



MMJPR NEWSLETTER

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

MMJPR offers numerous benefits to both website visitors as well as advertisers, as it brings them together to exchange and connect on a subject that is of growing interest to patients with chronic conditions, growers of medical marijuana, healthcare practitioners, and anyone interested in improving health.

If you're interested in becoming part of the thousands of Canadians who are exploring the benefits of medical marijuana, MMJPR offers you this unique opportunity to do so

WELCOME TO A NEW WORLD IN HEALTH CARE.

Its 2018 and we have some amazing news coming up later this year as well as the movement from the deep of winter into the glorious spring time next month.

We are happy to present you with this fifteenth issue of our medical cannabis newsletter. This issue we have some great ways for you to get more exercise even when you are at your desk. Also be sure to check out our superfood of the month, avacados!



Province of Ontario Confirms New Government Agency to be Solely Responsible for the Sale of Legal Cannabis

Ontario will be launching a provincially owned cannabis corporation in the summer of 2018. It will be called the Ontario Cannabis Retail Corporation, or OCRC, and will be run by the Ontario Liquor Control Board (LCBO).

The Ontario government passed Bill 174 late last year to become one of the first provinces to confirm regulations regarding the sale of cannabis once it becomes legalized in Canada. The new law allows anyone over the age of 19 to purchase cannabis at their government-run stores, as well as allowing for up to four plants to be grown at home for personal use. The Ontario government plans to use revenues from the sales of cannabis to benefit law enforcement as well as educational initiatives.

They are planning to open 150 stores by 2020 with an online direct-to-the-consumer component. This new OCRC is projected to become the world's largest cannabis retailers. A reasonable proposition when considering the fact

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Eat your way to a healthy heart



Super Food of the Month – Olive Oil

that the LCBO is already one of the largest alcohol retailers in the world; and as such, possesses significant bargaining power when negotiating prices and terms with its suppliers and distributors.

Under the Government of Canada's plan to legalize, each provincial government has been given the power to decide how cannabis will be sold within its borders. In the case of Ontario, the government has chosen the same system of sales and distribution that they have used traditionally to sell alcohol.

This was unwelcome news to many existing canna-business owners in Ontario, as effectively, they have been pushed out of the industry. Indeed, some private dispensaries see the OCRC's efforts to build 150 stores and staff them with knowledgeable and well-trained staff in such a short period of time as folly, especially when a network of retailers and customers already exists.

The Ontario government seems intent on eliminating not only existing canna-business owners but also any black-market competition as well, as the OCRO have stated their intention of keeping the price of cannabis below \$10 a gram. Furthermore, supply is expected to become a major issue for the OCRO initially; because as a province with a population of more than 13.5 million people, they plan to open only 40 stores across the province in their first year of operation.



EAT YOUR WAY TO A HEALTHY HEART

It's pretty easy to ignore your risk of heart disease. If nothing hurts, it's tempting to assume everything's fine. But remember, heart disease takes many years to develop, and you can't reverse it overnight — so start now.

Diet is one of the biggest contributors to heart disease, so that's the best place to start. The big changes are obvious: Lay off the bacon cheeseburgers and eat more fish, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Gradual adjustments are okay. Eating just one fruit or vegetable at every meal can significantly lower your risk of a heart attack.

Even if you already have heart disease, the right diet can help you reverse it—something no cholesterol-lowering pill will do—by improving your cholesterol readings and taming high blood pressure, steadying blood sugar, dousing inflammation, and even taking off extra weight. Many studies have proved it. For instance, the Lyon Diet Heart Study showed that when people with heart disease follow a Mediterranean-style diet that eschews red meats and processed foods in favour of produce, whole grains, and good fats from fish, olive oil, or nuts, they are 50 to 75 percent less likely to have repeat heart attacks compared to patients who stick with standard Western fare.

Cutting Calories Cuts Heart Disease Risk

Can cutting calories turn back the cardiological clock? It appears so. When researchers at Washington University School of Medicine looked at 25 people who cut 600 to 1,000 calories from their daily diets (most North Americans eat between 2,000 and 3,000 calories a day) for six years, their hearts looked 15 years younger than their chronological age. The people in the study were also leaner and had lower levels of inflammatory markers, cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood pressure. The study participants cut their calories by eating nutrient-dense foods and limiting empty calories from refined and processed foods and sodas.

YOUR FOOD PRESCRIPTION

Find a friend in fatty fish Salmon may be the first food that comes to mind when you envision a heart-healthy diet, and for good reason. Salmon and other fatty fish, such as mackerel, sardines, and tuna, contain now-famous omega-3 fatty acids, particularly compounds known as eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA).

Consider these nature's heart medicines. According to one study, consuming small quantities of fish—just half a serving a week—lowers the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease by 17 percent and the risk of a nonfatal heart attack by 27 percent. Each additional weekly serving reduces the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease by another 4 percent.

Eating food with fins benefits your heart and its “plumbing” in a number of ways. Having fish for dinner once a week probably means one less meat-based meal, and that in itself helps—for instance, by keeping your cholesterol under control. But the fats in fish are themselves beneficial. They help stabilize heart rhythms to prevent arrhythmias (irregular heartbeats that can lead to heart failure, blood clots, and stroke); lower cholesterol and triglycerides; and reduce inflammation in the arteries, which was recently discovered to play a major role in heart disease. Fish eaters have levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a marker of inflammation, that are up to 33 percent lower than those of people who don’t eat fish. Because high levels of CRP have been found in heart attack patients whose cholesterol levels were normal, some heart specialists believe it may be even better than cholesterol for predicting who is likely to develop heart disease.

Aim for: At least two servings of fatty fish (9 to 13 ounces, or 250 to 375 grams, total) a week.

Since mercury contamination is a concern, opt for fish lower in mercury, such as salmon, and steer clear of highly contaminated fish, including shark, swordfish, fresh and frozen tuna, and escolar.

A rainbow of fruits and vegetables Many of us don’t make the effort to eat enough fruits and veggies. But this statistic may send you straight to the salad bar: Research from a major survey that analyzed the connection between disease risk and fruit and vegetable consumption in more than 9,000 healthy adults showed that eating a fruit or vegetable at every meal cut the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease by 27 percent.

Need more reason to serve yourself a helping of spinach or have an apple snack? According to research from the Nurses Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study, which looked at the eating habits of over 100,000 men and women, people who ate eight or more servings of fruit and vegetables each day had a 30 percent lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease than people who ate fewer than two servings a day.

Fruits and vegetables are among the best sources of fibre, which lowers cholesterol and helps reduce the low-grade inflammation in our bodies that contributes to heart disease. Opt for brightly coloured fruits and vegetables; they contain the most antioxidants, which counteract the damage free radicals do to arteries and help prevent the breakdown of LDL (“bad”) cholesterol that leads to plaque build-up. You can’t rely on supplements for your antioxidants, since they don’t seem to have the same effects as food.

Aim for: At the very least, get 3 to 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day (a serving is one medium piece of fruit; 1/2 cup of fruit or vegetable juice; 1/2 cup of chopped fruit or cooked vegetables, beans, or legumes; or 1 cup of leafy vegetables). Having 7 to 10 daily servings is even better.

Helpful hint: Start one meal a day with a salad or add a side of steamed spinach. If you’re already eating about five servings of green vegetables a day, adding a sixth lowers heart disease risk by another 23 percent.

Oatmeal, oat bran, legumes, beans, and peas. The secret ingredient in these foods is soluble fibre, the kind that reduces cholesterol by soaking it up so it’s flushed it out of the body as waste. Studies show that diets low in fat and rich in soluble fibre can reduce total cholesterol levels by 10 to 15 percent, which in many cases may be enough to get you into the target range.

Aim for: 25 to 35 grams of fibre each day. Of that, 10 grams should be soluble fibre.

Helpful hint: Oats contain more soluble fibre than any other grain, 2 to 3 grams per serving. Having just two servings of regular oatmeal or oat bran cereal a day lowers cholesterol by 2 to 3 percent. Not into oats? A half cup of beans, legumes, or peas also contains 2 grams of soluble fibre.

Pour on some extra-virgin olive oil Low-fat diets have been shown to prevent and even reverse heart disease. The problem is, they can be hard to stick with. So how can you enjoy some fat in your diet and protect your heart, too? By swapping saturated fats (like butter) for olive oil, particularly extra-virgin olive oil.

Olives and olive oil are mainstays of the famously heart-healthy Mediterranean diet. They contain monounsaturated fat, which is healthier for the heart than saturated fat. But 7 olives—which are fruits, after all—and their oil also contain antioxidants called polyphenols, which, research suggests, help reduce inflammation in the blood vessels and help improve cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

It's important to opt for extra-virgin olive oil; because it's minimally processed, it retains many of the polyphenols that are stripped from more heavily processed olive oils.

Aim for: Limit yourself to no more than 2 to 3 teaspoons of oil. And remember, olive oil is meant to replace other fats in your diet, not be added to them.

Shell game: walnuts, almonds, and peanuts. Eating nuts in place of other fatty foods can potentially lower your risk of heart disease by up to 39 percent according to research done at Pennsylvania State University. Although nuts contain a lot of fat, it's of the monounsaturated and polyunsaturated varieties, which lower cholesterol and protect against heart disease. Nuts also seem to lower CRP and fibrinogen, both of which are markers for inflammation. Plus, they're good sources of fibre and protein as well as vitamin E, the B vitamins, magnesium, and potassium, all of which are essential for good heart health.

Aim for: Just 30 grams of nuts at least five times a week.

Helpful hint: Almonds and walnuts lower cholesterol, but don't leave peanuts out of the mix. As sources of antioxidants go, peanuts are on a par with blackberries and strawberries. They contain good amounts of vitamin E as well as vast stores of antioxidant polyphenols. Roasted peanuts contain even more of them.

Is soy healthy? Soy foods aren't the cure-alls we once thought; they lower cholesterol only a little bit, according to reviews of recent studies. But there are still plenty of good reasons to rotate them into your diet, especially in place of meats and full-fat cheeses.

The fact is, like other beans, soy is an excellent source of protein with none of the saturated fat of meat. It also contains hormone-like compounds called isoflavones that seem to help fight certain cancers.



Tasteless chunks of tofu are not your only option—although tofu really is good in stir-fries because it takes on the flavour of the sauce. You can add it to beef stir-fries to cut down on the amount of meat you use or add it to lasagne in place of some of the cheese (you won't notice it's there). But one of the simplest and tastiest ways to enjoy soy is by stocking the freezer with soybeans (also called edamame), either in or out of their shells. They make a fun, satisfying snack when you squeeze them out of their pods (thaw them first), or you can sprinkle shelled soybeans on salads or into soups.



Aim for: There's no official recommendation, but you can do your heart good by occasionally eating soy foods instead of meats and dairy products. When you eat tofu, choose the low-fat variety.

Wine, beer, and spirits Red wine gets all the attention in terms of heart health, but the fact is, other types of alcohol also protect against heart disease when consumed in moderation. In general, alcohol increases HDL ("good") cholesterol, lowers LDL ("bad") cholesterol, and in some cases, reduces fibrinogen and CRP, the inflammation markers.

A recent study done at the University of Florida found that older adults who have one alcoholic beverage a day were 30 percent less likely to develop heart disease. Another study of cardiac patients hospitalized after heart attacks found that study participants who averaged two drinks a day were 32 percent less likely to experience fatal heart attacks.

Red wine does offer some added benefits from plant compounds found in grape skins, such as flavonoids, which help prevent blood clots, and resveratrol, which helps lower cholesterol.

Aim for: One to two drinks a day (the higher number is for men) is the amount considered generally safe and beneficial to the heart.

Helpful hint: Not sure what constitutes a drink? It's 4 oz (125 ml) of wine, 12 oz (360 ml) of beer, or

1.5 oz (45 ml) of hard liquor.

A nice cup of tea You may think of fruits and vegetables when you think of antioxidants, but tea is an even better source of these disease fighters. Green tea is associated with reduced cholesterol levels and lower rates of artery blockages. But both black and green teas contain significant amounts of flavonoids, antioxidants that appear to protect against heart disease by slowing the breakdown of LDL cholesterol, preventing blood clots, and improving blood vessel function.

People who drink a cup or two of tea a day have a 46 percent lower risk of developing narrowed arteries. Upping that to three cups a day lowers the risk of having a heart attack by 43 percent and of dying from a heart attack by 70 percent. It can even help prevent a second heart attack. In a study of 1,900 patients recovering from heart attacks at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, the death rate among patients who drank at least two cups of tea a day was 44 percent lower than among non-tea drinkers.

Aim for: Two to five cups of green or black tea daily.

Helpful hint: Choose green tea if you're looking for a beverage naturally low in caffeine.

The wonders of cranberries Women have long relied on cranberry juice for fending off urinary tract infections. Now research suggests that the juice, one of the richest sources of antioxidants, can also raise levels of HDL cholesterol. In a three-month study of volunteers with high cholesterol, three servings of cranberry juice a day boosted their HDL cholesterol levels by 10 percent, which in turn lowered their risk of heart disease by 40 percent.

Aim for: Three 4- to 6-ounce (125- to 175-millilitre) servings a day.

Dark chocolate Yes, you can have your wine—and chocolate—on a heart-healthy diet. Dark chocolate is full of the same antioxidants found in red wine and green tea. In fact, it contains more flavonols (a subclass of flavonoids, in case you're paying attention to the technical stuff) than tea or red wine and has about four times the catechins in tea. These compounds prevent blood clots, slow the oxidation of LDL cholesterol (making it less likely to stick to artery walls), improve blood vessel function, and reduce inflammation. Another plus for chocolate: It gives good cholesterol a slight boost.

Of course, chocolate's high in fat, but a third of that fat is stearic acid, a particular type of saturated fat that doesn't raise cholesterol, while another third is a type of monounsaturated fat that lowers cholesterol.

Aim for: Some research suggests that 45 grams a day may reduce the risk of heart disease by 10 percent. Look for dark chocolate that contains at least 60 percent cocoa.

Helpful hint: Choose dark chocolate over milk chocolate. Dark chocolate, which has a higher cocoa content, contains more flavonoids, and although milk chocolate contains some, the milk actually prevents their absorption. Dark chocolate also tends to contain less sugar.

OFF THE MENU

Fatty meats, chicken skin, full-fat dairy foods, and foods containing trans fat. Saturated fat, found in meat, cheese, and butter, raises cholesterol and heart disease risk. So does trans fat, found in vegetable shortening, stick margarine, and many commercially fried and/or baked foods (look for the word hydrogenated on the label). These foods should be the first to go.

According to a Cleveland Clinic study, eating even one meal that's high in saturated fat interferes with artery elasticity and encourages plaque deposits. And data from the Nurses Health Study shows that every 5 percent increase in saturated fat intake bumps up your risk of heart disease by 17 percent. Trans fat not only raises LDL cholesterol but also lowers HDL cholesterol. In addition, some animal research suggests that eating foods high in trans fat increases belly fat, which in turn raises the risk of diabetes and heart disease.

Sugar and refined, processed carbohydrates. Sugary foods and drinks have something in common with starchy foods like potatoes and refined carbohydrates like white bread and white rice. All of them are quickly broken down into sugars in the body, raising blood sugar and insulin levels. Over time, this can lead to weight gain and insulin resistance, both contributors to heart disease.

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Super Food of the Month – Olive Oil

Eating generous amounts of olive oil is one the main reasons that people who follow the Mediterranean diet have less heart disease and far fewer heart attacks. That's because olive oil contains a special anti-inflammatory component so strong, researchers liken it to aspirin—and inflammation is linked to heart disease, type 2 diabetes and Alzheimer's.

What's In It

Hydroxytyrosol and Oleuropein: These antioxidant phytochemicals may work together, according to laboratory studies, to help protect against breast cancer, high blood pressure, infection-causing bacteria and heart disease.

Lignans: Present in extra-virgin olive oil, these potent antioxidants may protect against breast, colon and prostate cancer by suppressing early cancer change in cells.

Monounsaturated fat: When substituted for saturated fat, this cardioprotective fat helps to lower total and LDL or “bad” cholesterol, and may increase HDL or “good” cholesterol. Research suggests that a diet deriving most of its fat calories from monounsaturates may reduce the risk for chronic disease, including arthritis, certain cancers and cardiovascular disease. At 73 percent monounsaturated fat, olive oil has the highest percentage among common cooking oils. (By contrast, coconut oil has 6 percent; corn or soy oil, 24 percent.)



Vitamin E: Olive oil is one of the best dietary sources of this food-scarce vitamin, which shields against damaging free radicals. One tablespoon of olive oil provides 8 percent of the recommended daily intake of vitamin E.

Try this for a simple snack:

Pick up a baguette and a good quality olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Pour a generous amount of the olive oil into a deep saucer plate and pour a small amount of the balsamic into the middle of the oil. Break off a piece of the baguette and swirl the bread into the oil and balsamic for a great tasty bite! You'll consume about 50 less calories and very little saturated fat, and the bonus is, it's more tasty than bread and butter.



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