

# CANADIANS AND MULTI-VITAMINS

*While Most Canadians Feel (69%) It Is Important To Take A Multi-Vitamin When On A Weight Loss Diet, Only One Third (34%) Of Those Currently Following A Weight Loss Diet Are Actually Doing So Daily*



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## CANADIANS AND MULTI-VITAMINS

### *While Most Canadians Feel (69%) It Is Important To Take A Multi-Vitamin When On A Weight Loss Diet, Only One Third (34%) Of Those Currently Following A Weight Loss Diet Are Actually Doing So Daily*

**Toronto, Ontario** – According to a survey conducted by Ipsos-Reid for Bayer HealthCare, while almost two-thirds (63%) take a multi-vitamin at least once in a while, just over one quarter (27%) of Canadians take one on a daily basis. Although daily multi-vitamin intake increases to one third (34%) among those who are currently following a diet, this is still very low, considering the number of people (69%) who think that a multi-vitamin should be part of a regular or weight-loss diet.

Two in ten (22%) Canadians are currently “following a diet or limiting their food intake to lose weight”, while 77% say they have never started a specific diet or weight loss program over this past year. One in six (16%) Canadians are “planning on going on a diet in the new year.”

Almost all Canadians (94%) have heard the term ‘metabolism’, and there is general agreement on the definition of the term. One quarter (25%) define ‘metabolism’ as ‘the rate at which the body uses energy’. Just under one fifth (19% and 18% respectively) define it as ‘how the body functions/body chemistry’ or ‘how the body digests/processes food’. One-tenth (12% and 10% respectively) define ‘metabolism’ as ‘how the body burns energy’ or ‘the rate at which the body digests/processes food’. Just over one tenth (11%) do not know how to describe the term ‘metabolism’.



*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between November 18<sup>th</sup> and November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The telephone survey is based on a randomly selected sample of 1055 Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.1$  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 2001 Census data.*

***While Many Canadians Feel (69%) It Is Important To Take A Multi-Vitamin  
When On A Weight Loss Diet, Only One Third (34%) Of Those Currently  
Following A Weight Loss Diet Are Actually Doing So On A Daily Basis***

Just under two-thirds (63%) of Canadians have ever taken a multivitamin (27% on a daily/regular basis; 7% on a regular basis but not everyday; 16% occasionally when they feel run down or sick, 14% rarely), while nearly four in ten (37%) have never taken one.

- Residents of Saskatchewan/Manitoba (74%) and Alberta (73%) are the most likely to have ever taken a multivitamin followed by residents of Ontario (65%), British Columbia (64%), Quebec (59%), and Atlantic Canada (47%).
- Canadians 18-34 years of age (68%) are more likely than those 55 and older (58%) to have taken a multivitamin.
- Women (69%) are more likely than men (57%) to have taken a multivitamin.
- One third (34%) of Canadians following a weight loss diet take a multi-vitamin on a daily basis, compared to one quarter (25%) of those who are not following a diet.

Seven in ten (69%) Canadians believe it is important (40% “very important,” 29% “somewhat important”) to one’s health to take a multi-vitamin on a regular basis if following a weight loss diet.



- Although this sentiment is strong in English Canada (BC: 73%, Alberta: 77%, Sask/Man: 78%, Ontario: 78% and Atlantic Canada: 73%), it is much weaker in Quebec, with less than half (46%) stating that this is important.
- Women tend to agree more strongly (74%) with this than do men (63%).
- More of those with a high school education (77%) or some college or university (70%) feel that taking vitamins is important, than university graduates (61%).
- Consistent with education, Canadians with household incomes of \$60K a year or more are more likely to feel that it is *not* important (21%) to take a multi-vitamin when following a diet, than are those with household incomes of less than \$60K a year (less than \$30K: 18%, \$30K to \$59K: 13%).

### *Who's Dieting?*

Currently, just over two in ten (22%) Canadian adults are following a weight loss diet.

- Age, gender, region, education and income do not seem to play a role in whether or not adults are currently on a diet.

Nearly eight in ten (77%) say they have never started a specific diet or weight loss program over this past year. One in seven (15%) have started a specific diet or weight loss program once, while eight percent of Canadians have been on two or more diets this year (4% twice, 2% three to four times, and 2% five or more times).

- Men (82%) are much more likely to say they have never, in the past year, started a diet, whereas fewer women (72%) are likely to state they have not started a diet in the past year.
- Those who have not finished high school are more likely (84%) to say that they have not started a diet in the past year, while those who have completed at least a high school education are more likely to say they have started a diet in the past year



(completed high school: 24%, college or some post secondary courses: 25%, university graduate: 25%).

One in six (16%) Canadians are “planning on going on a diet in the new year.”

- Canadians 18-34 years of age (21%) are more likely than adults over 55 (12%) to plan on going on a diet in the new year.
- Women (19%) are more likely than men (12%) to plan on going on a diet in the new year.

### *What Is A ‘Metabolism’ Anyways?*

Almost all Canadians (94%) have heard the term ‘metabolism’, and do seem to share some common definitions of the term.

- Women (96%) are more likely than men (93%) to say they have heard the term ‘metabolism’.
- Those with at least some post secondary education are a little more likely to say they have heard the term (some post secondary: 96%, university graduate: 97%) than those with a high school education or less (less than high school: 89%, high school: 91%).

Nearly all Canadians (94%) have heard the term ‘metabolism’ before.

- Canadians with some post-secondary education/a college diploma/a university degree (97%) are more likely than those with a high school diploma or less (90%) to have heard the term before.

The most popular definition of the term is ‘the rate at which the body uses energy’ (25%), followed by ‘how the body functions/body chemistry’ (19%) and ‘how the body digests/processes food’ (18%). Other strong definitions are ‘how the body burns energy’ (12%) and ‘the rate at which the body digests/processes food’ (10%). Just over one in ten (11%) were unable to define the term ‘metabolism’.

- While ‘the rate at which the body uses energy’ was the definition given by more people in English Canada (BC: 35%, Alberta: 39%, Sask/Man: 24%, Ontario: 30% and

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Atlantic Canada: 26%), Quebec Canadians are more likely to describe 'metabolism' as 'how the body functions/digests' (41%).

- More than one quarter of those 54 years of age or less (18 to 34: 30%, 35-54: 28%) defined the term as 'the rate at which the body uses energy'. Almost one fifth (19%) of those 55 years of age or older were unable to define the term.
- Education played a role in being able to define the term, as one third (33%) of those with less than a high school education, and 16% of those with a high school education were unable to define the term. In contrast, less than one tenth of those with at least some post secondary education (some post-secondary: 8%, university graduate: 3%) had difficulty defining the word.

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