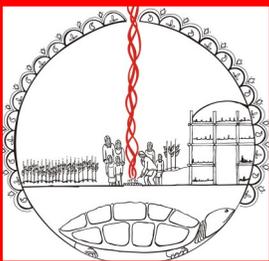




HEART &  
STROKE  
FOUNDATION

# Taking Control

*Lower your risk of heart disease and stroke*



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## Taking Control

Paying attention to risk factors that you can do something about and maintaining a healthy lifestyle will help to reduce our risk of heart disease and stroke.

Talk to your healthcare provider.

### High Blood Pressure

- also known as hypertension, happens when the force of blood pushing against artery walls (the tubes that carry blood away from your heart) is too high. To know whether your blood pressure is too low or high, a healthcare provider has to measure it using a blood pressure device.

- High blood pressure is the **#1 Risk factor for Stroke** and a **Major risk factor for Heart Disease**. That's why its important to keep high blood pressure under control.

### Lack of Physical Activity

People who sit or do not move around much during the day have a higher risk of heart disease and stroke than those who are active. An active, healthy lifestyle can help prevent and manage high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, excess weight and stress—all of which increase your risk of heart disease and stroke.

### Smoking

Smoking and being exposed to 2nd-hand smoke increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. The bad health effects of smoking and 2nd-hand smoke include:

- ♥ **The build up of plaque in your arteries**
- ♥ **Higher Risk of blood clots**
- ♥ **Lower oxygen levels in your blood**
- ♥ **Strain on your heart**

### Overweight

Being overweight, at any age, means you are at higher risk of having high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Maintaining a healthy weight is one of the best things you can do for your heart.

- ♥ **Eat a healthy diet**
- ♥ **Lose weight slowly**
- ♥ **Avoid "New" or "Fad" diets**
- ♥ **Eat healthy foods that are lower in fat**
- ♥ **Manage the size of food portions**
- ♥ **Drink plenty of water**
- ♥ **Calm your stress**

### Diabetes

First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples are at a higher risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes, the most common form of this serious medical condition that may lead to heart disease and stroke.

### If you have been diagnosed with diabetes

Work closely with your healthcare team to set goals for your blood glucose levels. Make sure you know what your target levels are, and how to maintain that target.