



HEALTHY CANADA by design



Welcome Remarks

Gaining Ground Pre-Conference Walkability Workshop

Vancouver, October 4, 2010

Dr. John Carsley, Vancouver Coastal Health

**Welcome, and
Why is this work important?**



A growing body of evidence has demonstrated a link between health and the built environment

Example:

A recent study found that for every 5% improvement in the walkability of a neighbourhood, adults who reside there tend to walk and cycle 32% more, have a lower body mass index and enjoy reduced pollution from automobiles.¹



¹Lawrence D. Frank *et al.* (2006). "Many Pathways from Land Use to Health: Associations between Neighbourhood Walkability and Active Transportation, Body Mass Index, and Air Quality." *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Volume 72, Issue 1, p. 75-87.

Chronic illnesses such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes have become primary health concerns.



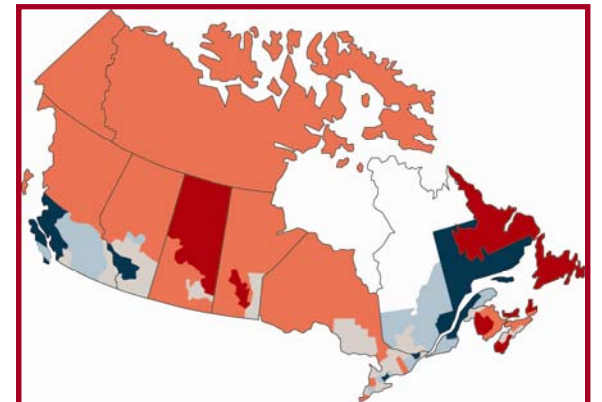
Consider the case of **cancer**:

- Leading cause of premature death in Canada
- **40% of women and 45% of men** will develop cancer in their lifetime
- An estimated 1 out of 4 Canadians are expected to die from cancer
- The proportion of cancers that are preventable is estimated at 50%
- Modifiable risk factors include smoking, excess weight, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating



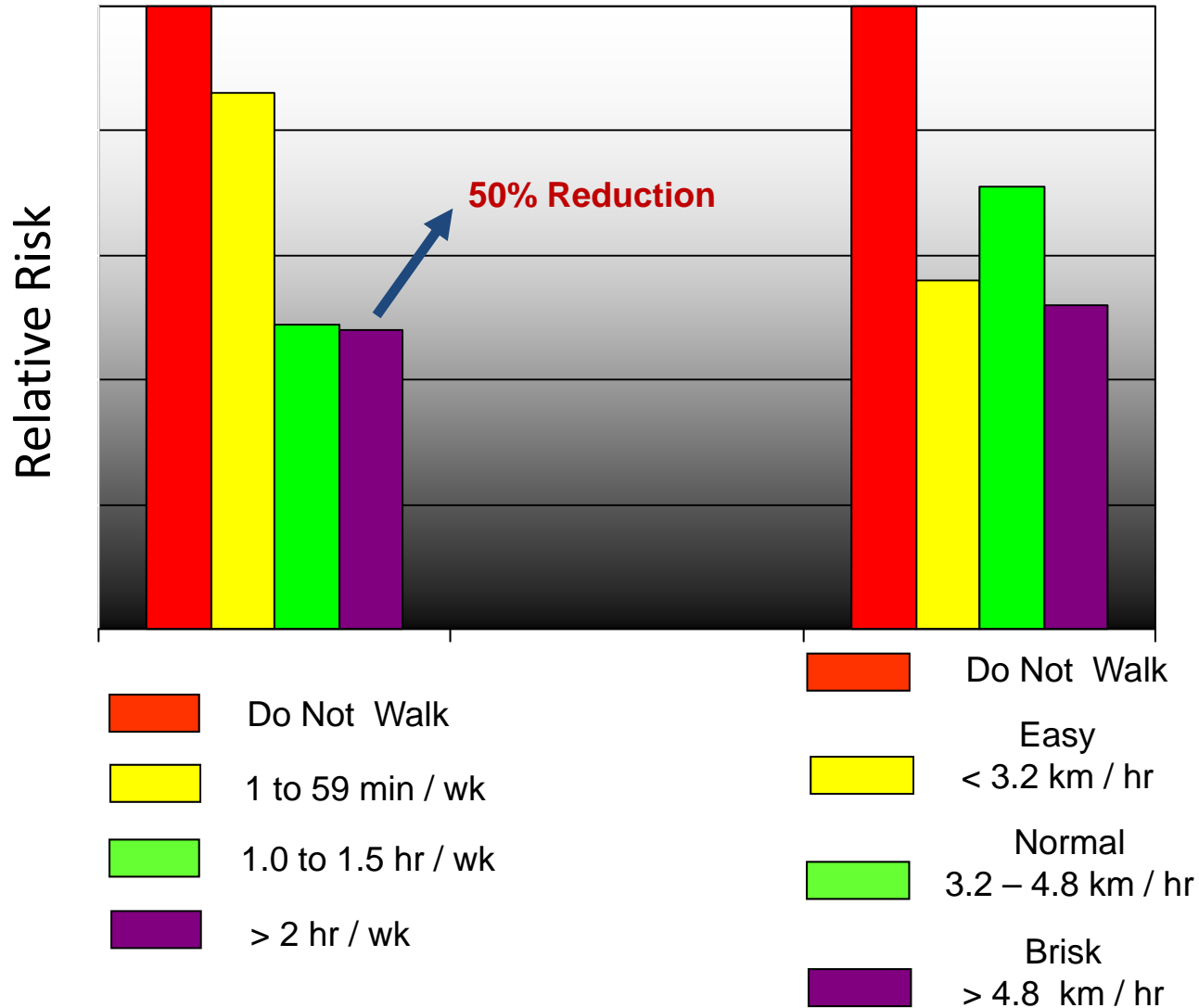
Consider the case of **cardiovascular disease**:

- Responsible for 32.1 % of deaths in Canada
- Leading cause of hospitalizations and drug costs in Canada
- Responsible for an estimated \$22b/year in direct costs (health care) and indirect costs (lost productivity)
- **80% of CVD is preventable**
- Modifiable risk factors include unhealthy eating, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity, smoking, type two diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, stress

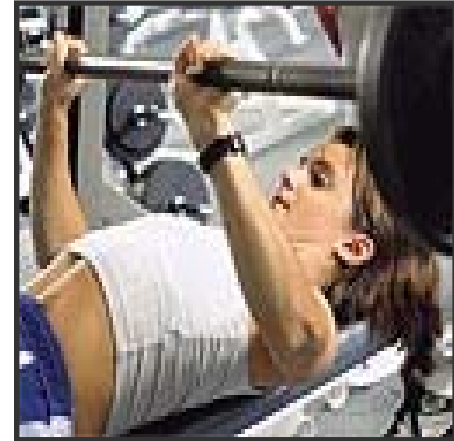


Walking, Walking Pace and Risk of CHD in Women

Lee et al. JAMA 285(11): 1447, 2001.



Exercise and Physical Activity are Not the Same



Physical activity = the way we move and get around - 'unstructured' activity

The way we design our communities influences risk factors :

- Physical activity
- Air quality
- Road safety
- Social capital
- Stress
- Food
- Heat and shade



Public health officials across Canada have taken notice of the **links between health and the built environment**, and have to started to take action.

However, there have been few attempts to unite these efforts under a strategic, integrated network of analysis and action.





HEALTHY **CANADA** by design



An initiative of:



Together, we are:

1) **Piloting different approaches** to translating the latest research in this field into state-of-the-art tools to support policy-makers and practitioners in creating healthier built environments.

2) **Exchanging knowledge**, lessons learned and looking for opportunities to adapt practices from one city or region to another.

3) **Cultivating the building of a cross-sectoral community of practice.**



- A framework to integrate health background studies into the development application review process;
- A software tool to evaluate the extent to which proposed developments either promote or hinder public health;
- An analysis of consumer demand for more walkable residential developments;
- A synthesis of the latest Canadian research on health and the built environment;
- A workshop kit to facilitate knowledge and stakeholder engagement around built environment issues in communities across the country;
- Results of the evaluation of grassroots initiatives to promote green, more walkable neighbourhoods;
- A training & technical assistance program and evaluation to support BC UPHN Health Authorities in promoting healthy built environments.
- And, more!



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