. Making small changes, like cutting out one glass or can of soda weekly, can double your odds of long-term success.
- Mix soda with water to reduce the sweetness. Over time, you can become accustomed to this.
- Try alternatives. Start a new ritual. Switch to iced tea (brewed tea that is cooled) and add lemon and mint. Pinpoint the vulnerable times in your schedule, and then make smart trades.
- Drink a glass of water before grabbing a soda. Enhance the flavour of water with items such as lemon, orange, berries or cucumber.
- Switch to a brand of soda with fewer artificial ingredients e.g. organic or ‘natural’ sodas.
- Remove sodas from your environment.

Source: S. Fowler et al., (2015). [*Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*](#), Harvard School of Public Health [website](#), Laura Shocker, [*How I Kicked the Diet*](#)

[*Soda Habit \(And How You Can Too\)*](#), Huffington Post, February 2, 2012



Have You Lost a Family Member Who Suffered from Cognitive Impairment or Dementia?



Seeking Family Members of Older Adults who
were Cognitively Impaired
for a UVic Dissertation Research Study on
Advance Care Planning

What is Required?

- Voice your story/issues/concerns in a 1.5-hour focus group or individual interview

Where/When?

- Held at the Centre on Aging (UVic) or by phone - Flexible dates and times

How Will You Benefit?

- Discuss concerns about care received by your loved one
- Become actively involved in research to inform healthcare practice and policy
- Provide suggestions on improving care for a vulnerable population

**If you would like to participate, please contact graduate student,
Anna Jeznach, at 250-721-6368 or abraslav@uvic.ca**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST!

Please send your ideas and suggestions to [In the Loop](#).



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