

SEARCHING FOR ONLINE HEALTH INFORMATION THE NUMBER ONE ONLINE ACTIVITY IN CANADA

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up from 55% in 2000*



Ipsos  **Reid**

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Toronto, Ontario—New survey results released today from Ipsos-Reid's *Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report* shows that more Canadians have looked for online health information than any other online activity. A larger proportion of online Canadians have visited a health website than those who have sent joke emails (59%), used instant messaging (54%), conducted online banking (49%), comparison shopped (45%) or who have purchased something online (43%). In fact, besides the generic categories of sending & receiving email, and using a search engine, using the Internet to visit a health site that offers medical, nutritional, exercise, diet or alternative medicine information, is number one among 40+ activities Canadian Interactive Reid Report has measured over the past eight years. It is also an activity with relatively frequent participation levels, as 66% of those who have visited a health site do so on a monthly basis, and a smaller proportion (22%) browse weekly.

The two-thirds (66%) of all online Canadians who have ever visited a health website is an 11-point increase over the 55% who had done so the last time Ipsos-Reid measured this behaviour in the Fall of 2000.

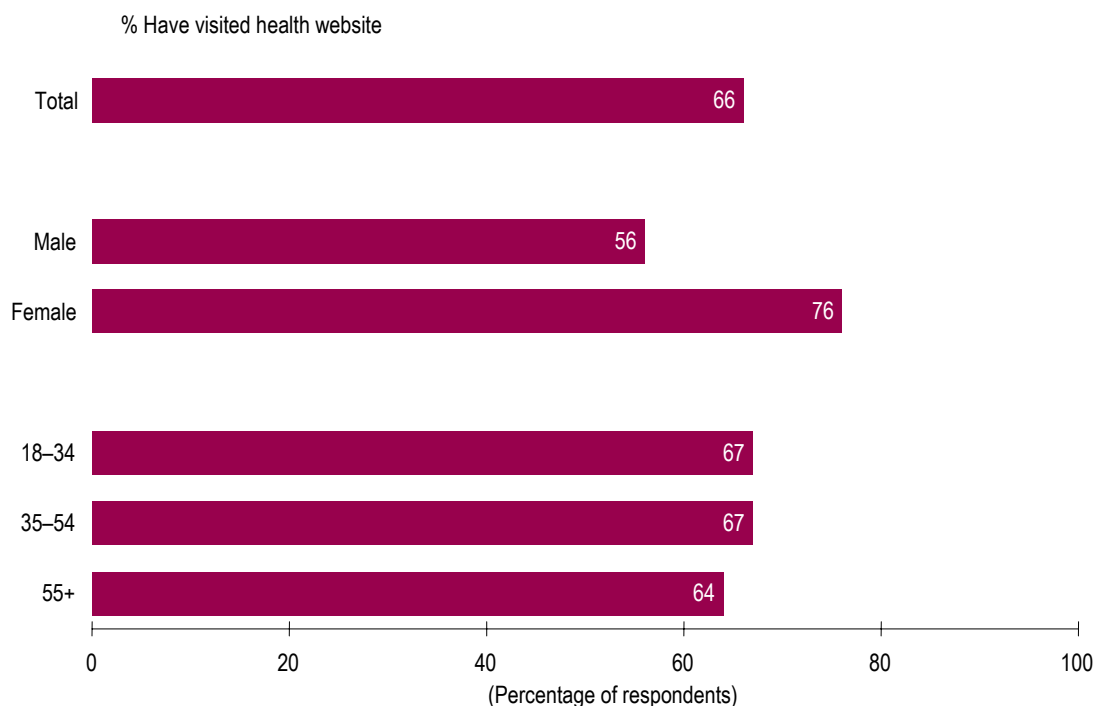
Some interesting demographic patterns also emerge in the findings. Women in particular are more likely to have visited an online health site, as this is one of the only online activities where females are more likely to participate than males (76% vs. 56%). It is also worth noting that this is the only the second online activity (next to purchasing online) where the participation rate among the 55 and older group (64%) is close to the 35-54 year old group (67%), and the 18-34 year old group (67%). In fact, it is the number one activity among this age group by far.

"Of all the categories we've tracked, online health information is growing in popularity more rapidly than most," says Steve Mossop, Senior Vice President at Ipsos-Reid. "It's

not surprising, considering that healthcare is the number one issue that Canadians are concerned about in our monthly national issues poll. What is surprising though, is the depth, and the breadth of the interest in this category among online Canadians.”

Visitors to Health Websites

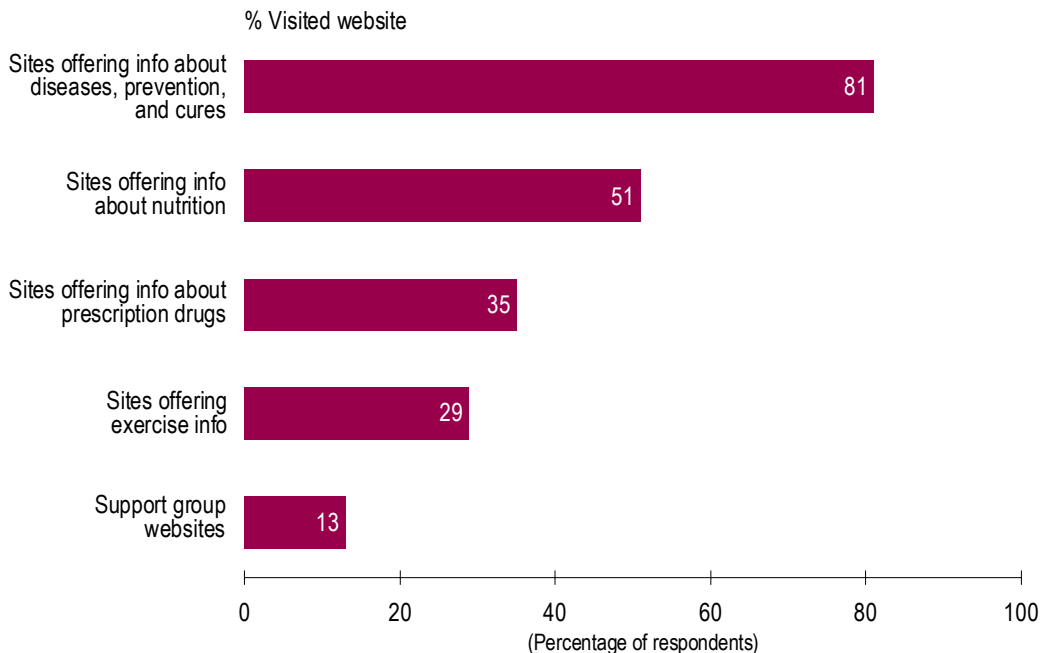
n=723, Canadians with Internet Access



When it comes to health information, online Canadians are most interested in combating specific threats to their own health. The most popular types of health websites among those who have visited, are those which provide information on diseases, prevention and cures, as 81% have visited this kind of site. This compares to 51% for nutrition information sites, 35% for prescription drug information sites, 29% for exercise sites and 13% for support group websites.

Types of Health Websites Visited

Q3-2002 n=781, Health Site Visitors



“The Internet has had a dramatic effect on empowering Canadians by making them more knowledgeable about their health” says Andrew Grenville, Senior Vice President of Ipsos-Reid’s Healthcare practice. “Over the years, our research has revealed an ongoing trend in which Canadians are becoming more active participants in their own health. The Internet is helping Canadians to feel less like patients and more like informed consumers.”

The *Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report* is the largest, most comprehensive and authoritative source of its kind about quarterly Internet trends in Canada. The results in this release are based on 1,000 telephone interviews with Canadian adults, and 1,000 online interviews, which were conducted between September 25 and October 7, 2002. With a national sample of 1,000, one can say with 95% certainty that the overall results are within a maximum of ± 3.1 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire population of Canadian adults been surveyed. The margin of error will be larger for sub-groupings of the survey population.



Established in 1979, Ipsos-Reid is Canada's leading marketing research and public opinion company. It is best known for the Ipsos-Reid Express Poll, the most widely quoted source of public opinion in the country. Ipsos-Reid has conducted extensive market and social research in 80 countries and in 40 languages, and serves clients around the world through more than 300-professionals and 1,000 data collection staff in eleven offices. The company is a member of the Paris-based Ipsos Group, ranked among the top ten research companies in the world.

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

Steve Mossop
Senior Vice President
Ipsos-Reid Corporation
Vancouver
604-257-3200
steve.mossop@ipsos-reid.com
www.ipsos-reid.com

Andrew Grenville
Senior Vice President
Ipsos-Reid Corporation
416-324-2900
andrew.grenville@ipsos-reid.com
www.ipsos-reid.com

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