

CANADIANS ON CHOLESTEROL

One-Quarter Of Canadians Have Never Discussed Their Cholesterol Level With Their Doctor



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One-Quarter Of Canadians Have Never Discussed Their Cholesterol Level With Their Doctor

Toronto, ON – According to a new Ipsos-Reid survey conducted on behalf of Swiss Vegapure, one-quarter of Canadians (25%) have never discussed their cholesterol level with a doctor. Half of Canadians (54%) say that based on conversations they have had with a medical professional their own cholesterol level is normal. The same proportion of Canadians report having a high level of cholesterol (11%) as do a low level of cholesterol (9%).

Three-quarters of Canadians (77%) say, unaided, that not eating healthfully is a factor that contributes to high cholesterol. A smaller proportion of Canadians say that lack of exercise (28%) and genetics (22%) are contributing factors, while one in ten Canadians (11%) mentions fats as a contributing factor to high cholesterol.

Four in ten Canadians (43%) are increasing their level of physical activity in order to achieve a healthy cholesterol level. Two in ten Canadians (20%) say they are eating healthier foods to achieve a healthy cholesterol level and the same proportion (18%) say they are increasing their consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Asked what factors, to the best of their knowledge, contributes to cardiovascular disease, 14% of Canadians say, unaided, high cholesterol.



These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/Swiss Vegapure poll conducted from July 2nd to July 5th, 2004. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1000 adult Canadians was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 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 weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.

One-Quarter Of Canadians Have Never Discussed Their Cholesterol Level With Their Doctor

One-quarter of Canadians (25%) have never discussed their cholesterol level with a doctor. Half of Canadians (54%) say that based on conversations they have had with a medical professional their own cholesterol level is normal. Just 11% of Canadians report having a high level of cholesterol and the same proportion (9%) say they have a low cholesterol level.

- Canadians living in Quebec (59%), Atlantic Canada (58%), Ontario (56%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (52%) are more likely than those living in Alberta (43%) and British Columbia (42%) to say they have a normal level of cholesterol.
- Canadian adults aged 40 and older are significantly more likely than those under the age of 40 to say that they have a normal cholesterol level (60% vs. 43%).
- Canadian adults under the age of 40 are more likely to have never discussed their cholesterol level with a doctor (42% vs. 16%).



Three-quarters Of Canadians Say Not Eating Healthfully Contributes To High Cholesterol

Three-quarters of Canadians (77%) say, unaided, that not eating healthfully is a factor that contributes to high cholesterol.

- Ontarians (82%), Atlantic Canadians (79%), and Albertans (78%) are the most likely to say that not eating healthfully is a contributing factor to high cholesterol, followed by residents of British Columbia (73%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (73%), and Quebec (70%).
- Women are significantly more likely than men to say that not eating healthfully is a contributing factor to high cholesterol (80% vs. 73%).
- University graduates (84%) and those with some post-secondary education (77%) are more likely than and those with a high school education or less (71%) to say that not eating healthfully contributes to high cholesterol.
- Canadians with an annual household income of \$60,000 or greater (83%) are more likely than those with an income of less than \$60,000 (74%) to say that not eating healthfully contributes to high cholesterol.

Three in ten Canadians (28%) say that lack of exercise is a contributing factor to high cholesterol.

- Canadians under the age of 40 are more likely than those aged 40 or over to say that lack of exercise is a contributing factor to high cholesterol (32% vs. 26%).



- University graduates (39%) are more likely than those with some post-secondary education (31%) and those with a high school education or less (17%) to say that lack of exercise contributes to high cholesterol.

A smaller proportion of Canadians say that genetics (22%) contribute to high cholesterol.

- Women are also more likely than men to say genetics contribute to high cholesterol (25% vs. 19%).
- Canadians aged 40 and over are more likely than those under 40 to say that genetics is a factor that contributes to high cholesterol (25% vs. 17%).
- University graduates (37%) are more likely than those with some post-secondary education (21%) and those with a high school education or less (12%) to say that genetics are a contributing factor to high cholesterol.
- Canadians with an annual household income \$60,000 or greater (31%) are more likely than those with an income of less than \$60,000 (16%) to say that genetics are a factor that contributes to high cholesterol.

One in ten Canadians (11%) mentions fats such as transfat, saturated fat, oil and grease as factors that contribute to high cholesterol. All other factors were mentioned by less than one in ten Canadians, and 5% say they “don’t know” what contributes to high cholesterol.



Four In Ten Canadians Are Increasing Their Level of Physical Activity To Achieve A Healthy Cholesterol Level

Four in ten Canadians (43%) are increasing their level of physical activity in order to achieve a healthy cholesterol level.

- Canadian adults under the age of 40 are more likely than their elders to say they are increasing their level of physical activity in order to achieve a healthy cholesterol level (47% vs. 40%).
- University graduates (54%) are more likely than those with some post-secondary education (46%) and those with a high school education or less (31%) to say that they are increasing their level of physical activity.
- Those with an annual household income of \$30,000 or greater (48%) are significantly more likely than those with less than \$30,000 (33%) to say that they are increasing their level of physical activity to achieve a healthy cholesterol level.

Two in ten Canadians (20%) say they are eating healthier foods to achieve a healthy cholesterol level and the same proportion (18%) say they are increasing their consumption of fruits and vegetables.

- Canadians under the age of 40 are more likely than those aged 40 and older to say they are eating healthier foods (23% vs. 18%).
- Men are more likely than women to say they are increasing their consumption of fruits and vegetables (21% vs. 15%).

Other things Canadians are doing to achieve a healthy cholesterol level include: Reducing calorie consumption (13%), reducing fat consumption (12%), and achieving and maintaining



a healthy weight (11%). Two in ten Canadians (19%) say they are doing nothing to achieve a healthy cholesterol level and all other mentions were cited by less than one in ten Canadians.

One In Seven Canadians Say That High Cholesterol Is a Factor Contributing To Cardiovascular Disease

One in seven (14%) Canadians say that high cholesterol is a contributing factor to cardiovascular disease. Canadians are more likely to cite factors such as: Not eating healthfully (49%), smoking (46%), lack of exercise (44%), obesity (27%), genetics (20%), and stress (16%) as factors that contribute to cardiovascular disease.

- Women are more likely than men to say that not eating healthfully is a factor that contributes to cardiovascular disease (53% vs. 46%).
- University graduates (59%) are more likely than those with some post-secondary education (55%) and those with a high school education or less (38%) to say that not eating healthfully contributes to cardiovascular disease.
- Those with an annual household income of \$60,000 or greater (60%) are more likely than those with an income less than \$60,000 (44%) to say that not eating healthfully is a factor that contributes to cardiovascular disease.

One in ten Canadians (11%) say they “don’t know” what contributes to cardiovascular disease and all other mentions were cited by less than 5% of Canadians.



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