

WATERLOO REGION'S **VitalSigns**[®]

What does your lifestyle say about you?



Many factors influence community health including our ability to access and use health care services. By quitting smoking, drinking in moderation, getting a yearly physical, and by exercising and eating right, we can improve our health and overall well-being.

The third annual **Waterloo Region's Vital Signs** report, a snapshot on the quality of life in our Region released last October, told us that fewer of our residents are eating a healthy diet or exercising and that many of us are still looking for a family physician.

Taking a 'common sense' approach to healthy living is important for us all. That means exercising daily (20 minutes will do it) and eating nutritiously (whole grains, fresh vegetables and fruit, pure protein, and high-fiber foods). The concept can't be simpler.

However, data tells us that only 33% of us eat the suggested five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day. That number has dropped since 2003 when it was 43%.

In addition, obesity rates are up in Waterloo Region. We still have many smokers and less than half of our residents report being at least moderately active.

These numbers are cause for concern and are all leading causes of chronic health problems. And, who do we turn to when we're not feeling well – doctors.

In Waterloo Region, we have roughly 73 family physicians per 100,000 people. These numbers are well below many other communities in Canada and indicate that many of us do not have access to a doctor.

Take charge of your health and keep informed about positive well-being practices in the Region. Activities as simple as taking your dog for a walk, jumping on the trampoline with your kids, or taking the stairs at work can make a big difference.

The 2010 Waterloo Region's Vital Signs report will be released on October 5th. Check out www.wrvitalsigns.ca for more details.

Waterloo Region's Vital Signs is an annual checkup through which **The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation** and the **Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation** measure the vitality of our Region, identify significant trends, and invite community supporters to assign grades in 11 key areas critical to Waterloo Region's quality of life.

Community foundations provide a simple, powerful, and highly personal approach to giving and help others to make a lasting difference in their community.



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