

MAJORITY (54%) OF CANADIANS DON'T THINK HEALTHCARE SYSTEM HAS CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH A TERRORIST ATTACK

*45% Concerned Canada Does Not Have Sufficient Vaccines or
Antibiotics in the event of a Bio-Terrorist Attack*



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45% Concerned Canada Does Not Have Sufficient Vaccines or Antibiotics in the event of a Bio-Terrorist Attack

Ottawa, ON – Since the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Canada's preparedness to handle terrorist acts has been a subject of public debate. In terms of our healthcare system, the majority (54%) of Canadians think our healthcare system does not have the capacity to deal with a terrorist attack. Forty-five percent are also concerned that Canada does not have sufficient vaccines or antibiotics in the event of a bio-terrorist attack.

Moreover, vivid memories of the attacks in the United States, combined with multiple high alert warnings of possible terrorism and the war in Afghanistan has resulted in nearly one-third (30%) of Canadians showing symptoms of stress including ongoing sadness, anger, disturbed sleep and over-protection of children.

These are the findings of a Canadian Medical Association/Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between October 23rd and November 6, 2001. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 2,000 adult Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 1996 Census data.

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The Majority (54%) of Canadians Say Our Healthcare System Doesn't Have the Capacity to Deal with a Terrorist Attack

Survey respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement “I don’t think our healthcare system has the capacity to deal with a terrorist attack”. The majority (54%) of Canadians think our healthcare system does not have the capacity to deal with a terrorist attack. Three-in-ten (29%) are neutral, while only 17% disagree.

- ◆ The highest levels of agreement are found among women (57%) and residents of BC (61%) and Ontario (58%).

45% Are Concerned that Canada Does Not Have Sufficient Vaccines or Antibiotics in the event of a Bio-Terrorist Attack

Forty-five percent of Canadians are also concerned that Canada does not have sufficient vaccines or antibiotics in the event of a bio-terrorist attack. Only 24% disagree, while one-third (31%) are neutral.

- ◆ Women (49%) are more likely than men (40%) to agree that they are concerned that Canada would not have sufficient vaccine or antibiotic supplies in the event of a terrorist attack.

Nearly One Third (30%) Have Experienced “Ongoing Sadness, Anger, Disturbed Sleep or Over-Protection of Children”

Nearly one-third (30%) of Canadians indicate they have had symptoms of stress since September 11, including “ongoing sadness, anger, disturbed sleep or over-protection of children”.

- ◆ Women (35%) are more likely than men (25%) to say they have experienced these symptoms of stress as a result of the terrorist attacks.



- ◆ Regionally, residents of Ontario (35%) are most likely to say they have experienced ongoing sadness, anger, disturbed sleep and over-protection of children since the September 11 attacks in the U.S.

When asked whether they had experienced any of three more serious symptoms of stress, one-in-ten (13%) Canadians indicate that they have experienced vivid memories and flashbacks of the September 11th attacks and that these memories have interfered with their day-to-day lives. The same proportion (13%) say that their day-to-day lives have been disrupted by recurring insomnia, irritability and poor concentration since the terrorist attacks in the United States. A smaller proportion of Canadians (5%) say the emotional impact of the September 11th attacks has resulted in avoidance of family and friends.

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