

HEART-BEAT

A newsletter from heartyparty.com

Spring / Summer 2005

Promoting physical activity, healthy eating and a smoke-free environment

Funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Pillows with a purpose

Heartyparty.com, in association with Southlake Regional Health Centre and Upper Canada Mall, hosted a 3-day "Pillows With A Purpose" event at Upper Canada Mall in Newmarket.

Pillows With A Purpose attracted 68 volunteers (young and old alike), who helped to stitch together 895 pillows that will be donated to recovering heart surgery patients in York Region, Simcoe and Muskoka.



From left: Nicky Rauzon Wright, Lucia Connor, Gill Small, and Mary Molokach.

"Mall patrons visited our booth, enabling us to inform them about the Cardiac Care Program at Southlake Regional Health Centre," says Nicky Rauzon Wright, Coordinator, heartyparty.com. "It also gave Heartyparty.com and Public Health an opportunity to inform the visitors about risk factors and opportunities in the community to live healthy."

The response from the volunteers and from the public was overwhelming. "I would like to thank the many volunteers who helped to make this event such a success, including the Public Health and Hospital staff," says Nicky. "And a heartfelt thanks to volunteer, Vicki Case, from Southlake Regional Health Centre, who coordinated the sewing project."

Reducing your risk of having a stroke

There are many things you can do to be healthy. To help reduce the risk of stroke you can:

- Eat healthy foods most of the time.
- Be active most days of the week.
- Try to reach or keep a healthy weight.
- Quit smoking. If you don't smoke, don't start. Try to avoid second-hand smoke.
- Find healthy ways to cope with stress in your life.
- Enjoy alcohol in moderation, if you choose to drink.

Source: *Healthy ways to Prevent Stroke.*



York Region Heart Health Program

Car-dependent habits are killing us

The Heart and Stroke Foundation recently reported that Canadians living in non-urban areas are more car-dependent, less active and more prone to being overweight or obese than people who live in urban areas.



"The evidence is conclusive: our car-dependent habits are killing us. We have to start focusing on healthy lifestyle habits to replace our 'drive-through' mentality," says Dr. Anthony Graham, Heart and Stroke Foundation's spokesperson. Yet, 80% of Canadians believe city living and its high pressure, fast-paced lifestyle is detrimental to your health.

Foundation research shows that city-dwellers are twice as likely to walk, bike or take public transit to get to work as their non-urban counterparts. In addition, city-dwellers walk or bike to do daily chores.

To read the full report, visit www.heartandstroke.ca.

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NUTRITION & WELLNESS

Partners for a Healthy Heart

Throughout the month of February, Markham Stouffville Hospital, in partnership with York Region, Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario and HeartyParty.com, hosted the “Partners for a healthy heart - Heart Month at Markham Stouffville Hospital”, a series of interactive activities and heart health seminars geared towards promoting heart healthy lifestyles.

February has been designated as National Heart Month across Canada. Cardiovascular disease accounts for the deaths of more Canadians than any other disease, according to the latest data from Stats Canada (1998).

Organizations such as Markham Stouffville Hospital, York Region, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and **HeartyParty.com** have risen up to the challenge of making a difference for our communities.

“I know a lot of health workers don't live a heart healthy lifestyle,” says Shari Comerford, Nurse Clinician at Markham Stouffville Hospital and Chair of the Partners for a Healthy

Heart event, “and these same people are affected by risk factors that they may not know how to address. This event is intended to provide everyone with the opportunity to gain that critical information on how they can better protect their health.”



(From left to right): Shari Comerford (Nurse Clinician for Diabetes & Cardiology); Helena Jaczek (Chief Medical Officer of Health); Suzanne Vanderlip (Professional Practice Leader for the Acute Medicine System); Mary Wilson Trider (Vice President, Markham Stouffville Hospital).

Dr. Helena Jaczek, Commissioner of Health Services and Medical Officer of Health for York Region, was also onsite at Markham Stouffville Hospital to help kick off the month-long campaign, where she provided some statistics that directly relate to York Region residents.

Dr. Jaczek stresses the importance of getting our youth more involved in physical activity at an early age. “Young adults are being diagnosed with high blood pressure at an earlier stage in life,” says Dr. Jaczek. “One way parents can help get their children more active is by only permitting one hour of non-homework related screen time per day. This includes television, computer and video games.”

Dr. Jaczek announced:

- Every day this year, 16 residents of York South will be hospitalized because of **heart disease**
- One out of six (17%) of York Region adults age 35 and over have **high blood pressure**
- Almost half (46%) of the residents of York Region are **physically inactive**
- One out of three (34%) of the residents of York Region is **overweight**
- One out of five (21%) residents of York Region **smokes**.

Saving money on vegetables and fruit

- ▶ Buy fresh vegetables and fruit that are in season - and grown locally - whenever possible.
- ▶ When shopping for your family, buy large bags of apples, oranges, potatoes, onions, and carrots. It's cheaper than buying a few.
- ▶ Visit a pick-your-own farm, or join a gleaning program in your area. Gleaning is a practice where vegetables and fruit that are left in the farm fields after harvest can be collected for free.
- ▶ Try to grow your own vegetables and fruit or think about joining a community garden where people share a plot of land to grow their own produce.
- ▶ Look for store-brand / non-brand frozen or canned items, which cost less
- ▶ Buy juice in large plastic jugs or cartons or frozen concentrated cans instead of small juice boxes.



Source: the Self-Help Resource Centre

Visit our web site at heartyparty.com for information on:

Heart Health

Stress Management

Physical Activity

Healthy Eating

Smoke-Free Living

Community Events



Moving towards Health event

The Moving Towards Health Event took place at the Lebovic Leisure Centre in Stouffville on April 9th, 2005.

Partners for this event included: HeartyParty.com, the Canadian Mental Health Association, Canadian Diabetes Association, Markham Stouffville Hospital Heart and Stroke Foundation, York Region, Kelsey's Restaurant, and the Town of Whichurch Stouffville. Approximately 60 participants took part in activities such as aqua-fit, pilates, yoga and effective stress management techniques for women.

Stairway to Health



Stairway to Health is a newly launched web-based resource developed to increase physical activity in the workplace through stair climbing.

Activities like stair climbing can significantly contribute to the 30 minutes of physical activity we all need... everyday, plus...

- Stair climbing is easy to do in most workplaces. It requires no special equipment to participate.
- Moderate intensity lifestyle activities, like taking the stairs, may be more successfully promoted than structured vigorous intensity exercise.
- Two flights of stairs climbed once per day, can lead to 2.7 kg weight loss over one year. Using the stairs burns twice as many calories as walking.
- Taking the stairs is often faster than waiting for the elevator and it is a great Way to re-energize throughout the day. For more information, visit www.healthcanada.ca/stairwaytohealth

CONSIDER THIS: The more you move, the better you feel • More active older adults have the function and fitness of those much younger • More active people prolong their independence • Everyone can benefit from increased physical activity • People with physical limitations and chronic conditions can also benefit by becoming more active.

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The Benefits of Stairway to Health Programs

Programs that encourage the use of stairs over elevators provide many benefits to employees, such as improved morale, a sense of well-being, higher energy levels and improved team-building. Other benefits include:

- Active stair-climbers are more fit and have a higher aerobic capacity than those who don't use the stairs regularly (Ilmarinen et al., 1978);
- Stair-climbing programs can improve the amount of 'good cholesterol' (HDL) in the blood (Wallace and Neill, 2000);
- There is a strong association between stair-climbing and improved bone density in post-menopausal women (Coupand et al., 1999);
- Stair-climbing increases leg power and may be an important priority in reducing the risk of injury from falls in the elderly (Allied Dunbar Survey, 1992);
- Because stair-climbing is a familiar activity, employees have a high level of confidence in their ability to do it (Kerr, 2001).
- Since stair-climbing rates are currently very low, increasing population levels of stair-climbing could lead to substantial public health dividends (Kerr, 2001).

Source: www.healthcanada.ca/stairwaytohealth

DID YOU KNOW?

Walking is a natural, no-nonsense way to get in and stay in shape.

- You can walk just about anywhere.
- It helps to relax you and to lift your spirits.
- It helps you to lose excess body fat, and it will strengthen your lungs, heart, bones and back.
- It's easy on your joints.



Take It To Heart

The Heart and Stroke Foundation, in Partnership with **Heartyparty.com**, the Town of Markham, and York Region Health Services Department, hosted the "Take It to Heart" event at the Rouge River Community Centre in Markham on March 9.



Volunteers for the Take It To Heart event included (from left), Anna Sou, Keisha Lorde and Tinya Li

The event focused on women and it featured information about healthy lifestyle choices, health displays, a healthy cooking demonstration and food tasting.

Special guest speaker was Dr. Carin Wittnich. Dr. Wittnich is a professor in the department of surgery and physiology and director of the Cardiovascular Sciences Collaborative Program at the University of Toronto. In 2001, Dr. Wittnich received the Order of Ontario, the province's highest and most prestigious honour, for her work in promoting awareness and education of heart disease in women and children.

"Take It To Heart provided a lot of good, practical information to help women improve their own health, and the health of their families," says Nicky Rauzon-Wright, Coordinator at heartyparty.com. "We are proud to have been part of this special event."

Heartyparty.com hosts Basketball tournament



Dominic Mazotta (pictured left), heartyparty.com Steering Committee member and Principal of St. Peter's Separate School, looks on at the heartyparty.com Basketball Tournament in February. More than 300 students participated in the tournament, which took place at Holy Cross Catholic High School in Woodbridge, and at Father Bressani Catholic High School in Woodbridge.

Healthy Measures



Healthy Measures offers a fresh approach for health professionals to use in promoting consistent healthy weights throughout Ontario. The program is targeted to women 25-45 years of age, who are the food and nutrition gatekeepers of many households. Visit their website: www.healthyasures.ca.

"To insure good health: eat lightly, breathe deeply, live moderately, cultivate cheerfulness, and maintain an interest in life."

-- William Londen



York Region Heart Health Program

Please send your feedback or submissions to:
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HEART-BEAT, SPRING / SUMMER 2005

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Upcoming events....

The Meningitis C Shot.

A free vaccination against Meningitis C for anyone born between 1985 and 1990 and for students in Grade 7. For more information, call York Region Health Connection at 1800-361-5653.

Mount Albert Sports Day

starting June 3rd through to June 5th, 2005. Watch for Heartyparty's Road Hockey Tournament on June 4th, 2005.

Look out for news on **Hip Hop dance lessons**. For more information please call (905) 473-3449.

The Canadian Diabetes Association and Merck Frosst Present **The Live Well, Live Long Symposium Series**.

Wednesday May 11, 2005. Premier Convention Centre. For More Information please contact Jean Foster at 416-408-7142 or jean.foster@diabetes.ca.

Sun Awareness Week is from May 30th to June 3rd.

Goodbye...and thanks

Heartyparty.com would like to express a fond farewell to a couple of its long-serving Steering Committee members - **Eleanor Joyce** and **Jane Brown**.

Eleanor is retiring from Southlake Regional Health Centre, and Jane Brown will be moving on as a result of the closing of the District Health Council.

Thank you both for your many contributions to heartyparty.com over the years, and sincere best wishes in your future endeavours.