



Heart Health Month Q & A with Jane Dummer RD

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February is heart month! Nine in 10 Canadians have at least one risk factor for heart disease and stroke. Almost 80% of premature heart disease and stroke can be prevented through healthy behaviours. Lifestyle habits including eating a healthy diet, being active and living smoke-free have a huge impact on your health.

Making one small change towards a healthier lifestyle, like adding oats to a balanced diet, can make a big difference. We checked in with Registered Dietitian, Jane Dummer for her heart-healthy recommendations.

What is the recommended frequency and duration to maintain a healthy heart for both adult men and women?

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity per week (1). I

recommend aiming for 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise five times per week (2) which can include power walking, skipping rope, swimming and your favourite cardio workout.

What is the recommended amount of sleep for adult men and women to maintain a healthy heart?

Yes, lack of or too much sleep can be a risk factor for heart disease. I recommend you aim for seven to eight hours of restful sleep per night. A 2016 systematic review published in the International Journal of Cardiology (3) identified less than 6 hours and more than 9 hours of sleep are significantly associated with increased risk of coronary heart disease.

What are the current recommendations regarding healthy weights and abdominal fat for heart health in both men and women?

I recommend weighing yourself only once a month to confirm you're maintaining a healthy weight for your height. Use the BMI as a general guideline. Keep in mind, excess abdominal fat is a risk factor for heart disease. Heart and Stroke Foundation (4) identifies a waist measurement of more than 94 cm (37 inches) is an increased risk for men and for women a waist measurement of more than 80 cm (32 inches).

What is soluble fibre and why is it heart-healthy?

Rogers Foods Soluble fibres found in oats are called beta-glucans. Current studies suggest the beta-glucans in both barley and oats have the most beneficial effect on heart health (5-6). Consuming at least 3 grams per day may reduce total cholesterol and low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels by 5 to 10%. Enjoy adding oat based [recipes](#) to your meals at least five times per week.

What is the latest recommendation of omega-3 fats to maintain a healthy heart in well adults?

It's important to get a variety of plant and marine source omega-3 fats for heart health. Plant sources include nuts and seeds and marine sources include fish. Both the Canadian and American guidelines suggest eating at least two servings of fish per week (7-8). Check out this simple yet gourmet, one-skillet [salmon recipe](#) to get started!



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