

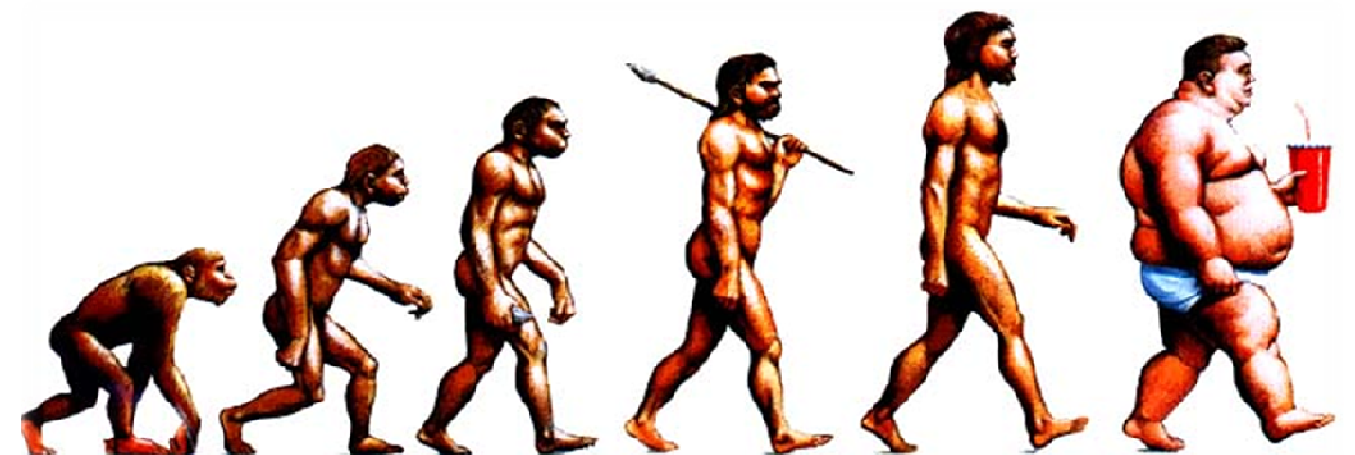
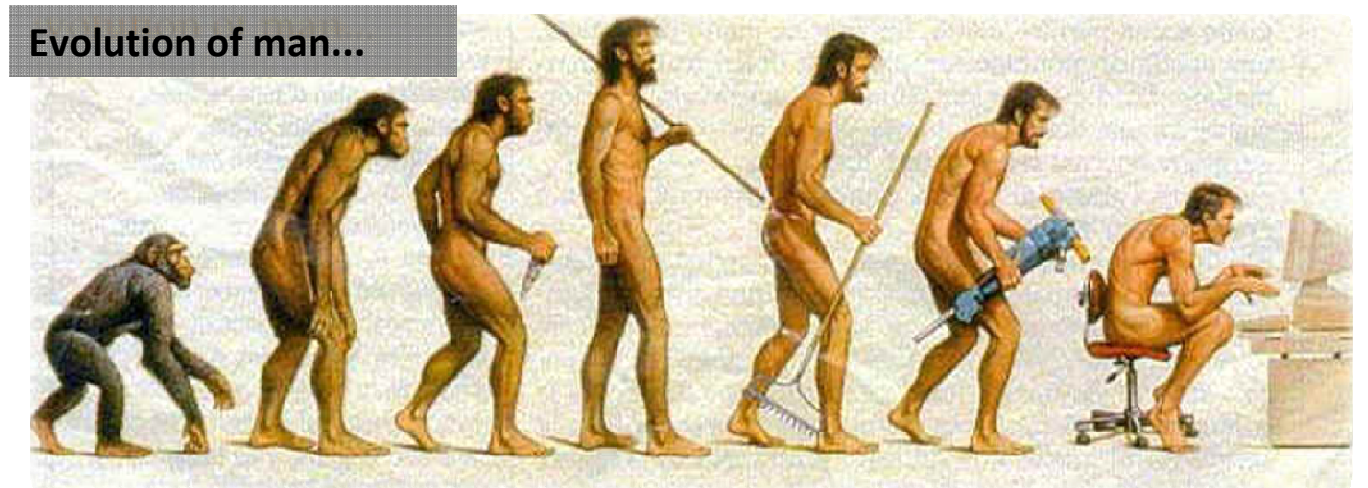
# Born to Move



All modern humans were hunter-gatherers until around 10,000 years ago. Following the invention of agriculture, hunter-gatherers were displaced by farming in most parts of the world. Then, industrialization led to the creation of the factory. Now, three out of every four working Canadians – 12 million people- are employed in the service sector. Today, we are “*desk potatoes*” - the majority of our work and leisure time is spent *sitting*.

The reality is our bodies are **designed to move**. We are a perfect anatomical moving machine. Our flexible spinal cartilage, tissues, and muscles allow us to move in every possible direction – crawl, climb, jump, run, etc. And how do we thank our ancestors for this great gift? We sit on couches, car seats, and in front of computers and television as though we were not given the gift of movement.

It is easy to move – after all, movement is natural. We were all **born to move!**



## Canada Is In Trouble

- Greater than one in four Canadian adults is **obese**.
- **62%** of Canadians are overweight *or* obese.
- **Physical inactivity** is the number one factor contributing to the obesity of men and women.
- In 2008, the direct and indirect economic costs of physical inactivity and obesity in Canada were approximately **\$4.6 – \$7.1 billion**.
- 405,000 cases of male obesity and 646,000 cases of female obesity could be averted if all individuals obtained the recommended level of physical activity (150 minutes of moderate-vigorous physical activity/week).
- **More than half** of Canadians are considered *inactive*.



## Benefits of Physical Activity

Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Being active for at least 150 minutes per week can help reduce the risk of:

- Premature death
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- High blood pressure
- Certain types of cancer
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Overweight and obesity
- And can lead to:
  - Improved fitness
  - Improved strength
  - Improved mental health (morale, self-esteem)
  - Reduced fatigue
  - Reduced stress



# How Much Will Lower My Risk

“To achieve health benefits, adults aged 18-64 years should accumulate at least **150 minutes** of moderate-to vigorous-intensity *aerobic physical activity* per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more”.

## “Walking is man’s best medicine” (Hippocrates)

Research published in the **Archives of Internal Medicine (1999)** found that the duration of a *walk to work* was associated with the risk of developing high blood pressure. A walk of *21 minutes or more* resulted in a **29% decrease** in likelihood of developing high blood pressure and every *additional 10 minutes* of walking was associated with a **12% reduction** in risk of developing high blood pressure.

**\*More physical activity provides greater health benefits\***



# Barriers to Physical Activity

Many technological advances that have made our lives easier have also made us less active. Personal variables (physiological, behavioral, psychological) may also affect our plans to become more physically active.

## The 10 most common barriers to physical activity include:

1. Lack of time to exercise
2. Exercise is inconvenient
3. Lack of self-motivation
4. Exercise is not enjoyable
5. Exercise is boring
6. Lack of confidence in ability to be physically active (i.e., low self-efficacy)
7. Fear of injury
8. Lack of self-management skills (e.g., ability to set goals, monitor progress, reward progress)
9. Lack of encouragement, support, or companionship
10. Lack of resources (e.g., safe and pleasant parks, sidewalks, bicycle trails, health club) convenient to home or office

# Overcoming Common Challenges

**Squeeze in short walks during the day:** Shorter bouts of exercise (e.g., 10 minute walk) offer benefits too.

**Drive less, walk more:** Walk to your destination, park a few blocks away or in the back of the parking lot.

**Join forces:** Exercise with friends, relatives, or co-workers. You will enjoy the camaraderie and encouragement of the group.

**Work with your nature, not against it:** Plan physical activity for times of the day when you tend to feel more energetic.

**Forget the competition:** Do not worry about becoming a superstar athlete. Focus on positive changes your making to your body and mind.

**Set realistic goals:** Set simple goals you can achieve (e.g., walk 30 minutes per day). Add more activities to your routine when you become confident in your abilities.

**Get your kicks with your kids:** Pack a healthy lunch and take your family to the park for a game of tag or play with your kids in the pool instead of watching from a chair.

# Mini-Movements Work!

## The Case for Accumulating Activity

Lack of time is a commonly cited barrier to being physical active. Research supports intermittent exercise, multiple 10-minute bouts that accumulate to at least 30 minutes per day, can yield numerous health benefits.

### A short bout of physical activity can help to:

- Increase blood flow providing oxygen and nutrients
- Sustain strong bones and connective tissue
- Increase metabolism
- Improve mood, increase vigor, reduce fatigue
- Reduce blood triglyceride levels and blood pressure
- Reduce inches off of waist line
- Reduce desire to smoke



## Sneak Exercise into Your Day

1. **Find the time, it's there:** Monitor your daily routine for one week. The time is there and it doesn't have to be all at once (e.g., nine ten-minute get-moving periods)
2. **Build physical activity into your daily routine:** Take the bus to work? Get off two stops early and walk the rest of the way. Taking your son/daughter to hockey practice? Walk laps around the rink.
3. **Leave the car at home:** Active transportation is better for you and the environment. Walk, jog, or bike your way to work and errands.
4. **Explore new options:** Learn new skills while being physically active (e.g., snowshoeing, indoor climbing, Aquafit)
5. **Make active plans:** Plan time for physical activity as you would schedule an important appointment. Make sure your friends and family are aware of your commitment.
6. **After dinner, every night:** Leave the stress of the day behind and do something active every evening – even if just for 10 minutes (e.g., walk the dog, go for a swim)
7. **DIY:** Rake your own leaves and/or shovel your own snow. You will save money while being active!

## Ways to Exercise While Travelling

1. If travelling by car, stop frequently for short, brisk walks, and stretching.
2. Pack your sneakers and a fitness DVD.
3. Book a hotel room between the fifth and eighth floors and forget the elevator.
4. Stay in hotels with swimming pools and exercise facilities.
5. Avoid the moving sidewalk and walk laps around the airport while waiting for a flight





## Things to Think About...

- ➔ Acquiring about **5,000 steps/day** (approximately 30 minutes of walking) = *15 pounds* of weight loss in one year.
- ➔ For **every minute** you walk, you extend your life by *2 minutes*.
- ➔ If you walk off **2,000-2,500 calories/week** (approximately 115,000 calories/year) = *33 pounds* of weight loss per year (Note: 30 min of walking = approximately 150 cal).
- ➔ If you walk off **2,000-2,500 calories/week**, the average middle-aged person extends their life by *two years*.
- ➔ By just standing, you can expend 30-100 more calories/hour than sitting. Can you limit your sitting and sleeping to 23 ½ hours per day?
- ➔ One pound = approximately 3,500 calories. You could shed **15 pounds** in one year simply by increasing your steps every day.



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