

# Health Reports: Unperceived hearing loss among Canadians aged 40 to 79

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Many Canadians are unaware that they have experienced some level of hearing loss. Based on audiometric testing, an estimated 54% of Canadians aged 40 to 79 (8.2 million) have at least mild hearing loss in the high-frequency range, but 77% of them (6.3 million) had not perceived any loss of hearing.

This is one of the findings from a new study released today in *Health Reports*, that uses data from two cycles of the Canadian Health Measures Survey to estimate the prevalence of audiometrically measured hearing loss and self-reported hearing status, and to examine the characteristics of the population with unperceived hearing loss.

Unperceived hearing loss was more common among individuals whose measured loss was in one ear (86%) rather than in both ears (74%) and more common in those whose measured hearing loss was mild (93%) rather than moderate to profound (65%).

When age, sex and severity of hearing loss were taken into account, the odds of having unperceived hearing loss were 60% higher among individuals who had never worked in a noisy environment, compared with those who had.

For people who had experienced tinnitus (e.g., ringing in the ears), the odds of having unperceived hearing loss were 50% less than those who had never had tinnitus.

Men were more likely than women to have unperceived hearing loss when age and hearing loss severity were taken into account.

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## Note to readers

*Data were collected from 2012 to 2015 as part of the Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS). The study sample was composed of respondents aged 40 to 79 with valid audiometric results for both ears (sample size = 3,964). Unperceived hearing loss was defined by four criteria: audiometrically measured hearing loss, no self-reported hearing impairment, no hearing aid(s), and no history of a hearing problem diagnosis.*

*Two cycles of the CHMS included audiometric evaluation, which is considered to be the gold standard for measuring hearing acuity.*



**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5071](#).**

The study "[Unperceived hearing loss among Canadians aged 40 to 79](#)" is now available in the August 2019 online issue of *Health Reports*, Vol. 30, no. 8 ([82-003-X](#)).

This issue of *Health Reports* also contains the article "[Accelerometer-measured moderate-to-vigorous physical activity of Canadian adults, 2007 to 2017](#)."

To enquire about "Unperceived hearing loss among Canadians aged 40 to 79," contact Didier Garriguet ([didier.garriguet@canada.ca](mailto:didier.garriguet@canada.ca)), Health Analysis Division.

To enquire about "Accelerometer-measured moderate-to-vigorous physical activity of Canadian adults, 2007 to 2017," contact Rachel Colley ([rachel.colley@canada.ca](mailto:rachel.colley@canada.ca)), Health Analysis Division.

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