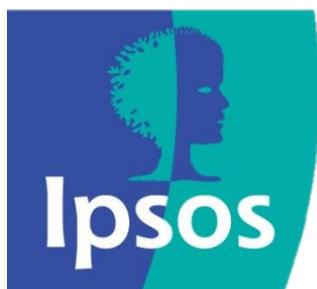


**Seven in Ten Canadians (68%) Have Skipped Seeing a Doctor
Due to Long Wait Times, Timeliness or Other Barriers
Half of Ontarians (49%) Interested in Online Appointments with
Ontario-Based Doctors**

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Seven in Ten Canadians (68%) Have Skipped Seeing a Doctor Due to Long Wait Times, Timeliness or Other Barriers

Half of Ontarians (49%) Interested in Online Appointments with Ontario-Based Doctors

Toronto, ON – Seven in ten Canadians (68%) have missed a doctor’s appointment for reasons ranging from long wait times to an inability to find a doctor outside of working hours, a new Ipsos survey for Maple has revealed. Long wait times at walk-in clinics are the most common reason for Canadians skipping out on seeing a doctor, with one in four (42%) saying they’ve avoided the clinic for this reason.

Nearly as many Canadians (37%) say they’ve not gone to the doctor’s office when sick because they were unable to get a timely appointment, while a further two in ten (17%) say they’ve passed on a doctor’s appointment because there wasn’t a physician available outside of working hours. The spread of disease at the doctor’s office is a real concern for some, with one in ten (10%) having avoided it when sick due to fear of germs in the waiting room, while another 10% have barriers like transportation issues or physical disabilities that make getting to doctor’s appointments challenging. This leaves one in three (32%) who say they’ve not missed out on seeing a doctor for any of these reasons, meaning that a majority (68%) have missed an appointment for at least one of the aforementioned reasons.



The survey finds that the most common first response to feeling sick is to self-medicate: one in three Canadians (36%) will buy an over-the-counter remedy at the first signs of illness. Others will seek out more information about their symptoms online, with 15% turning to Google as a first response. One in four (25%) will access some sort of formal healthcare service, whether it's a family doctor (14%), a walk-in clinic (10%), or even the emergency room (1%).

Women (19%) are nearly twice as likely as men (11%) to Google their symptoms as a first response, as are younger Canadians compared to older ones (31% of those 18-34, vs. 12% of those 35-54 and 7% of those 55 and over). Men, meanwhile, are more likely than women to visit their family doctor (17% vs. 11%) or a walk-in clinic (13% v. 7%) as a first reaction to feeling sick. Canadians aged 55 and over (21%) are the most likely to turn to their family doctor at the first sign of illness, compared to 12% of those 35-54 and 7% of those 18-34.

Taking Healthcare Online in Ontario

One alternative to traditional doctor's appointments and walk-in clinics is the possibility of seeing a doctor in real time, online, with little waiting involved and the convenience of staying at home and scheduling the appointment at the most convenient time for the patient.

In Ontario, interest in such a service is high. Half of Ontarians (49%) say they'd be interested in seeing a live licensed Ontario-based doctor online, to have their symptoms diagnosed and receive a prescription.



High-Tech Health Management

One in three (36%) Canadians say they use technology to help manage their health, while two in three (64%) do not. Millennials (47%) are the most likely to adopt technological health management aids, while Boomers (26%) are less likely to use tech in this area of their lives.

Smartphone-based health apps are less commonly used: two in ten Canadians (19%) say they use these apps to help manage their health, while eight in ten (81%) do not.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between January 9 and January 12, 2017, on behalf of Maple. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians from Ipsos' online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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