

Risky behaviour

Canadians, as a whole, are a delusional lot. That's the gist of The Heart and Stroke Foundation's 2011 Report on Canadians' Health which warns that nine out of 10 Canadians are jeopardizing the quality and length of their lives.

The Foundation found that many Canadians are in denial about their risk factors for heart disease, such as being overweight and being physically inactive—risk factors they can manage and control.

"The fact is that we're not managing some of the most common and deadly cardiovascular risk factors as well as we think we are," says Dr. Beth Abramson, cardiologist and spokesperson for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. "We Canadians are living with a false sense of security that could be fatal."

The poll found that 84 per cent of Canadians know that nine out of 10 adults have at least one risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

Nine out of 10 Canadians polled know that the majority of first-time heart attacks are caused by risk factors they can control.

However, the poll also showed that Canadians overestimate their own healthy behaviours:

- Almost 90 per cent rate themselves as healthy. The reality is that nine out of 10 Canadians have at least one risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

- Only about a third said they are not physically active or don't eat a minimum of five servings of vegetables and fruit per day. The reality is about half of Canadians don't meet the physical activity and healthy eating recommendations.

- Eighteen per cent of Canadian adults say they are obese. The reality is that almost one quarter—25 per cent—of Canadian adults are obese.

According to Abramson, Canadians, by being physically active, can gain close to four years of life, three of those free of heart disease or stroke.

"Living longer isn't much fun if you don't have your health," she adds.

On average, inactivity and obesity can each shave almost four years off a person's expected lifespan, high blood pressure two and a half years, and low vegetable and fruit consumption, 1.3 years.

We all know what needs to be done to better our health: exercise, stop smoking, reduce stress, control your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, eat healthy, limit alcohol use, etc.

It is time to get off the couch.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters must include an address and daytime telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

E-mail: jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

Mail or drop off: Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1.

The Independent & Free Press

The Independent & Free Press is published Tuesday and Thursday and is one of several Metroland Media Group Ltd. community newspapers. Editorial and advertising content of The Independent & Free Press is protected by copyright. Unauthorized use is prohibited.



Steve Nease

NEASE!!
neasecartoon@gmail.com

905-873-0301
Publisher: Ken Nugent
General manager: Steve Foreman
 (sforeman@independentfreepress.com)
Retail advertising manager: Cindi Campbell
 (ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)
Managing editor: John McGhie
 (jmcghie@independentfreepress.com)
Distribution manager: Nancy Geissler
 (ngeissler@independentfreepress.com)
Classifieds
 Kristie Pells
 (classified@independentfreepress.com)
Accounting
 Rose Marie Gauthier
Editorial
 Cynthia Gamble: News editor
 (cgamble@independentfreepress.com)
 Ted Brown: Photography
 (tbrown@independentfreepress.com)
 Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer
 (ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)
 Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports
 (emaher@independentfreepress.com)

WEB POLL RESULTS

A current funding plan would see the Town of Halton Hills go \$25 million in debt to finance the construction of three new ice surfaces. As a Halton Hills taxpayer do you support this spending plan?

- Yes (58%)
- No (42%)

Go to www.independentfreepress.com

Letters to the editor

Some cyclists lack common sense

Dear editor,

I understand someone who wants to conserve energy and save the environment by riding their bike to and from the GO train, but I don't understand the carelessness of people.

Two fellows recently rode their bikes along King Street with barely a flicker of a reflector and only on the rear of their bikes. Both were dressed in black with no reflector tape on their clothing.

At 6 p.m. during the winter you can barely see these people on the road. One of them rode directly behind a car along Mill Street, not off to the side, and one night a cyclist actually passed the other in the middle of the road, right in front of my car.

Is there no law saying cyclists should be seen after dark, or do these people just not have any common sense?

W. Valentini, Georgetown

Hospital care great

Dear editor,

I would like to express my thanks to the doctors and nurses in the emergency department of both the George-

town and Milton Hospitals.

I was admitted in early January with major trauma to my hand (due to my careless handling of a snow blower). The way I was treated was not only professional but also compassionate and, under the circumstances, that helped considerably. I believe the speed and skill with which the doctors and nurses at both hospitals performed helped to reduce the damage considerably.

Within 10 hours I was admitted to Georgetown and given initial treatment, transferred to Milton for reconstructive surgery and released. Wow! I am sure impressed with the system that some say is broken.

Due to the severity of the injury I was rushed in for treatment ahead of others who were waiting. Given the circumstances I was extremely grateful. If, in future, I am unfortunate enough to be in emergency and made to wait, I will be far more patient.

D. Buckley, Ballinafad

Litterbugs 'thanked'

Dear editor,

I would like to thank all the people who dumped their garbage in my scrap bin (meant for metal only). I really enjoyed taking your garbage to the dump and paying for it.

For those who I found an address or telephone number in a bag I hope you enjoyed getting a call from the police department.

Joe Sebalj, Georgetown
JZS Precision Machining Inc.

Run a great success

Dear editor,

On behalf of the Georgetown Runners, I wish to extend my thanks to all the generous sponsors, volunteers and participants for making our 28th annual Egg Nog Jog a huge success.

More than 500 runners braved the wet, cold conditions around the Terra Cotta Conservation Area to complete the hilly 10.8 km run. This year, proceeds raised will support Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills as well as Community Living North Halton. The many positive comments from our race participants—and their emotional finishes—will remain in my memory.

We look forward to continuing to present a top-notch event while also giving back to our community.

Mauro Uliana, President
Georgetown Runners