



Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada media backgrounder

The Heart and Stroke Foundation, a volunteer-based health charity, leads in eliminating heart disease and stroke and reducing their impact through the advancement of research and its application, the promotion of healthy living, and advocacy. The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada is a federation of 10 provincial Foundations, led and supported by a force of more than 140,000 volunteers.

Research

The Heart and Stroke Foundation leads the way in funding life-saving research to reduce the burden of heart disease and stroke and improve the lives of Canadians and in transferring the resulting knowledge to the public and to health professionals:

- HSFC is a leading funder of heart and stroke research in Canada. In 2006, we invested over **\$58 million** into peer-reviewed heart disease and stroke research.
- HSFC has invested more than **one billion dollars** into Canadian heart and stroke research in the last 50 years – and currently funds more than **900** researchers and research teams across Canada.
- As a leading and early partner with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, HSFC has partnered in research initiatives with all 13 of the CIHR institutes.

Health promotion and public policy

HSFC brings a strong message to all Canadians of the importance of healthy lifestyles, healthy communities, and healthy public policy to prevent heart disease and stroke:

- Health Check™, Canada's first not-for-profit food information program, helps millions of Canadians identify healthier food choices every day through the Health Check™ symbol on food packaging and restaurant menus. Since 1999, Health Check™ has grown to over 120 brands and over 1,000 products.

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- HSFC partners with the Canadian Cancer Society on the 5 to 10 a Day joint education and public awareness campaign.
- HSFC co-chaired the Trans Fat Task Force with Health Canada.
- The Foundation's health promotion programs and resources are at work across Canada to help people learn how to live healthier lives.
- HSFC leads the Canadian Stroke Strategy, designed to provide all Canadians with the best stroke care possible, regardless of where they live, by 2010, in partnership with the Canadian Stroke Network.
- HSFC is a leader in the development of the Canadian Heart Health Strategy and Action Plan - which is set to be released in 2008.
- HSFC sets the Canadian Guidelines for CPR, defibrillation, and other aspects of emergency cardiovascular care in Canada. HSFC CPR training materials are used across the country to teach Canadians how to save a life.

Advocacy

HSFC undertakes a number of activities to position heart disease and stroke issues (e.g., health research issues & obesity control) with federal parliamentarians. It does this in part through:

- Regular appearances before House of Commons Standing Committees.
- The preparation of briefs and other materials for parliamentarians.