Lifestyle Tips for a Healthy Heart

February is **Heart Month in Canada**. Did you know you have more control over your heart health than you think? By making healthy lifestyle choices, you can reduce your risk of developing heart disease or better manage any heart conditions you may already have.

Here are some lifestyle choices for maintaining a healthy heart:

Get Moving for a Healthy Heart:

Exercising regularly helps lower blood pressure, lowers fat and sugar in the blood, decreases inflammation in your body, and boosts good cholesterol (HDL). All of these amazing benefits help prevent heart disease. Exercise 30 minutes a day or 150 minutes weekly to enjoy these health benefits!

Heart Healthy Eating:

A healthy diet is vital for preventing and managing heart disease. Focus on eating balanced meals with whole grains, vegetables, fruits, quality proteins, and heart-healthy fats. Avoid diets high in salt and unhealthy fats (saturated and trans), as these can cause high cholesterol, plaque buildup, high blood pressure, and obesity. Choose unsaturated fats and low-sodium options whenever possible.

Quality & Restorative Sleep:

Good sleep is vital for a healthy heart. Aim for at least 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night to allow your heart to rest and recover. Without good sleep, the heart can become stressed and has to work harder to keep up with the body's needs. This added stress can increase the resting heart rate and blood sugar levels. A lack of good sleep will also cause the body to make more stress hormones and hormones that tell us when we are hungry, leading to unhealthy eating habits. To improve your sleep, establish a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, including weekends. Watch for the next edition of the 'Good for You Newsletter' to learn more about improving sleep!

Improving your lifestyle can be overwhelming. Choose one or two healthy changes to focus on and start your journey! Your heart will thank you.