

Under Chef's Hat: Vitamin C (Part II)



Joseph Stephens
Chef

The health benefits of Vitamin C, also known as Ascorbic Acid, include the prevention and treatment of the common cold, boosting the immune system, lowering of hypertension, the treatment of lead toxicity, curing cataracts, treatment of cancer, combating stroke, maintaining elasticity of the skin, the healing of wounds, and controlling the symptoms of Asthma.

Lowering of Hypertension: People with hypertension are at a higher risk of developing cardiovascular diseases. Vitamin C can help in lowering blood pressure and reducing the risk of stroke.

Cancer Risk: Research has shown that consumption of fresh vegetables and fruits especially those that are rich in Vitamin C may be linked to reducing the risk of various types of cancer.

Wound Repair: Vitamin C also contributes to the body's ability to heal wounds by facilitating the growth of connective tissues, which in turn speeds up the healing process.

Immunity: Vitamin C is widely known for its contribution to the immune system and its stimulation of white blood cells.

Mood: Vitamin C plays a key role in the production of neurotransmitters like norepinephrine. Neurotransmitters affect mood and are critical to the proper functioning of the brain.

Asthma: Vitamin C also helps to reduce the symptoms of asthma. It helps to protect against the harmful effects of pollution on respiration, which can often result in asthma-like symptoms.

Preventing Heart Disease: Vitamin C is essential for the protection of blood vessels from damage caused by free radicals. This could be a major cause of a heart disease called atherosclerosis. Vitamin C acts as a preventive agent of this heart disease as well as various other cardiac problems.

As I shared in our last issue, Vitamin C is easy to get through foods, especially citrus fruits and many vegetables.

Let us Enjoy Life and let us Be Kind to one another daily!

Disclaimer: Please consult your Doctor or Dietician before you make major changes to your diet.

Body Mechanics: The Single-Leg Quarter Squat

The single-leg quarter squat is a fantastic exercise that not only strengthens the muscles of the hip, upper leg and core, but it also helps to improve stability and balance.

For those concerned with falls prevention, the quarter squat becomes an excellent addition to your fitness program. The subtle movements in this exercise allow for the stabilizing hip muscles to properly engage and strengthen.

With stronger muscles comes greater balance.

Jeff Dubé, BSc, PTS, ATC
Fitness Program Coordinator



- 1 While holding onto the back of a chair, raise one foot slightly above the floor and maintain.
- 2 Bend the knee of the opposite leg and descend one quarter of the way into a squat, hold for 2 seconds, and return to top.
- 3 Repeat 10 times per leg.



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WELLNESS QUARTERLY

wellbeing news, advice, and opinions from christie gardens staff and residents spring 2016

Volume 2, Issue 1

Editor-in-Chief:
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Aging and the Heart



Jocelyn Alves
Director of Health
and Wellness

In this issue I want to share information about the heart and in particular how aging can effect heart function – and of course what you can do to delay or avoid heart disease.

Aging can cause changes in the heart and blood vessels. For example, as you get older, your heart cannot beat as fast during physical activity or stress as when you were younger. However, the number of heart beats per minute (heart rate) at rest does not change as you age.

Many of the problems older people have with their heart and blood vessels are caused by disease, not by aging. But changes that happen with age may increase a person's risk of heart disease.

The good news is that there are things you can do to delay, lower, or possibly avoid or reverse your risk.

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LAUGHING IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEART. A BIG LAUGH CAN INCREASE YOUR BLOOD FLOW BY 20%

YOUR HEART BEATS ABOUT 100,000 TIMES A DAY

THE FIRST PACEMAKERS PLUGGED INTO A WALL SOCKET

YOUR HEART IS ABOUT THE SIZE OF TWO HANDS CLASPED TOGETHER

MODESTY PROMPTED THE INVENTION OF THE STETHOSCOPE. BEFORE IT EXISTED, DOCTORS HAD TO PRESS THEIR EARS DIRECTLY TO EACH PATIENT'S CHEST

2,000 GALLONS OF BLOOD PASS THROUGH YOUR HEART EVERY 24 HOURS

Profile: Lesley Stachelbeck



Lesley Stachelbeck
Registered Physiotherapist
BScPT, MCPA

I have been working as a physiotherapist for almost 27 years and have seen many changes in healthcare and its implementation over those years. I first became interested in physiotherapy following a sports injury in high school.

I graduated from the University of Toronto and have practised in many different settings including hospitals, private clinics, homecare and consulting for the school board, treating a wide variety of conditions and patient populations.

I would say my philosophy of care is promoting wellness, although my profession focuses more on the physical aspects of health, promoting independence, and maintaining function. I believe it is important to take a holistic approach to care.

My definition of wellness is multidimensional, being healthy in body, mind, spirit, and one's environment. The holistic approach addresses the idea that all these factors contribute to a healthy individual. It is important to focus on all aspects of health in order to reach your potential.

If I have one piece of advice for people who want to maintain health and function it is simply that they exercise. Keeping active addresses many aspects of wellness including physical and mental wellbeing.

Often I am asked why I choose to work at Christie Gardens. Sometimes I wonder when I am sitting on the highway in traffic! (just kidding) Christie Gardens offers me an opportunity to work with elders who I find inspiring and interesting. I like the innovative approach incorporated in Christie Gardens' philosophy and I have a fantastic team to work with.

Away from Christie Gardens, I enjoy spending family time at the cottage. My husband and I have two very active teenage boys and we spend a great deal of time in the rinks or at sports fields.

Aging and the Heart

(... continued from cover)

A common problem related to aging is "hardening of the arteries," called arteriosclerosis. This is why blood pressure tends to increase with age.

Blood vessels can become stiffer, and some parts of the heart wall will thicken to help with blood flow.

Heart valves (one-way, door-like parts that open and close to control the blood flow inside your heart) may become thicker and stiffer, causing leaks or problems with pumping blood out of the heart.

The size of the sections of your heart may increase.

Other factors, such as thyroid disease or chemotherapy, may weaken the heart muscle. Things you cannot control, like your family history, might also increase your risk of heart disease. But even so, leading a heart-healthy lifestyle might help you avoid or delay serious illness.

Choices for a Heart-Healthy Lifestyle:

- ♥ Don't Smoke;
- ♥ Stay at a Healthy Weight;
- ♥ Avoid Spending Hours Sitting Every Day;
- ♥ Exercise;
- ♥ Keep Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, and/or High Cholesterol Under Control;
- ♥ Manage Your Stress; and
- ♥ Don't Drink a Lot of Alcohol.

Jocelyn Alves
Director of Health and Wellness

Heart Anatomy and Function

The human heart is an organ that pumps blood throughout the body via the circulatory system, supplying oxygen throughout the body and removing carbon dioxide.

The heart is roughly the size of a large fist and weighs between 8 to 12 ounces (or 225-340 grams).

The heart has four chambers: two upper chambers (the atria) and two lower ones (the ventricles). The right atrium and right ventricle together make up the "right heart", and the left atrium and left ventricle make up the "left heart". A wall of muscle called the septum separates the two sides of the heart.

The heart circulates blood through two pathways: the pulmonary circuit and the systemic circuit.

In the pulmonary circuit, deoxygenated blood leaves the right ventricle of the heart via the pulmonary artery and travels to the lungs, then returns as oxygenated blood to the left atrium of the heart via the pulmonary vein.

In the systemic circuit, oxygenated blood leaves the body via the left ventricle to the aorta, and from there enters the arteries and capillaries where it supplies the body's tissues with oxygen. Deoxygenated blood returns via veins to the venae cavae, re-entering the heart's right atrium.

A healthy heart contraction happens in five stages:

- In the first stage, the heart is relaxed;
- Then the atrium contracts to push blood into the ventricle;
- Next, the ventricles start contracting without changing volume;
- Then the ventricles continue contracting while empty; and
- Finally, the ventricles stop contracting and relax.

Then the cycle repeats.

