

Lifestyle Tips



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Pedal Power and the Benefits of the Bike



Whether you're going to work, school or the corner store, active transportation is one of the easiest ways to get more activity into your life. And now that the birds are chirping and the winter blahs have lifted, it's an ideal time to bring out your bicycle. Life with pedal power is

simple, enjoyable and fun. There are so many great reasons to don a helmet and hop on a bike to get places:

Cycling is fast

Many people say they don't have time to be active in their busy days, but for distances under five kilometres, Health Canada states that cycling is actually the fastest door-to-door mode of travel.

It's convenient

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, each Canadian makes an average of 2,000 short car trips (less than 3 km) a year—trips that could easily be replaced with an active choice like cycling. More and more, urban plans are incorporating bike lanes and bike racks. Plus, it's a lot easier to find a parking spot for two wheels than four.



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It's cost-effective

It costs an average of \$7,000 per year to own and run a car, but only \$150 a year for a bicycle. Plus, you don't have to pay for parking or a transit pass. And bicycles come in a wide range of prices; you don't need a high-performance bicycle to get around town.

It's good for the environment

Aside from a few beads of sweat on the odd cyclist's brow, bikes don't pollute. If you're trying to respect the environment, riding a bicycle can help reduce your carbon footprint.

It's good for your health

Cycling is great exercise! It's good for your heart, your muscles and your waistline. If you cycled 20 minutes a day to and from work, you could accumulate 100 minutes of moderate-to vigorous-intensity physical activity from Monday to Friday. That's 2/3 of the way to the 150 minutes of activity recommended per week in the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for adults, just through your commute.

It's enjoyable

One of the best parts about cycling to work is that you might really enjoy the trip! A Canadian study says 19 percent of

cyclists found their commute to be the most pleasant activity of their day. Not surprisingly, only two per cent of drivers felt so positive about being behind the wheel.

It's evolving

With bike rental programs in some major Canadian cities, better helmets, cycling route maps and better bike locks, cycling has become a movement more than just an activity. These days, some people equate how bikeable a city is with how liveable it is. When a city has lots of people on two wheels, it's seen as evidence of progress and being "world class." With so many great benefits to bicycling, it's not hard to figure out why!