

## The heart of the matter

The Heart of the Matter

by Margaret Langille

With February being Heart and Stroke month, it seems appropriate that the Heart and Stroke campaign is focusing in on the youth.

Recent research has shown that New Brunswick is one of the provinces rating high in deaths linked to heart disease. In starting at a young age, and looking at our diet and lifestyle, surely we can change around those statistics related to deaths associated with heart disease.

There are three major risk factors associated with heart disease: elevated blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, and smoking. If you are one who has all these factors, then research claims you are ten times the risk in developing heart disease than those who don't exhibit these factors.

Let's look more closely at these factors: Elevated blood cholesterol - there's only one way to find out if your cholesterol is high or not, and that is to have a fasting blood test done routinely. If the results indicate a high level, then your diet needs to be adjusted. The Canadian Heart Foundation recommends we eat less total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol in our diet, while increasing our intake of fruits, vegetables, fish, and whole grain breads and cereals.

In a typical day, generally Canadians consume 40% or more of their daily K calories in the form of fats. That's considerably higher than what we need on a daily basis. With added K calories particularly from our fat consumption, it is no wonder that obesity amongst Canadians, both in the young and old is prevalent. With increased consumption of fats, along with being overweight, this can be linked with increased amounts of fat in the blood, as a result our risk of heart disease increases.

When speaking about obesity, the question of activity needs to be addressed: How active are we? If one exercises moderately on a regular basis (at least three times weekly) not only would it regulate our blood cholesterol levels, but as well, it can help control obesity.

High blood pressure - Excess salt (or sodium) intake can result in fluid retention in some susceptible individuals. This excess fluid makes the heart work harder to pump the blood through the body. This could result in high blood pressure.

Most Canadians consume 4000 - 5000 mg. of sodium per day, much more than what is actually needed to stay healthy. The problem with salt is that there is a lot of it in foods you don't see. It's in processed foods, sauces, snack foods, and many other surprising items. The Canadian Heart Foundation recommends that excess salt/sodium intake should be reduced.

Smoking - Smokers run about three to four times more of a risk for heart disease than non-smokers. Smoking may also cause damage along the lining of the arteries, initiating the disposition of blood fats along the artery wall. Quite obviously, smoking should be avoided to decrease your risk of heart disease. Your Doctor should be consulted on the avoidance or control of risk factors, and should supervise you through any preventative program you undertake. By starting early in life, and taking an active toll in controlling your eating habits and lifestyle, this will mean added years to your life.

When was the last time you assessed your diet and lifestyle?  
Margaret Langille is a consulting Dietician for Beaver Foods.

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# More than just numbers

## Schedule for National Engineering conference

The following is the schedule for the National Conference of Women in Engineering: *More Than Just Numbers* which will be held in May on the UNB campus.

### Tuesday, May 21

- 1:00 pm - Registration
- 1:30 pm - Presentation of Research Papers
- 8:00 pm - Keynote Speaker:  
Kate Viscardi  
Women in Engineering Centre  
Southbank Polytechnique, U.K.  
*Is It Fair to Recruit Women  
Into Engineering?*
- 9:00 pm - Reception hosted by UNB

2:00 pm - Presentation of Research  
Abt Associates of Canada  
*Effective Practices in  
Universities and the Workplace*

- 4:30 pm - Display Session
- 6:30 pm - Reception/Banquet
- 7:30 pm - Guest speaker:  
The Hon. William Winegard  
Minister of Science

### Wednesday, May 22

- 8:00 am - Registration
- 9:00 am - Plenary Session  
Lino J. Celeste, P. Eng.  
President and CEO, NB Tel  
*Creating Woman-friendly  
Environments*
- 10:45 am - Panel Discussion  
Issues in the Pipeline
- 12 noon - Luncheon Speaker  
The Hon. Frank McKenna  
Premier of New Brunswick

### Thursday, May 23

- 9:00 am - Keynote Speaker:  
Rose Sheinin, Vice-Rector  
Academic, Concordia Univ.  
*Engineering For  
and By Women*
- 9:45 am - Workshops
- 12 noon - Luncheon
- 2:00 pm - Continuation of Workshops
- 3:30 pm - Presentation of Action Plans
- 4:30 pm - Wrap-Up

For more information about the conference  
phone 453-4515.

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