

Has boomeritis got a hold on you?

By J.C. Carroll

(NC)—Boomeritis is popping up everywhere. Boomeritis, an emerging condition, refers to sports-related injuries suffered by the growing number of baby boomers who are refusing to slow down.



As many as 80 million boomers are the first generation of North Americans who are staying active on their aging frames, leaving themselves open to a number of complaints, from annoying aches and pains to chronic musculoskeletal problems. Boomeritis includes tendonitis, bursitis, and arthritis, alongside many sports-related injuries.

True to form, boomers are an economic behemoth. They are joining health clubs at a stupendous rate – up 135 per cent between 1987 and 2001. In 1998, baby boomers accounted for nearly one-third of all North Americans who participate in bicycling, basketball, baseball, running and other sports. That same year however, studies show they suffered more than one million sports injuries, all of which amounted to more than \$19 billion in medical costs North America-wide.

Flower power forever

It's important that people 45 years of age and older learn to listen to their bodies – and before starting a new exercise program, these boomers should get expert help from a registered professional to help prevent injuries from happening. Here is just a snapshot of tips to lessen your chances of suffering

boomeritis:

- Customize your workouts based on your individual fitness level and goals.
- Find your "weak links" or points of vulnerability. They will need special attention in your workout design.
- If you have muscle, bone, or joint problems consider lower impact aerobic routines and lighter loads with weight training.
- Embrace cross-training for truly balanced fitness. Include aerobic or cardiovascular activities, strength training and stretching.
- Always warm up before exercise or sports.
- Eat foods rich in vitamins and minerals such as vitamin D, calcium and magnesium to keep your bones and joints healthy and strong.
- Learn to listen to your body. If you have problems with aches and pains, see an orthopaedic surgeon and a certified athletic trainer who can help you on the path to recovery.

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Are you an apple or pear?
Why you should take your body shape to heart

(NC)—What can an apple or a pear tell you about your heart health? When applied to your body, it turns out that an apple shape (where fat is concentrated more around the middle section) may be a strong indicator of your risk of developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes. According to the latest research, people who are health conscious would be better off measuring their waist than stepping on a scale.

Yet, many Canadians are still unaware of the link between their body shape and cardiovascular disease. In fact, in a 2005 survey, fewer than one-third of Canadians identified abdominal obesity, as measured by waist circumference, as a risk factor for cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

In general, a healthy waist circumference is considered to be no higher than 88 centimetres for women, and 102 centimetres for men.

People with an apple shape tend to gain weight mainly in the abdominal area, while those with a pear shape tend to gain weight mainly in their hips and buttocks. The excess fat in the abdominal area is what puts people with an "apple" body shape at increased risk. That's because fat cells (or adipose tissue) close to the liver and other major organs are metabolically active and release chemicals that may predispose a person to cardiometabolic complications leading to heart disease or diabetes.

So, take your body shape to heart and start measuring your waist. It could prolong your life.

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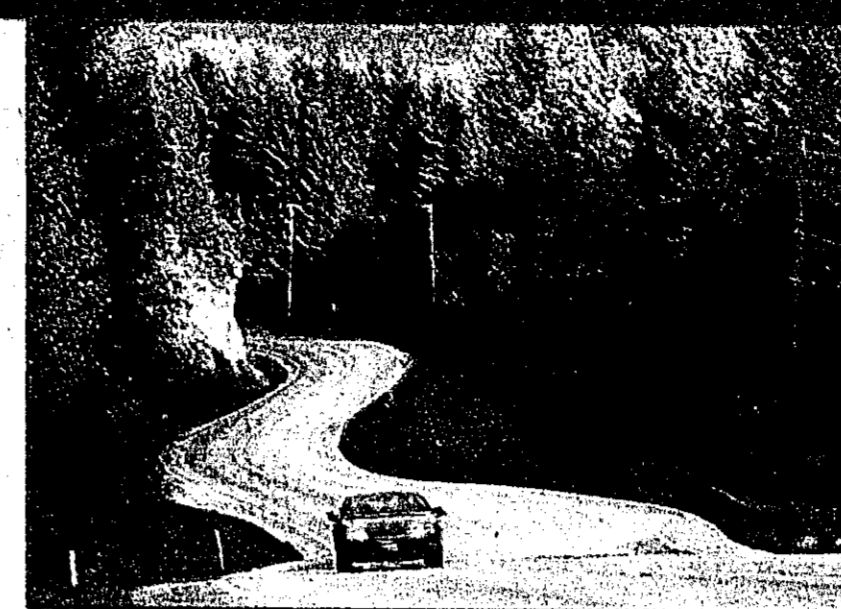
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Get the most out of your gas tank

(NC)—Tired of high gas prices? Some price-conscious drivers are leaving their own cars at home and are renting newer, more fuel-efficient vehicles for work use or weekend travel. Here are some other tips on how to save money while on the road:



- **Don't idle your engine.** Unnecessary idling is one of the biggest problems among Canadian motorists. Idling wastes fuel, is hard on your vehicle and is damaging our environment.
- **Hit the books.** Check the owners manual regarding the vehicle's fuel requirements. Premium, high-octane fuels don't guarantee better performance. In fact, such fuels don't provide any greater fuel efficiency. Many automobiles are designed to use regular low-octane fuel. If your vehicle doesn't require premium or mid-grade fuel, buy the cheaper regular unleaded.
- **Turn off the AC.** Minimizing your use of air conditioning will improve your fuel efficiency. To stay cool at highway speeds, use your car's flow-through ventilation. When driving in the city, open a window.
- **Kill two (or three or four) birds with one stone.** Consolidating trips and errands to cut down on driving time, can eliminate hundreds of miles – and dozens of litres of gas. Combine trips to the dry cleaners, bank, gym, grocery store, etc., in one trip.
- **Lose the weight.** Don't treat your car like a storage locker – extra car weight wastes fuel. Try removing your winter ski racks that increase your vehicle's aerodynamic drag or cleaning out the piles in your trunk and back seat.

Little things really add up

(NC)—Often, the fine line between the small business doldrums and a business that's booming is the entrepreneur who pays extra attention to the people in the workplace.

- Send handwritten thank you notes to your customers, prospects, and colleagues.
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