

THE FOUNDATION OF A HEALTHY COMMUNITY



# vim& VIGOUR

WINTER 2011

**Baby Spotlight!**  
A Donor Wall  
Features New  
Arrivals

**BIKERS  
SHOW THEIR  
GENEROUS  
SPIRIT**

**A Story of a  
Young Man's  
Courage  
and Grace**

CELEBRATING  
HEALTHCARE  
HEROES  
IN OUR  
COMMUNITY  
page 54



## *Champions in Health*

World-class skaters

**TESSA VIRTUE** and

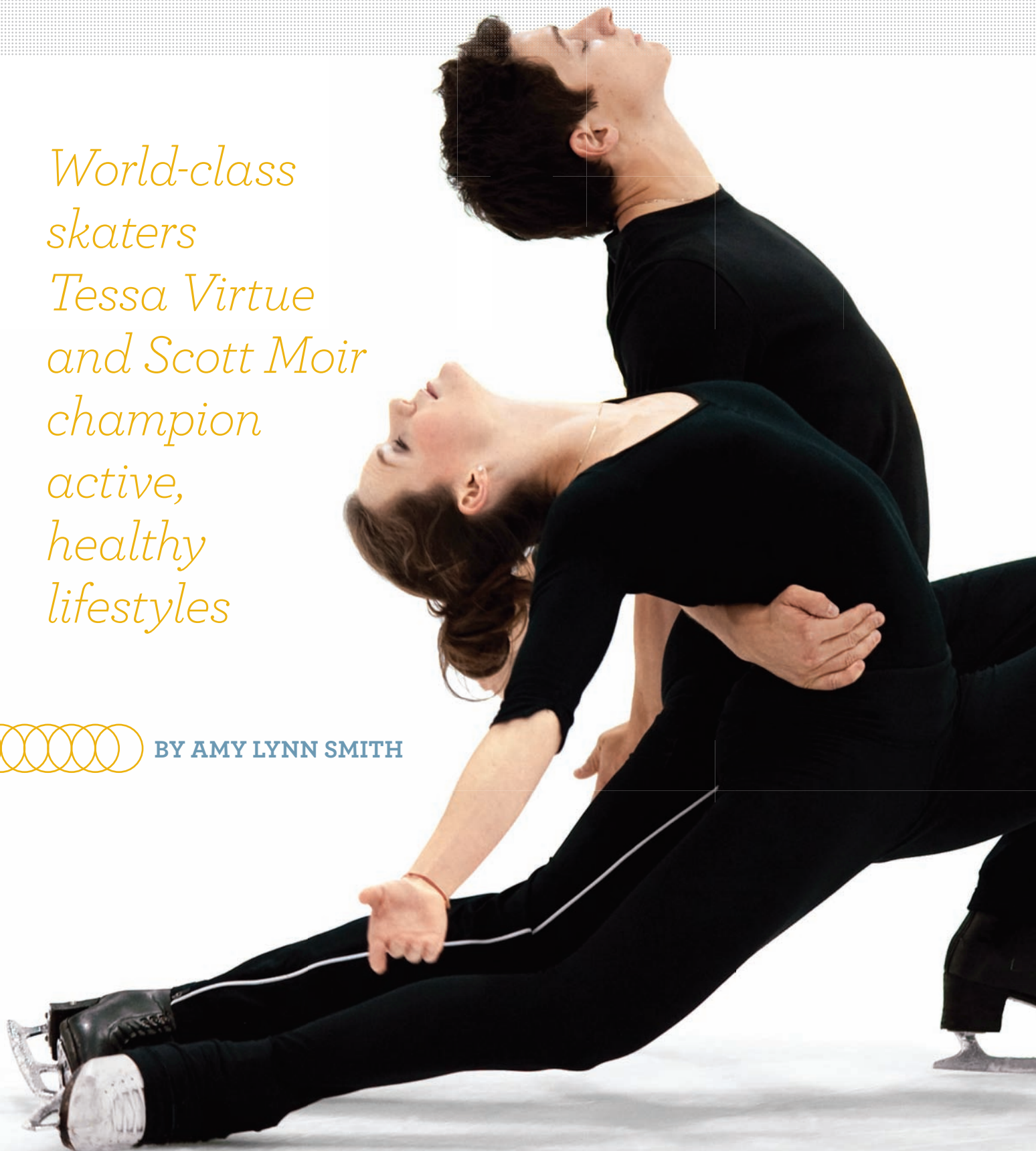
**SCOTT MOIR** exhibit

active, healthy lifestyles

*World-class  
skaters  
Tessa Virtue  
and Scott Moir  
champion  
active,  
healthy  
lifestyles*

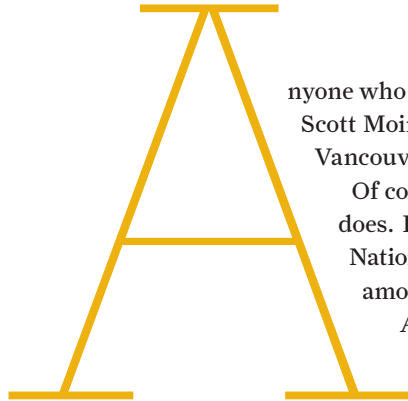


BY AMY LYNN SMITH





# GOLD- MEDAL ROLE MODELS



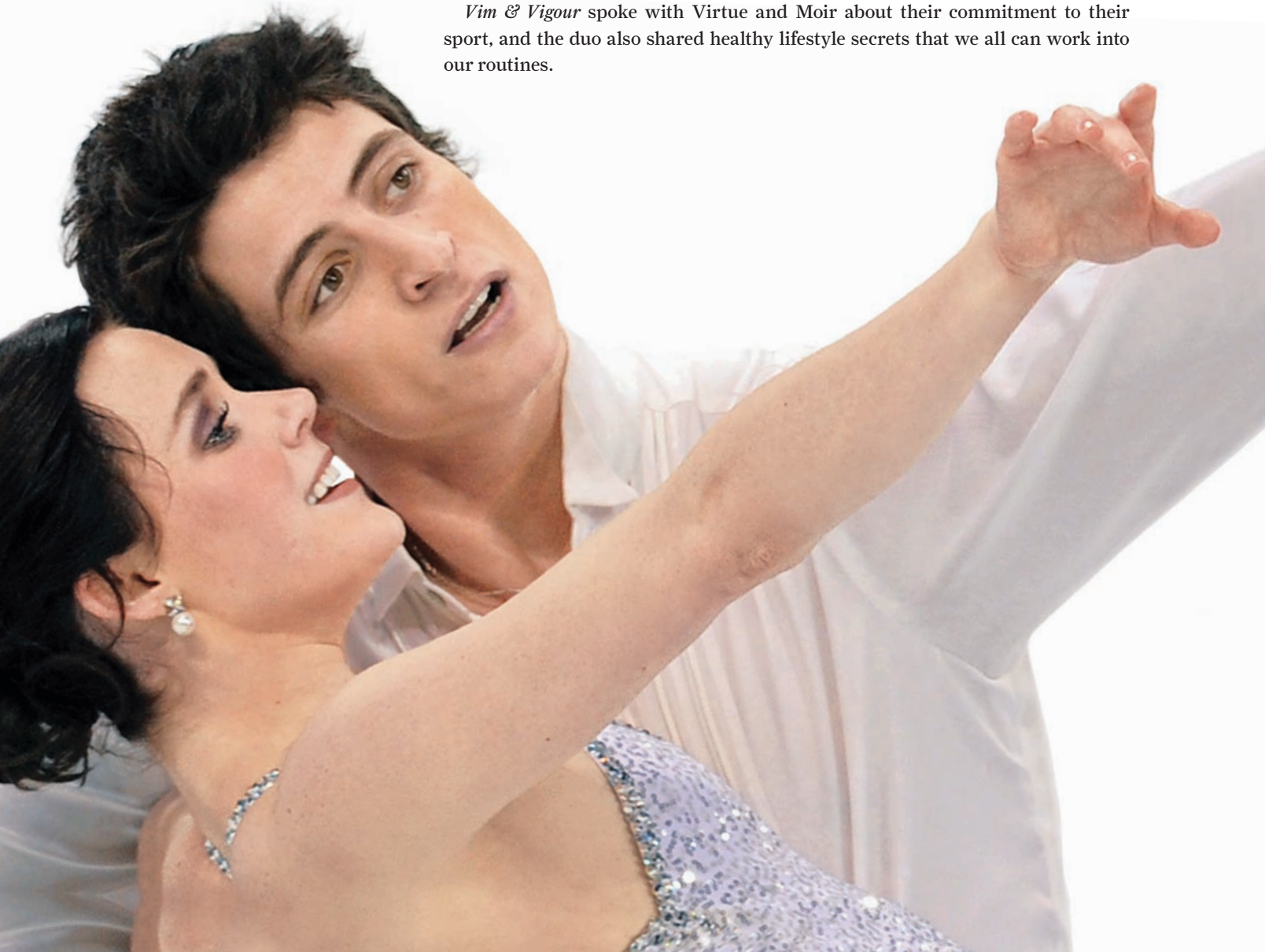
nyone who saw the exquisite skating program that earned Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir the gold medal for ice dancing at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver marvelled at their grace, athleticism and talent.

Of course, these skills are required to skate at the level this young duo does. In addition to their gold medal, they are the 2008-10 Canadian National champions, 2010 World champions, and runners-up for 2011, among many other achievements.

Although most Canadians aren't training for world-class athletics before they qualify for a driver's licence, everyone can get a healthy start.

"Habits that are formed at a young age are most likely to be maintained through life," says Dr. Ron Wilson, a family physician in Vancouver and a member of the College of Family Physicians of Canada. "It's much easier to develop good habits than to change bad habits into good ones."

*Vim & Vigour* spoke with Virtue and Moir about their commitment to their sport, and the duo also shared healthy lifestyle secrets that we all can work into our routines.



## AN EARLY START

Even if they weren't world-class skaters, there's a good chance Virtue and Moir would be just as fit and healthy anyway. The love of sport and smart lifestyle choices runs in both their families.

"I was lucky enough to grow up with fantastic role models around me," says the 22-year-old Virtue. "Both my parents are extremely active and healthy."

The youngest of four children, Virtue says it's "remarkable" to look back at her family's calendar from when she was young.

"Whether it was soccer or baseball, hockey, football, gymnastics, ballet—you name it, we were doing it all," she says. "It was ingrained in me from a young age to be active and take care of my body."

Moir, who is 24, grew up in much the same environment, with an athletic family who supported his aspirations. Because he started skating at a young age—and working with Virtue when he was 10 and she was eight—Moir spent much of his free time at the ice rink.

"Even though we were working hard to prepare, we were pretty normal kids," he says. "We had all the childhood experiences everyone does, plus playing on as many sports teams as we could."

## FAMILIES THAT PLAY TOGETHER

For Virtue and Moir, winning an Olympic gold medal was literally a childhood dream come true.

Wilson emphasizes the importance of parents setting the example, just as Virtue's and Moir's parents did. "Modelling good habits is the number-one way to instill them into young people," Wilson explains.

Parents who are physically active and eat healthfully are role models to their children, he says, and making exercise and good dietary habits a family affair is ideal. Try planning healthy family activities, such as going cross-country skiing together and returning to a pot of soup everyone made earlier in the day.

Wilson, who has five grown children, says they used to do relay races as a family, each taking a leg of an 80- to 100-kilometre race.

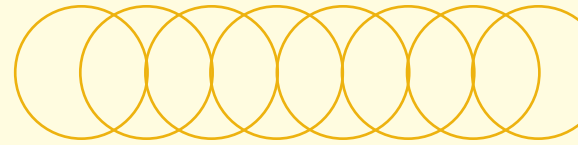
"It's a lot of fun and great satisfaction to do those kinds of things together," he says. "And now we see our grandkids starting to be physically active, which is great."

What's more, Wilson himself proves that good habits established early last a lifetime. He carried the Olympic torch during the relay leading up to the opening ceremonies, as part of the British Columbia Medical Association team.

## A PASSION FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Obviously, Olympic-calibre athletes like Virtue and Moir don't have a shortage of exercise in their day, especially when they're training. For an event like the Olympics or the World Figure Skating Championships that were held in Moscow earlier this year, they're on the ice four or five hours a day.

Still, they enjoy other forms of physical activity even during their downtime. Virtue is a fan of Pilates, and Moir likes to get outdoors as



## Follow the Leaders: New Activity Guidelines

Revised physical activity guidelines for Canadians were released in January 2011, and you may be surprised to learn how they've changed.

"The recommended amount of exercise has actually been reduced," says Dr. Ron Wilson, a family physician and member of the College of Family Physicians of Canada. "They wanted to make it more attainable, to encourage people to be more physically active."

The recommendations developed by the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (with support from the Public Health Agency of Canada) are as follows:

- **Children and youths five to 17 years old:** At least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity every day.
- **Adults 18 and older:** At least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity per week, in sessions of 10 minutes or more.

Moderate-intensity activity creates a little sweat and causes you to breathe harder. With vigorous-intensity activity, you'll sweat even more and be out of breath. The recommendations also suggest including, at least three times a week, activities that strengthen muscles and bones.



*“We have to make sure we’re feeding our bodies with the right fuel, including lots of protein.”*

much as he can, jogging or playing golf during the warmer months. He also loves playing ice hockey, but doesn’t do it during the figure skating season because of the risk of injury.

Of course, most Canadians don’t have four or five hours a day to devote to exercise. And that’s OK, says Wilson. The current recommendation is that kids get about 60 minutes of physical activity per day and adults get 20 to 30 minutes per day.

Many schools will provide kids with 30 minutes of physical activity per day, and getting another 30 minutes after school is an achievable goal. Even getting to school on foot or by bike, with the appropriate safety precautions, helps kids meet the daily recommendation. For adults, getting in 10-minute snippets throughout the day to work up to the recommended total is a good way to make time for exercise.

“You don’t have to be vigorously active,” Wilson says. “Moderate activity is sufficient to gain most of the benefits of being physically active.”

## HEALTHY APPETITES

Because they’re extremely active, especially when training, Virtue and Moir eat more calories than the average person needs. But they still adhere to a balanced, healthy diet.

"We have to make sure we're feeding our bodies with the right fuel, including lots of protein," Virtue says.

She loves fruits and vegetables, so she eats a lot of them. Virtue tends to stick with lean protein like chicken and turkey. In fact, she didn't eat red meat until her 20th birthday, when she decided to have a steak.

"My body must have been craving iron or something," she laughs. "So now I'll have it every once in a while."

Virtue also confesses a love of chocolate and dessert, which she doesn't deny herself completely. "If I did, I'd just go crazy and then one day eat a ton of chocolate bars," she says. "So I treat myself. It's just everything in moderation."

Moir adheres to a similar diet, indulging in red meat once a week as a reward. "We put in our bodies what makes us feel good, and that's always been our stand on the nutrition side of things," he says. "When we don't eat well we can feel it in our bodies. You have to give your body what it needs to run properly."

Wilson says eating more fruits and vegetables is an excellent choice for anyone. Opting for foods low in fat and salt is another smart move, as is limiting sugar-sweetened drinks to no more than one a day.

He also thinks it's important for families to sit down to eat together as often as possible. "It's not only a great time to find out what's going on in everybody's life," Wilson explains, "but it's a way for parents to set the example of good nutrition."

## THE GOLD STANDARD

As in every aspect of life, it's up to parents to be the role models for their children. That being said, it's never too late to start changing bad habits into good ones, even in adulthood. Making small changes can lead to big results.

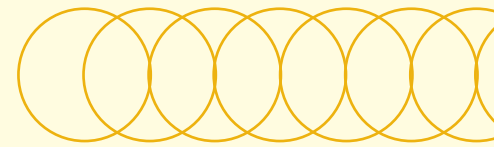
And for kids and adults alike, the shining example of accomplished, dedicated athletes like Virtue and Moir can serve as inspiration—making them role models in their own right.

"It's scary that more Canadians are inside playing video games than are outside exploring our country or taking advantage of organized sport," Moir says. "We'd like to see as many Canadians involved in sport as possible, living a healthy, active lifestyle and doing things that make Canadians great." **V&V**

INTERACTIVE

## Free Activities to Keep Kids Healthy

Want to know more about starting kids off on a healthy path? Visit Active Healthy Kids Canada at **www.activehealthykids.ca** to find great information and resources, including an interactive activity challenge.



## Don't Just Sit and Watch

There are plenty of reasons people don't get enough exercise. But too much screen time is an increasingly significant concern. In fact, it's an alarming trend, says Dr. Ron Wilson, of the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

"There is good evidence that people who spend time on the screen—be it computer, smart phones or TV—are not as healthy as those who don't," he says.

Experts recommend that children limit recreational screen time, which includes television, computer and video games, to no more than two hours a day. For children who are spending more than two hours a day in front of a screen, it's fine to reduce their screen time in increments to meet the guidelines.

It's interesting to note that hosting the Olympics in Vancouver didn't motivate Canadians to be more active, says Wilson, whether they attended in person or watched on TV.

"Kids who are already physically active might choose to become more involved in some of the Olympic activities," he says, "but by and large it has not translated into getting the general population more active."