



Are you at risk?

People with diabetes are four times more likely to develop a cardiovascular disease. Added to that are other factors that increase the risk:

- Being 40 years of age or older
- Being a menopausal woman
- Having an immediate family member who had heart disease before the age of 65 for women or age 55 for men
- Being of Indigenous or South Asian descent
- Having high blood pressure
- Having a high blood cholesterol level
- Having a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or more
- Smoking

Good news!

Keeping your blood sugar within target levels and adopting healthy lifestyle habits can decrease your risk of developing a cardiovascular disease. The earlier you take action, the greater the positive effect on your health!

Resources

Heart & Stroke
heartandstroke.ca

**Ordre des diététistes-
nutritionnistes du Québec**
odnq.org

Questions about diabetes?

InfoDiabetes Service
514-259-3422
1-800-361-3504
infodiabete@diabete.qc.ca

Diabetes School

Universi D
universi-d.com

Diabetes Québec
diabete.qc.ca

Diabetes Québec

Heart health and diabetes

Understanding
cardiovascular diseases



What is cardiovascular disease?

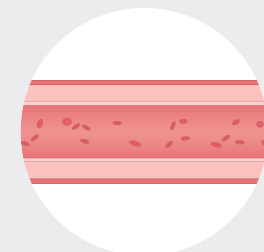
Cardiovascular disease refers to problems affecting the heart and blood vessels. The type of cardiovascular disease and its consequences depend on which part of the body is affected:

- **Heart:** angina, arrhythmia, heart attack, heart failure
- **Brain:** stroke (cerebrovascular accident or CVA)
- **Lower limbs:** calf pain when walking, gangrene, amputation

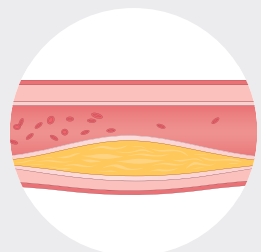
Diabetes, particularly with high blood sugar, damages the blood vessels. This can contribute to the development of atherosclerosis. Atherosclerosis occurs when fatty deposits in the form of plaque accumulate in the arteries causing the arteries to harden or narrow. Blood circulating in damaged arteries slows down and can even become blocked. If a clot of plaque gets loose, it can block the flow to other blood vessels.

Diabetes speeds up the aging of the heart and blood vessels.

Normal blood vessel



Atherosclerosis



The winning recipe for cardiovascular health

Eat foods high in soluble and viscous fibre:

- White and red beans, chickpeas, lentils and other legumes
- Hulled barley, oatmeal and oat bran, cereals with psyllium (e.g., All-Bran Buds)
- Artichokes, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, asparagus, green peas, green beans
- Oranges, pears, apples, strawberries, plums
- Ground flaxseed

Choose foods rich in unsaturated fats:

- Olive oil and canola oil
- Nuts and seeds
- Natural peanut butter and almond butter
- Avocados
- Fatty fish such as salmon, trout, sardines, mackerel, herring

Reduce your salt intake:

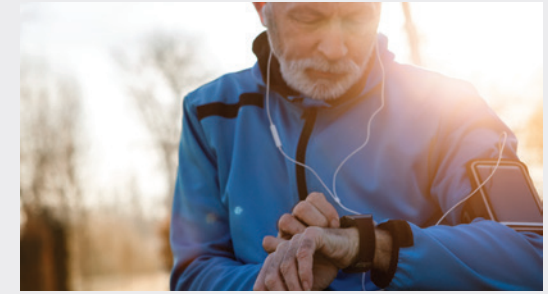
- Choose unsalted or salt-reduced foods.
- Limit ready-to-eat foods.
- Use herbs, spices or lemon in your recipes to enhance flavour.

Reduce your consumption of saturated fats:

- Incorporate meat substitutes, such as beans, tofu and fish, into your menus as often as possible.
- Remove the skin from chicken and turkey before eating them.
- Choose lean cuts of meat and remove the visible fat.
- Choose cheeses with no more than 20% M.F. (milk fat).

Cut back on cholesterol-rich foods, such as egg yolks, shrimp, squid and organ meats.

Diet plays an important role in reducing the risk of developing a cardiovascular disease. Make meals from scratch as often as possible using basic and unprocessed ingredients, eat a wide variety of foods and take the time to savour what you eat.



Exercise 5 times per week for a minimum of 30 minutes per session



Stop smoking or vaping



Manage your stress

Consult your doctor!

Your doctor can assess your risk of developing a cardiovascular disease.

Your doctor can also prescribe medication to prevent the development of a cardiovascular disease.