

Health Fact Sheets

Fruit and vegetable consumption, 2017

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Health Fact Sheets

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Fruit and vegetable consumption, 2017

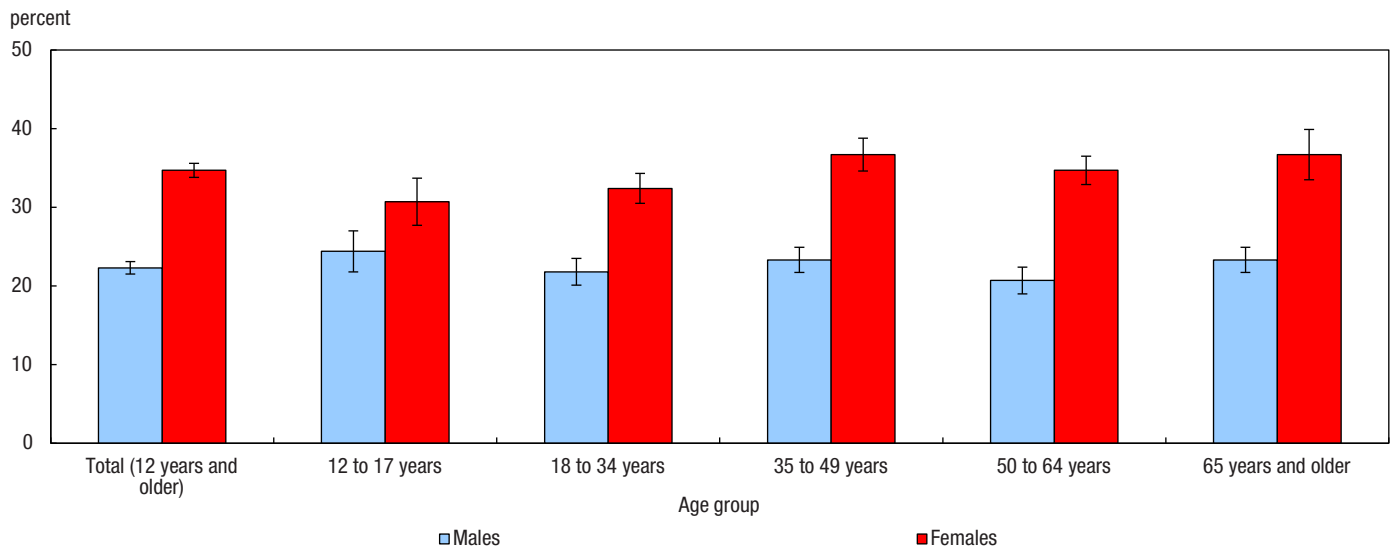
Fruit and vegetable consumption provides an important source of vitamins, minerals and fiber, which may reduce the risk of heart disease and some types of cancer.¹

In 2017, 28.6% of Canadians aged 12 and older (roughly 8.3 million people) reported that they had consumed fruits and vegetables five or more times per day.^{2 3 4} Since 2015, the proportion of Canadians reporting that they have consumed fruits and vegetables five or more times per day has been decreasing (31.5% in 2015 and 30.0% in 2016).⁵

Females were more likely than males to report consuming fruits and vegetables five or more times per day (34.7%, 22.3%). The proportion of females aged 12 and older who reported that they had consumed fruits and vegetables five or more times per day declined between 2016 and 2017 (36.9%, 34.7%), while the proportion for males remained stable.

In 2017, consumption of fruit and vegetables among females was lower among 12 to 17 year olds (30.7%) compared to those aged 35 and older (Chart 1). Conversely for males, most age groups were similar in reported fruit and vegetable consumption.

Chart 1 Fruit and vegetable consumption, five or more times per day, by age group and sex, population aged 12 and older, Canada, 2017



Note: Indicates the usual number of times (frequency) per day a person reported eating fruits and vegetables. Measure does not take into account the amount consumed.

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2017.

Comparisons by province indicated that Quebec had the highest proportion of residents who reported eating fruits and vegetables at least five times daily (34.5%). Less than 1 in 5 (18.3%) respondents in Newfoundland and Labrador reported consuming fruits and vegetables five times a day.

In 2017, Canadians who reported living in food secure households were more likely to report consuming fruit and vegetables five or more times per day (29.5%) than those in moderately or severely food insecure households (21.2%, 19.3%).⁶

Research has shown that increased sedentary time is associated with unhealthy dietary behaviours.⁷ The proportion of Canadians reporting they consumed fruits and vegetables five or more times per day decreased as the reported amount of screen time⁸ increased. Canadians aged 12 and over were more likely to report consuming fruit and vegetables five or more times per day when they reported less than four hours of screen time per day (31.6%) than if they reported six hours or more (17.7%).

For analysis of fruit and vegetable consumption with other healthy behaviours see the [‘Healthy Behaviours’](#) Fact Sheet.

References

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Data

Additional data from the Canadian Community Health Survey are available from table [13-10-0096-01](#).

Notes

1. Pérez, C.E. 2002. [Fruit and vegetable consumption](#). *Health Reports*. Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 82-003. Vol. 13, no. 3. (accessed July 4, 2018).
2. Estimates in this article referring to the national average or Canada rate exclude the territories. This is because the coverage of the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) in 2017 does not represent the entire population of the territories. Only half of the communities in the territories were visited in 2017, and the other half in 2018 so analyses based on the territories are only available for two year cycles of the CCHS (e.g. 2017-2018).
3. Fruit and vegetable consumption data are based on survey questions that measure the number of times respondents reported that they consumed fruit and vegetables, rather than the actual quantity consumed.
4. There is some debate on how to define and measure fruit and vegetable intake. Some research excludes potatoes and pure fruit juice from the calculation due to the potential decreased nutritive value compared to other fruits and vegetables. When pure fruit juice and potatoes are excluded from the 2017 estimate, 19.8% of Canadians reported consuming fruits and vegetables five or more times per day.
5. In this article when two estimates are said to be different this indicates that the difference was statistically significant at a 95% confidence level (p-value less than 5%).
6. Based on a set of questions about the ability of households to afford the purchase of sufficient nutritious food and it captures three kinds of situations: food secure, moderately food insecure, or severely food insecure.
7. Pearson, N., and S.J.H. Biddle. 2011. [Sedentary behaviour and dietary intake in children, adolescents and adults: A systematic review](#). *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 41(2), 178 –188. (accessed August 17, 2018).
8. Screen time is based on a question in the CCHS that asked respondents to report the amount of time spent (on a day that was not a school or work day) watching television or a screen on any device while sitting or lying down.

For more information on the Canadian Community Health Survey, please contact Statistics Canada's Statistical Information Service (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; STATCAN.infostats-infostats@STATCAN@canada.ca).