



VANCOUVER FILM SCHOOL

IT'S KIND OF LIKE MAGIC

Meet us at the Info Session >

LIFE HEALTH

Health: Honour 'king' by using restraint



By Melissa Carr, Special to 24 hours
Thursday, February 5, 2015 7:12:05 PST AM



Cutting your intake of salt can go a long way to keeping your heart healthy. (FOTOLIA)

Since 1958, February has been designated Heart Month. No, it's not because of Valentine's Day, but because the Heart and Stroke Foundation created a campaign to fundraise for research and to bring awareness to heart disease and stroke.

Traditional Chinese medicine calls the heart the "king" because of its vital function to keep us alive. Unfortunately, heart disease and strokes end someone's life every seven minutes, and 90% of Canadians have at least one risk factor. The good news is that since 1952, deaths from cardiovascular disease have dropped by more than 75%.

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease include high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, smoking, alcohol, and physical inactivity. All of these issues can either be managed or reversed.

With one-in-five Canadians having high blood pressure (hypertension), and a further one out of five considered pre-hypertensive, this is one risk factor that many help controlling. Limit your sodium intake and watch for packaged and restaurant foods that may be higher in salt. Though we often hear of the heart-healthy benefits of red wine, too much of any alcohol increases blood

pressure, so watch how much you indulge.

Exercise regularly 30 to 60 minutes most days of the week. If you haven't been active, starting a regular exercise program has been shown to help in just a few weeks. Even 10 minutes of daily exercise can help. It can also help manage weight, another cause of hypertension. And, as with most health issues, stress also affects your blood pressure, so look for ways to cope, like prioritizing tasks, asking for help, meditation, yoga, and breathing exercises.

Acupuncture has also been shown to help lower elevated blood pressure. In a 2007 randomized study published on the American Heart Association site, acupuncture according to traditional Chinese medicine, but not sham (fake) acupuncture, significantly lowered blood pressure after 6 weeks of treatment. Even some cardiologists support acupuncture to help manage heart disease. Pascal J. Goldschmidt, MD, FACC and chief of cardiology at Duke University in 2001 said, "It's not an accident that people have been doing acupuncture for so long. [It's] pretty clear that it's not a placebo effect. Acupuncture seems to be having a relatively specific effect on the control of blood pressure."

Honour your "king" heart with a little extra care and attention, and you may enjoy the benefits for many more years to come.

Dr. Melissa Carr is a registered doctor of traditional Chinese medicine, caring for patients in an integrative medicine clinic in Vancouver.

3 Prostate Cancer Signs 
healthreply.com/ProstateCancerSign
Do You Have These (3) Scary Prostate Cancer Signs?
See Now!

UR Reader's comments »

If you already have an account on this newspaper, you can login to the newspaper to add your comments.

By adding a comment on the site, you accept our terms and conditions and our netiquette rules.

Comments for this thread are now closed. 

0 Comments **Vancouver 24 hrs**

 [Login](#) 

[Sort by Newest](#) 

 [Share](#)   [Favorite](#) 

Be the first to comment.

 [Subscribe](#)

 [Add Disqus to your site](#)

 [Privacy](#)