

Study: Social determinants of health for the off-reserve First Nations population aged 15 years and older, 2012

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In 2012, off-reserve First Nations people aged 15 years and older were more likely to report poor health outcomes compared with the total Canadian population.

Over 60% of First Nations people reported being diagnosed with at least one chronic condition, compared with 49% of the total Canadian population. About half (49%) of First Nations people rated their general health as very good or excellent, compared with 62% of the total population. In turn, 60% reported their mental health as very good or excellent, compared with 72% of the entire population.

The findings, taken from a new study, "[Social determinants of health for the off-reserve First Nations population, 15 years of age and older, 2012](#)," are based on data from the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey and the 2012 Canadian Community Health Survey. The study examines the relationship between health outcomes and various social, economic and cultural factors.

Living in a house in need of major repairs and food insecurity are predictors of poor health outcomes for First Nations

After controlling for other factors, 70% of First Nations people who lived in a house in need of major repairs had at least one chronic condition, compared with 62% of those who lived in a house in need of minor or no repairs.

Higher incidences of fair or poor self-rated general and mental health were also reported by those who lived in a house in need of major repairs. Fair or poor self-rated general health was reported by 27% of those living in a house requiring major repairs, compared with 21% for those living in a house that required minor or no repairs. For self-rated mental health, the corresponding percentages were 18% and 13%.

Food security refers to the ability to access adequate and suitable food. Off-reserve First Nations people who experienced food insecurity were significantly more likely to report being diagnosed with at least one chronic condition and more likely to report fair or poor self-rated general and mental health compared with those who were food secure.

Other social factors were found to predict poor health outcomes among the off-reserve First Nations population aged 15 and older, including daily smoking, unemployment, having unmet health care needs and having no one to turn to for support in a time of need.



Note to readers

The Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) is a national survey on the social and economic conditions of Aboriginal peoples (First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit) aged six years and older. The 2012 APS represents the fourth cycle of the survey and focuses on topics related to education, employment and health.

The population living on reserves, in health care institutions and in some remote areas, as well as full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces were excluded.

The article, "Social determinants of health for the off-reserve First Nations population, 15 years of age and older, 2012," examines the relationship between social determinants of health and self-rated general health, self-rated mental health and having at least one chronic condition. Multivariate analysis was conducted to test the association between the social determinants of health and selected health outcomes using a logistic regression model.

The chronic conditions covered by the APS are the following: asthma, allergies (food/digestive, respiratory and other allergies), arthritis, bronchitis, diabetes, learning disability, attention deficit disorder (with or without hyperactivity), mental health issues, autism, speech/language difficulties, developmental disability, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, tuberculosis, high blood pressure, chronic bronchitis / emphysema / chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease, intestinal or stomach ulcers, bowel disorders, mood disorder, anxiety disorder, and other long-term conditions.

The chronic conditions covered by the Canadian Community Health Survey are the following: asthma, arthritis, back problems excluding fibromyalgia and arthritis, high blood pressure, migraine headaches, chronic bronchitis, emphysema or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, effects of a stroke, bowel disorder, Alzheimer's disease or other dementia, mood disorder, and anxiety disorder.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [3226](#), [3250](#) and [5178](#).

The article "[Social determinants of health for the off-reserve First Nations population, 15 years of age and older, 2012](#)" is now available in the publication *Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2012* ([89-653-X](#)). From the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, choose *Publications*.

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