

[CANHEART Health Index](#)

Related Media

Downloads & Links

- [CMAJ Paper](#)
- [CANHEART Health Index Presentation \(PDF\)](#)
- [Poster abstract presented at Vascular/CCC 2013](#)

CANHEART Investigators and HSF develop the CANHEART Cardiovascular Health Index

With the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, the CANHEART investigators developed a Canadian “ideal” cardiovascular health index based on 6 health behaviours/factors associated with better cardiovascular health. The CANHEART Health Index is described in an article by Maclagan et al published in the CMAJ - Dec. 23 2013.

The new CANHEART health index builds upon the work of the American Heart Association which, in 2010, introduced the concept of “ideal” cardiovascular health and an associated measure based on 7 health behaviours/factors associated with better cardiovascular health.

The CANHEART ideal cardiovascular health index is a score from 0-6 based on the sum of 6 health factors/behaviours (shown below), all equally weighted. The index for adults is comprised of all 6 factors with scores ranging 0-6, where 6 is ideal, 4-5 is intermediate and 0-3 is poor. For youth, the index is based on the first 4 factors and scores range from 0-4, with 4 being ideal.

The CANHEART health index is measured using data from the Statistics Canada’s Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). The CANHEART investigators used data from the CCHS to calculate the CANHEART health index on a sample of 464,883 people aged 12 and older who participated in the CCHS for years 2003-2011 (excluding 2005). For the 2001-2011 study period (used for trend calculations) a larger sample size of 728,657 CCHS respondents was used.

CANHEART Health Index	
#	Health Factor/Behaviour
1	Non-smoker (or former smoker who quit >1 year ago); never tried smoking or never smoked whole cigarette for youth
2	Physically active (>30 mins walking/day); for youth, (≥60 mins of walking or ≥20 minutes of running or jogging/day)
3	≥5 fruits and vegetables/day
4	Body Mass Index
5	Non-diabetic
6	Non-hypertensive

CANHEART Cardiovascular Health Index finds 1/10 of Canadians in ideal cardiovascular health

The CANHEART investigators found that only 9.4% of Canadian adults were in ideal cardiovascular health, and more than one-third (37.3%) of Canadians were in poor cardiovascular health. Among youth, only 16.6% were in ideal cardiovascular health, and about half (49.7%) were in poor cardiovascular health.

“A large proportion of Canadians are in poor cardiovascular health and the overall trend has remained the same in the past decade,” says senior author Dr. Jack Tu, from the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) and the Schulich Heart Centre, Sunnybrook Health Sciences, Toronto, Ontario. “There is an urgent need to improve the heart health of Canadians.”