

Health Fact Sheet

Healthy Behaviours, 2017

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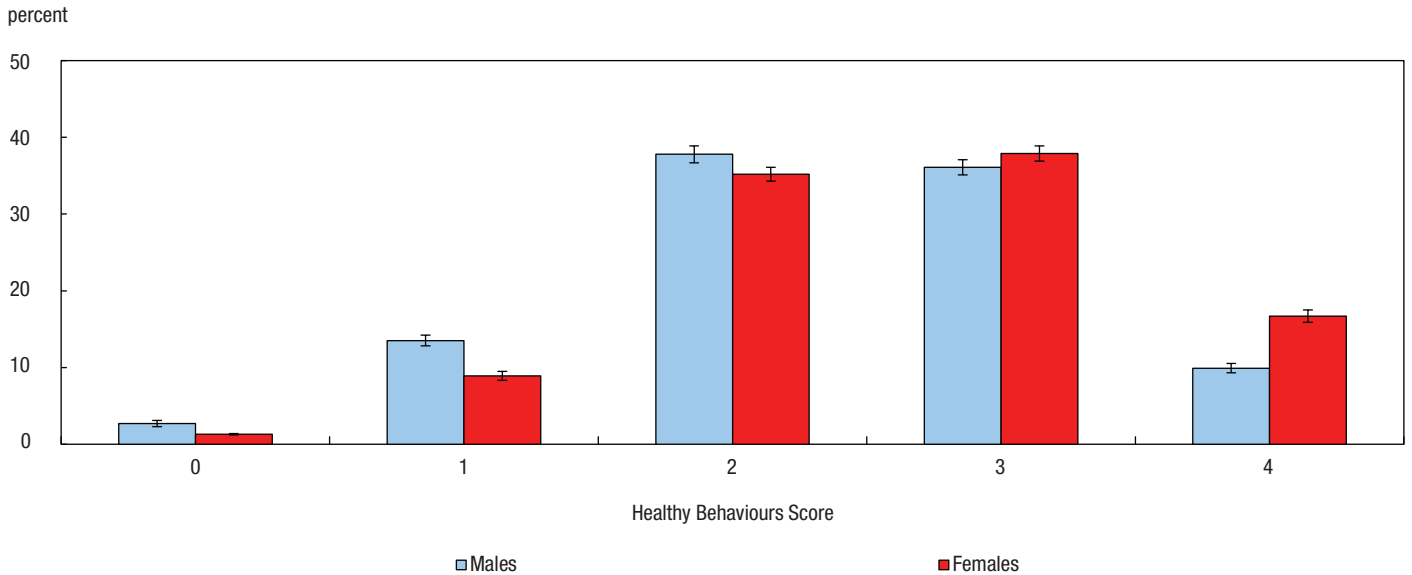
The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) collects information on the various health behaviours of Canadians. This article combines four indicators of health behaviour into a single score, called the Healthy Behaviours Score (HBS), which counts the number of healthy behaviours an individual has (smoking, drinking, physical activity, and frequency of fruit and vegetable consumption). A score of 1 or 0 is given depending on whether the reported behaviour is healthy or not. The HBS varies from 0 to 4 depending on the number of healthy behaviours reported.

As an example, an individual who was a current smoker (0), physically active for at least 150 minutes in the week (1), not a heavy drinker (1), and eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day (1) would have a score of 3 (0+1+1+1).

In 2017, 50.4% of Canadians aged 18 and older (roughly 13.4 million people) had an HBS of 3 or 4, indicating a higher level of engagement with healthy behaviours.¹

Overall, women were more likely than men to have a score of 3 or 4 (54.6% of women, compared to 46.0% of men).² The difference in the HBS between the sexes was attributable to the higher likelihood of men to be smokers or heavy drinkers and the higher likelihood of women to eat fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day. These differences were somewhat offset by a higher rate of physical activity among men (Chart 1).

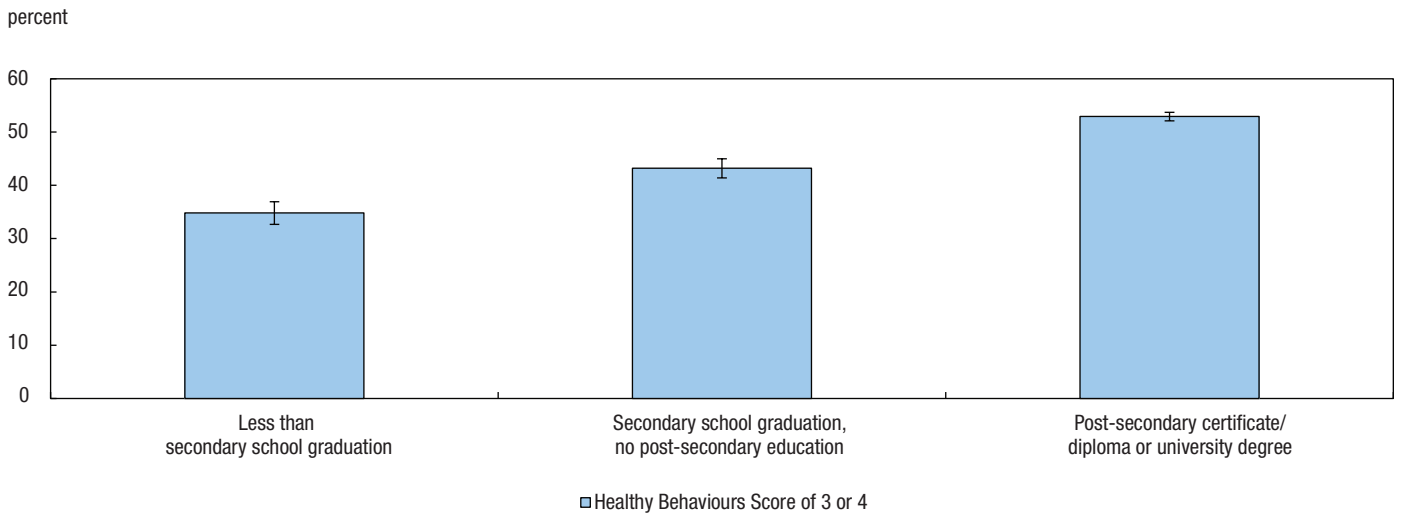
Chart 1 Healthy Behaviours Score, by sex, population aged 18 and older, Canada, 2017



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2017.

The distribution of the HBS varied by the highest level of education³ attained by a household. When the highest level of education was less than secondary school graduation, 34.8% had an HBS of 3 or 4. The proportion of adults with a healthy behaviours score of 3 or 4 was highest where post-secondary graduation was attained by a member of the household (52.9%, chart 2).

Chart 2 Percentage of adults with a Healthy Behaviours Score of 3 or 4, by highest level of education, population aged 18 and older, Canada, 2017



Note: The highest level of education attained in the households is based on the educational attainments of all household members. Post-secondary includes those with a trade, college, or CEGEP certificate or diploma.
Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2017.

The proportion of residents with an HBS of 3 or 4 was **highest** in British Columbia where 56.1% had a score in this range. Compared to the national average, residents in British Columbia were more likely to have each of the four healthy behaviours associated with the HBS. The proportion of people in British Columbia who reported that they were physically active for 150 minutes or more per week, was noticeably higher than all provinces.

The proportion of residents with an HBS of 3 or 4 was **lower** than the national average (50.4%) in:

- Newfoundland and Labrador (37.6%)
- Nova Scotia (44.1%)
- New Brunswick (43.4%)
- Saskatchewan (46.0%)

The proportion of residents with an HBS of 3 or 4 was in line with the national average in all other provinces.

See Table 1 for more information about the derivation and meaning of this score.

Table 1
Indicators of the Healthy Behaviours Score, negative and positive health behaviours

Health indicator	Negative health behaviour associated with characteristic:	Positive health behaviour associated with characteristic:
Physical activity ¹	Less than 150 minutes of activity per week	Physically active 150 minutes or more per week
Smoking status	Current daily or occasional smoker	Current non-smoker
Drinking status	Heavy drinker ² in past 12 months	Not a heavy drinker in past 12 months
Fruit and vegetables consumption	Consumed fruits and vegetables less than five times per day	Consumed fruits and vegetables five or more times per day

1. "Physically active" is defined by the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines as having at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week (causing the respondent to sweat a little and breathe harder), in bouts of 10 minutes or more. This is based on self-reported physical activity.

2. Heavy drinkers are men who consumed 5 or more drinks per occasion, at least once a month in the past year. Women are heavy drinkers if they consumed 4 or more drinks per occasion, at least once a month in the past year.

Note: The healthy behaviour score is calculated by adding 1 for each characteristic with the positive health behaviour associated, and 0 for those with the negative behaviour. For example, an individual who was a current smoker (0) who was physically active (1), not a heavy drinker (1), and eating fruits/vegetables 5 times per day (1) would have a score of 3.

Notes

1. Estimates in this article referring to the national average or Canada rate exclude the territories. This is because the coverage of 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 is only available for two year cycles of the CCHS (e.g. 2017-2018).
2. 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%).
3. For the purpose of this fact sheet, education is reported as a three tier system—less than secondary school graduation, secondary school graduation, or post-secondary certificate/diploma or university degree.

Data

Additional data from the Canadian Community Health Survey are available from table 13-10-0096-01 (https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1310009601&request_locale=en).

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).