



Safe Environments

Healthy Workers

MEN, LETS TALK ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

You may have heard that men live shorter lives than women. Men are live less healthy lives. According to Men's Health Resource Center this is in part because they are more likely to go long periods of time without going to the doctor and less likely to adopt preventative health measures¹. For some, the only time they step into a clinic is when their health has severely declined, making the prognoses bleaker, all the while their condition was preventable. Visiting a physician is a sign of caring for your health, not a sign of weakness. Changing your health patterns can prolong your life, and improve its quality. It's time to take care of your health. Let's look at three health issues that are prevalent in men and four things you can do to prevent them.

IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS APPLY TO YOU, IT'S TIME TO VISIT A PHYSICIAN:



- You have found something on your body or have a symptom and it doesn't go away after 2 weeks
- You've heard people saying "you should get that checked out..."
- You keep trying to self-diagnose by Googling the same symptoms for some time now
- You don't remember the last time you've stepped into a doctor's office. It's time for a physical
- You are at a high risk for a serious health issue due to family history or other factors and you do not monitor your symptoms

¹ <http://www.menshealthresourcecenter.com/about/>

HEART DISEASE

Heart disease strongly holds itself among the top causes of death in Canada² and men are at a higher risk for heart related issues, especially those over 50. When symptoms are not treated, heart disease causes congestive heart failure, angina pectoris, heart attack, ischemia, and sudden cardiac arrest. Serious heart problems can be prevented with medical intervention.

Signs and symptoms

- Discomfort in the chest area, chest pain, shortness of breath
- Irregular or faster heartbeats
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol level

Risk factors

- Being physically inactive
- Diet high in trans fats and sodium
- Smoking or excessive drinking
- Obesity
- A family history of heart disease

TYPE 2 DIABETES

Another disease that gets into top ten leading causes of death in Canada is Diabetes. Diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes (the most common type) is more likely in men³ than women, and is more likely at age 55 and older. Diabetes can result in heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and amputation⁴. The symptoms are slow to develop but if left untreated the disease is devastating.

Signs and symptoms

- Tingling or numbness of the hands and feet
- Cuts and scrapes that take a longer to heal
- Urinary tract infections
- Impotence or erectile dysfunction
- Low testosterone levels

Risk factors

- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar
- Being physically inactive
- Family history (immediate family)
- Being overweight

SEXUAL HEALTH

The most sensitive topic for men has to do with the health of their sexual organs. Often any problems in this arena can make a man feel discouragement. The truth is, many men will experience these issues at some point in their life, and most of the time the cause is physical, or simply stress related.

SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

Sexual dysfunction can refer to either of the four conditions: erectile dysfunction (difficulty in sustaining an erection), premature ejaculation (reaching orgasm too quickly), delayed or inhibited ejaculation, and low libido (reduced interest in sex). Sexual dysfunction can happen in any age, but is more common with increasing age⁵. While one time occurrences of any of these conditions is normal, if they persist for a period of time, it may be a sign of serious health issues such as diabetes, heart issues, or prostate cancer.

² Statistics Canada. [Table 13-10-0394-01 Leading causes of death, total population, by age group](#)

³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-229-x/2009001/status/dia-eng.htm>

⁴ <http://www.menshealthresourcecenter.com/conditions/diabetes/#about-anchor>

⁵ <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9122-sexual-dysfunction-in-males>

Risk factors and causes

- Low testosterone
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Smoking, excessive drinking, and/or drug abuse
- Depression
- Stress and anxiety

PROSTATE CANCER

When cancer develops in the prostate gland, it does so slowly, but it is crucial to catch it early before it spreads to other organs. If you notice multiple symptoms that continue over some time, make an appointment with your physician and bring it to their attention.

Signs and symptoms

- Frequent urination
- Pain when urinating
- Blood in urine
- Chronic pain in lower back
- Sudden onset of erectile dysfunction
- Discomfort when sitting
- Blood in the semen
- Pain ejaculating

FOUR WAYS YOU CAN PREVENT THESE HEALTH ISSUES

1. ANALYZE YOUR LIFESTYLE

A study on *The Economic Burden Associated with Tobacco Smoking, Excess Weight, Alcohol Consumption and Physical Inactivity in Canadian Men* revealed that smoking, excess weight, over-consumption of alcohol and physical inactivity are some of the leading causes of chronic disease among Canadian men, and the annual economic burden attributable to these four factors is staggering: \$36.9 billion⁶. If Canadian men got active, quit smoking, lost weight and reduced alcohol consumption that would prevent [70% of the cost](https://menshealthfoundation.ca/economic-burden-report). Your daily choices matter, so if you want better health, develop a healthy lifestyle.

2. MOVE AROUND

A healthy lifestyle is one where you are getting regular exercise. If you lead a physically inactive life, increasing physical activity does not have to start by signing up for a gym (although that is a good idea). Begin by looking for opportunities to walk and take the stairs more. For example make choices such as choosing to park further away from the entrance at a parking lot. Do not take an elevator to the third floor. Look past the escalator and take the stairs. Start making time for regular runs or a bike ride.

It is easier and more fun if you have accountability. Ask a friend or a family member to do some physical activities together and encourage each other to keep going. There are also creative and helpful apps that can track your progress and provide insight.

⁶ <https://menshealthfoundation.ca/economic-burden-report>

3. EAT RIGHT

A healthy lifestyle is also one where you are eating right. That means eating food that benefit you, not harm you. Changing your diet can be hard which is why it's important to transition in stages and focus on sustaining the good choices that you are picking up. Reduce the harmful (deep fried foods, trans fats, processed meats, food and drinks with added sugar, and salty snacks) and supplement it with the good, such as [foods that are good for your heart](#) and [prevent diabetes](#). If you search for foods that are great for male health you will find that these are the same foods that are good for your general health. Study your food, take interest in what you consume and you will spread the health to those around you.

4. VISIT YOUR DOCTOR

And do that when you should, not when you absolutely have to. In order to avoid health complications from diseases, it's important to pay attention to your health by address any early signs of disease with a doctor, and monitoring cholesterol (every five years for a healthy man), blood sugar, and [blood pressure](#) levels.

“Taking your health seriously is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of courage”

Wayne Hartrick, President of The Canadian Men's Health Foundation

RESOURCES

[Canadian Men's Health Foundation](#) - a national nonprofit organization that inspires men to live healthier lives. They offer resources such as the [health check tool](#), [testosterone guidelines](#), and [more](#). Check out their [Don't Change Much](#) resources where they give tips on making small changes that have a big impact on your health and the health of your family.

[Men's Health Resource Center](#) - a resource build for men to learn about different health issues and see how they are interrelated. They provide a directory of health conditions as well as health articles.

[The Guys' Guide to Doctor Visits](#)

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