

Canadian Community Health Survey, 2013

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, June 12, 2014

New data from the 2013 Canadian Community Health Survey show that roughly one in five youths aged 12 to 17 reported height and weight that classified them as overweight or obese.

The survey results also show important shifts in the health and behaviour of the Canadian population. For example, 55.2% of Canadians aged 12 and older in 2013 (16.1 million) reported that they were at least "moderately active" during their leisure time, a level equivalent to a 30-minute daily walk or taking an hour-long exercise class, at least three times a week. This was an increase from 53.9% in 2012.

Overweight and obese youth

In 2013, 20.7% of youths reported a height and weight that classified them as overweight or obese. This rate has remained relatively stable since 2008, but is still higher than the 18.7% reported for this group in 2007. Excess weight in childhood has been linked to a number of physical and emotional health issues.

Being overweight or obese, however, did not appear to affect the activity level of these 12-to-17-year-olds. Among the group who reported excess weight, 70.9% reported being at least moderately physically active in leisure time, not significantly different from the 75.0% of youths who were not overweight or obese. (For more information, see "[Overweight and obese youths \(self-reported\), 2013.](#)")

Overweight and obese adults

The rates of adults who reported height and weight that classified them as overweight in 2013 were 41.9% for men and 27.7% for women. The percentage of men who were overweight was about the same as in 2012, while the rate among women has been stable since 2003.

In 2013, 18.8% of Canadians aged 18 and older, roughly 4.9 million adults, reported height and weight that classified them as obese. The rate of obesity among men rose from 18.7% in 2012 to 20.1% in 2013. Among women, the rate of obesity in 2013 (17.4%) was almost the same as in 2012.

In total, 62.0% of men (8.8 million) and 45.1% of women (5.8 million) in Canada were classified as either overweight or obese. For men, the combined rate in 2013 was significantly higher than in 2012, while the rate of overweight and obese women has remained stable since 2010. (For more information, see "[Overweight and obese adults \(self-reported\), 2013.](#)")

High blood pressure

In 2013, 17.7% (5.3 million) Canadians aged 12 and older reported a diagnosis of high blood pressure. This year marks the first significant increase since 2009, when the rate was 16.9%.

Weight was also a factor in the rates of high blood pressure, as those classified as obese according to the Health Canada guidelines on body mass index were twice as likely to have high blood pressure as those who were not obese.

High blood pressure rates increased by age group for both males and females, with the highest rates reported among those aged 75 and older. (For more information, see "[High blood pressure, 2013.](#)")

Physical activity

Among the 16.1 million moderately active Canadians, the most popular leisure-time activity was walking, as 72.4% reported walking during leisure time in the three months preceding the survey. Gardening, home exercise, jogging or running, swimming and bicycling were also popular activities. (For more information, see "[Physical activity during leisure time, 2013.](#)")



Fruit and vegetable consumption

In 2013, 40.8% (roughly 11.5 million) of Canadians aged 12 and older reported having consumed fruit and vegetables five or more times per day. This rate has been unchanged since 2011.

Females continued to be more likely than males to eat fruit and vegetables five or more times a day. In 2013, 47.4% of females (6.8 million) consumed fruit and vegetables five or more times daily, compared with 34.0% of males (4.7 million). (For more information, see "[Fruit and vegetable consumption, 2013](#).")

Heavy drinking

In 2013, 18.9% (5.5 million) of Canadians aged 12 and over reported alcohol consumption that classified them as heavy drinkers. The highest rates of heavy drinking for both sexes were among those aged 18 to 34.

Heavy drinking refers to having consumed five or more drinks per occasion at least once a month during the year preceding the survey for males. The same definition was used in the survey for females between 2001 and 2012. Starting in 2013, the limit for females was reduced to four or more drinks per occasion at least once a month. Heavy drinking was reported by 24.5% of males and 13.4% of females in 2013. For males, the rate was about the same as in 2012 (24.3%), but down from 26.8% in 2011. (For more information, see "[Heavy drinking, 2013](#).")

Smoking

Almost one in five (or roughly 5.7 million) Canadians aged 12 and older were daily or occasional smokers in 2013. The rates were 22.1% for males and 16.5% for females.

The proportion of Canadians who smoked either daily or occasionally remained similar to 2012 levels. Of the 5.7 million smokers in 2013, about three-quarters smoked cigarettes on a daily basis; however, more than half of this group were considered light smokers, consuming 14 or less cigarettes per day.

In 2013, males were more likely to be heavy or moderate smokers—smoking 15 or more cigarettes per day—while females were more likely to be light smokers. (For more information, see "[Smoking, 2013](#).")

Note to readers

This release presents data from the 2013 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), featuring information on more than 30 health indicators, including perceived health, smoking, exposure to second-hand smoke at home, access to a regular medical doctor (family doctor or specialist), physical activity during leisure time, obesity, high blood pressure, heavy drinking, fruit and vegetable consumption, diabetes, asthma, arthritis and perceived life stress.

The CCHS is an ongoing survey that collects a wide range of information about the health status of Canadians, factors determining their health status and their use of health care services. Results are released on an annual basis. About 65,000 respondents were interviewed for the survey in 2013.

Data for all indicators are available at the national, provincial and territorial level, as well as for the 110 health regions across Canada.

Residents of Indian reserves, health care institutions and some remote areas as well as full-time members of the Canadian Forces were excluded. The CCHS covers 90% of private households in Yukon, 97% in the Northwest Territories and 92% in Nunavut.

Available in CANSIM: tables [105-0501](#) and [105-0503](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3226](#).

For more statistics and analysis on the health of Canadians and the health care system, visit the [Health in Canada](#) module, accessible from our website's home page, under *Features*.

The fact sheets "[High blood pressure, 2013](#)," "[Overweight and obese youths \(self-reported\), 2013](#)," "[Fruit and vegetable consumption, 2013](#)," "[Overweight and obese adults \(self-reported\), 2013](#)," "[Physical activity during leisure time, 2013](#)," "[Smoking, 2013](#)" and "[Heavy drinking, 2013](#)," from the publication *Health Fact Sheets (82-625-X)*, are now available from the *Browse by Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*

The following *Health Fact Sheets (82-625-X)* are also now available: "[Access to a regular medical doctor, 2013](#)," "[Asthma, 2013](#)," "[Diabetes, 2013](#)," "[Perceived life stress, 2013](#)," "[Arthritis, 2013](#)," "[Perceived health, 2013](#)" and "[Exposure to second-hand smoke at home, 2013](#)."

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).