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Some Canadian Adults Report Falling Short of Recommended Vaccination Schedules

While 84% of parents or legal guardians surveyed report their children are fully up to date on recommended vaccines, only 51% of adults aged 65–75 and 33% of adults aged 18–64 say the same

Montreal, Quebec, November 10, 2026 — New findings from the latest Merck Canada Pulse Report, conducted by Ipsos, highlight gaps in self-reported adherence to recommended vaccination schedules among Canadian adults, particularly those aged 18 to 64.

Eighty-four per cent of parents or legal guardians surveyed reported that their children are fully up to date on recommended vaccines. Among adults, adherence to recommended vaccination schedules varies by age: 51% of respondents aged 65 to 75 said they are fully up to date, compared with 33% of those aged 18 to 64.

Knowing which vaccines are recommended in adulthood may not always be straightforward. Recommendations can vary based on factors such as age, health conditions, travel plans, and work environments, while questions around coverage can add another layer of complexity. Nearly one-third of respondents (31%) said their private insurance plan covers vaccines but that they are unsure which vaccines are included.

"It's encouraging to see that Canadians recognize the value of vaccination," said Dr. Victor Leung, infectious diseases physician and medical microbiologist at Providence Health Care and Clinical Professor at the University of British Columbia. "At the same time, adult immunization is an area where some people may benefit from additional information and support. Vaccine recommendations can change over time, and conversations with trusted healthcare professionals can help Canadians understand what is recommended for them based on their age, health status, coverage, and individual circumstances."

Additional findings shed light on how Canadians are navigating vaccination decisions and where they turn for information. While healthcare professionals remain respondents' leading source of vaccine information, with 79% turning to them for guidance, more than half (54%) look online, rising to 62% among adults aged 18 to 34.

With a wide range of vaccine information available online, it may not always be easy to know which sources are credible or relevant. According to a 2026 Canadian Medical Association survey, as many as 64% of Canadians reported encountering health information or news that they later discovered was false or misleading.

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Clear, trusted guidance can help Canadians make sense of the information they encounter and understand what applies to them as their health needs change throughout life - and the findings suggest they are receptive to that support.

Four in 10 said clearer explanations of why vaccines are recommended at specific ages or life stages would increase their confidence in following recommended schedules, while nearly two-thirds (62%) said they are likely or somewhat likely to proactively discuss immunization schedules with a doctor, pharmacist, or nurse practitioner in the next 12 months.

“Canadians should feel empowered to ask questions and understand what recommendations and options are relevant to them,” said Matthew Thornhill, Executive Director, Vaccines & HIV Business Unit, Merck Canada. “Creating more opportunities for these discussions and supporting greater access to qualified healthcare providers can help bring trusted immunization guidance and services closer to Canadians in their communities.”

Additional findings are available in the full Merck Canada Pulse Report.

About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of Merck Canada that was fielded between August 20-25, 2026. A total of n=1000 Canadians aged 18+ participated in the survey which was fielded via the Ipsos’ panel. Quotas and weighting were used to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. This survey has a credibility interval of +/- 3.8 per cent 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had all Canadian adults 18+ been surveyed. Credibility intervals are wider among subsets of the population.

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