



Métis Health News

No Judgments. Just Facts!

The Facts

The Métis health survey was developed to determine the strengths and opportunities for change in areas of health and well-being of Métis in Saskatchewan. Through a partnership between Métis Nation—Saskatchewan, University of Saskatchewan and First Nations University of Canada, 23 Métis Field Interviewers met with over 1400 Métis between February and June 2009 and asked them numerous health related questions. Preliminary results from the survey determine:

- 33.9 % of Métis people have high blood pressure as compared to

statistics from the aboriginal peoples survey (APS 2006) which stated that only 16% of Métis have High blood pressure compared to the general population at 12 %

- 19.8 % of Métis people have High Cholesterol
- 15.7% have diabetes as compared with the APS (2006) which stated that only 7% & of Métis people have diabetes when compare to the general population at 4%
- 10.6% of Métis people have heart disease
- 65.5% of Métis people stated that they currently mis-use tobacco (smoke cigarettes, cigars, or a pipe).

No Judgments

These numbers may not be surprising to many Métis communities as they live these realities everyday. The challenge lies in how Métis communities can work with health professionals and the rest of the population to make sure that these numbers decline. There are health programs set up to assist in dealing with some of the health problems listed but barriers exist for many Métis communities in accessing these programs. The Métis Nation—Saskatchewan wants to work with the already existing programs and act as a bridge for the communities to minimize the barriers they face in accessing these programs.

Chronic Health

Healthy Living

What is a Chronic disease ?

Chrono -means time. This means that certain diseases will stay for life if you don't get rid of the cause. According to the Aboriginal Peoples Survey, Statistics Canada, the following are

chronic illnesses Métis people are diagnosed with more often than others: High Blood Pressure, Arthritis, Asthma, Diabetes, High cholesterol and Heart Disease.

We all want to live healthy, but some of us don't know how and where to start.

We would like to help you with this by linking you with the appropriate resources, and organizations that will help support positive change.

Inside this issue:

Diabetes: Are you at Risk?	2
Arthritis	2
Asthma	3
High Cholesterol	3
Heart Disease	3
Healthy living	4
Resources for Métis	4



Diabetes Health Canada website

Diabetes is a condition characterized by the body's inability to control levels of blood sugar. Two types of diabetes are most common:

Type 1 Diabetes or Insulin Dependent Diabetes is caused by the body's own immune system destroying the cells in the body that produce insulin. Insulin is the hormone that keeps blood sugar levels normal. It is generally a disease of childhood.

Type 2 Diabetes or Non-Insulin Dependent Diabetes is caused by an inability

of insulin to perform its normal function, that is, the body is either not producing enough insulin or the insulin produced is not being used properly by the body.

It is most prevalent among overweight adults over the age of 40.

Normal blood glucose level is between 3.5–7.8 mmol/l, if sugar level is greater than 15 these are symptoms that may occur:

thirst; frequent urination; tiredness or lack of energy; slow healing; infections

Tips for staying well with diabetes

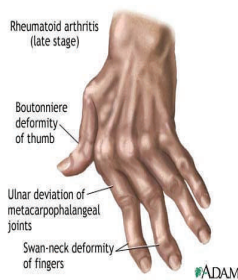
- Be physically active and eat healthy foods
- Monitor your blood glucose level
- Manage your weight
- Take your medication regularly
- Don't smoke
- Have regular medical checks, including blood

Arthritis Health Canada website

The word 'arthritis' means joint inflammation. The term arthritis is used to describe more than 100 conditions that affect joints, the tissues which surround joints, and other connective tissue. Arthritis conditions are usually characterized by pain and stiffness in and around one or more joints. However, the pattern, severity and location of symptoms vary depending on the specific form of the disease. Symptoms can develop gradually or suddenly.

Most Common types of Arthritis :

- Osteoarthritis
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Systemic lupus erythematosus
- Gout



How to Manage Arthritis:

- Be active!
- Maintaining healthy weight
- See your doctor for regular check ups.
- Learning techniques to reduce pain and limitations can be beneficial to people with arthritis. Self-management education is available through the Arthritis Society's website.

High Blood Pressure Health Canada website

Hypertension is high blood pressure. Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries as it flows through them. Arteries are the blood vessels that carry oxygenated blood from the heart to the body's tissues.

As the blood flows through arteries it pushes against the inside of the artery walls. The more pressure the blood exerts on the artery walls, the higher the blood pressure will be. The size of small arteries

also affects the blood pressure. When the muscular walls of arteries are relaxed, or dilated, the pressure of the blood flowing through them is lower than when the walls are narrow, or constrict. Hypertension is a major health problem, especially because it has no symptoms.

Hypertension is High Blood Pressure.

Hypertension is serious because people with the condition have a higher risk for heart disease and other medical problems than people with normal blood pressure.

How to Manage High Blood Pressure:

- Medication
- Exercise /weight control/ Diet
- Reduction of sodium and alcohol intake.

Asthma

Health Canada website

Asthma is a disease where the airways of the lungs become constricted by tightened muscles, mucus and inflamed tissue, causing labored breathing.

Asthma is a chronic condition typically induced by environmental factors in people who are predisposed to it. Uncontrolled asthma is a serious problem that can lead to death.



Risk factors for Developing Asthma

- Family history of asthma or allergies, eczema, allergic sinusitis, the child of parents who smoke, a person who is over weight.

Symptoms

The classic symptoms of asthma are wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath. Sometimes people also notice sweating or tightness in the chest. If you or your child have had an unexplained cough for more than

four weeks, your doctor may test you for asthma if other symptoms are not found.

How to Manage your Asthma:

- Work with your doctor to get your asthma under control
- Make and follow a written asthma plan
- Avoid Asthma triggers: smoke and cold air and Asthma inducers : allergies and viruses.
- Use medication as prescribed

High Cholesterol

Health Canada website

Cholesterol is a waxy, fatty substance produced by the liver and found in foods. It is found in all animal tissue and is a normal part of every cell in our bodies. Small amounts of cholesterol are necessary for good health. Too much cholesterol – usually because of dietary intake – means levels of cholesterol in the bloodstream rise and cause problems.

If blood cholesterol levels remain high for a long time, the cholesterol

contributes to build up of material in artery walls, narrowing the space through which blood flows. Of particular concern is clogging of the arteries that carry blood to the brain and muscles of the heart.

Symptoms

High cholesterol has no symptoms and only rarely causes changes to the outside of the body that can be seen, which is why it is sometimes referred to as a “silent killer”.

Prevention

The same lifestyle modifications for lowering high cholesterol can prevent the problem in the first place. These include maintaining a low-fat diet, exercising, and controlling your weight.



Heart Disease

Health Canada website

What is heart disease?

Heart disease is a group of conditions affecting the structure and functions of the heart and has many roots causes.

Coronary artery disease, for example, develops when a combination of fatty materials, calcium and scar tissue (called plaque) builds up in the arteries that supply blood to the heart (coronary arteries). The plaque build

up narrows the arteries and prevents the heart from getting enough blood.



Heart disease is preventable and manageable.

Reduce your risk:

- Be smoke-free
- Be physically active
- Know and control your Blood pressure and cholesterol
- Maintain healthy weight
- Reduce stress

Healthy Living Health Canada website

What does living healthy mean?

Healthy Living means making positive choices that enhance your personal physical, mental and spiritual health. You make these choices when you eat nutritiously, stay physically active to keep your body strong, choose not to smoke and put an end to other negative lifestyles practices. Healthy living choices are affected by where you live, work, learn and play. Keep yourself informed about positive health practices at home, work, school and at community events.



Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide: First Nations, Inuit and Métis



Sakitawak Michif Dancers in Photo.

Dancing is a good way of being active. It's also something you can do at home with your whole family. So next time everyone's sitting around the couch, switch to a music channel and have a dance off :)

Green Light Red Light is fun easy game to play with the kids in the house to help stay active. How to Play:

One player is chosen to be the "Stop Light", all other players line up about 15 feet away in a straight line. The "Stop Light" turns their back on the players. If the "Stop Light" says "green light" all players are allowed to move toward the "Stop Light". If the "Stop Light" says "red light" the players must stop. When the "Stop Light" says "red Light" they turn around. If players are caught moving they are out. Play continues when the "Stop Light" turns back around and yells "green light" The "Stop Light" wins if they catch ALL the players moving before anyone is able to touch them. Otherwise...the 1st player to touch the "Stop Light" is the next "Stop Light"

Métis Nation - Saskatchewan

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Special Points of Interest

The Métis Cookbook and Guide to Healthy Living is a collection of traditional and non-traditional recipes. All content has been reviewed by an Aboriginal dietician and is accompanied by nutritional information, health and wellness information, as well as tips on how to incorporate traditional Métis foods into a healthy lifestyle.

Cookbooks and Canada's Food Guide available at the MNS health promotion offices.

Good Food Box Locations

The Regina Food Security Project

Box 4482, Regina, SK S4P 3W7

Phone: 347-3224 Fax: 347-0943, E-mail: reach.office@sasktel.net, Web:

www.reachinregina.ca

Prince Albert 763-0242

Smart Families Food Cooperative

\$10 and \$20 prepaid food box program

To provide value-priced fresh fruits and vegetables to help members eat healthier while saving time and money.

\$20 Good Food Box Contains: 3 different fruits, 5 different vegetables, 1-3 staple items

\$10 Good Food Box Contains: 3 different fruits, 4-5 different vegetables

