



FACTUM

Canadian Awareness of HPV Lags Behind the Growing Trend of Related Cancers.

Close to a quarter of Canadians (22%) do not know what HPV is.

Montréal, QC, April 14, 2026 — A recent study conducted by Ipsos on behalf of Merck Canada highlights concerning gaps in Canadian awareness of human papillomavirus (HPV), its health impacts, and methods of cancer prevention and screening.

Despite the increasing burden of HPV-related cancers, including certain head and neck and gynecological cancers, many Canadians remain unaware of the connection between HPV and these diseases. Fewer than half of young adults aged 18-24 (49%) recognize HPV as a sexually transmitted infection, and about one-third of this group are unaware of its existence.

Awareness of HPV linked cancers mixed

The findings underscore that while the role of HPV is often associated with cervical cancer, it is now a leading cause of certain head and neck cancers in Canada, disproportionately affecting men. Yet, less awareness exists about these trends, and men are less likely than women to acknowledge their role in reducing HPV-related risks. Societal and informational barriers, such as embarrassment and a lack of information, may prevent open discussions about the virus, with 71% of adults identifying at least one obstacle.

Need for public health education

The results point out crucial opportunities to enhance public health education, emphasizing the importance of breaking the stigma around HPV. Continuous education efforts are essential for enabling Canadians to engage in informed conversations and encourage meaningful action against HPV.

These are the results of only some of the questions covered in this survey. For more details on this study, please consult the complete report which is available for download on this page.





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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between the 6th and 11th of March 2026, on behalf of Merck. For this survey, a sample of 1,000 Canadian adults aged 18 to 47 years was interviewed. Quotas and weighting were employed (age, gender and region) to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18 to 47 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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Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. Our 75 business solutions are based on primary data from our surveys, social media monitoring, and qualitative or observational techniques.

"Game Changers" – our tagline – summarizes our ambition to help our 5,000 clients navigate with confidence our rapidly changing world.

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