

CANADIANS ON HEALTHY EATING AND OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

*Nearly Half Of Canadians Plan To Make Specific Changes To
Their Diet In The Next Six Months*



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CANADIANS ON HEALTHY EATING AND OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Nearly Half Of Canadians Plan To Make Specific Changes To Their Diet In The Next Six Months

Toronto, ON – According to a new Ipsos-Reid survey conducted on behalf of Parmalat, nearly half (46%) of Canadians say they plan to make specific changes to what they eat and drink in the next six months in order to be healthier.

Two in ten (21%) Canadians say they *always* opt for healthier food and beverage options when they are available. Why doesn't everyone else? Given a list of three possible reasons why they don't always opt for healthier food and beverage options when they are available, one-third (32%) says healthier foods and beverages are "inconvenient or more time consuming to prepare," one-quarter (23%) doesn't think they "taste as good as the original versions" and 6% say don't think they "work as well in recipes." Another 21% mention some other reason and 5% don't know why.

Three-quarters (75%) of Canadians are aware of Omega-3. Specifically, when asked how much they have read, seen, or heard about Omega-3, 20% of Canadians say they have heard "a lot" and 55% say they have heard "some" (30%) or "a little" (25%). Just 24% of Canadians say they've heard "nothing at all" about Omega-3.

Respondents were told that, "Omega-3 is the name given to a family of polyunsaturated fatty acids. The omega-3 fatty acids are essential to life and good health; they protect against disease and can treat illness. Omega-3 essential fatty acids can be obtained from foods and



beverages” and then asked whether or not they were aware of which foods and beverages contain Omega-3. Half (51%) said “yes.”

Respondents were then asked which of a list of six sources of Omega-3 they’d be willing to add to their diet or increase in their diet; some sources are more preferred than others. Cheese (83%), eggs (81%), and milk (80%) are the most popular sources. Majorities would also be willing to add or increase yogurt (72%) and oil-rich fish such as salmon, herring, or sardines (67%), but just one-third (33%) of Canadians would add or increase fish oil supplements such as cod liver oil.

Canadians may find adding or increasing sources of Omega-3 quite easy as earlier in the survey 58% of Canadians said they have milk with their breakfast (including in their cereal), 24% said they have yogurt for breakfast, 20% have cheese with their breakfast (including cream cheese), and 18% have margarine with their breakfast. Two in ten (20%) Canadians say they don’t usually eat breakfast.

Finally, Canadians were asked whether or not they thought they were getting enough Omega-3 in their diet, two-thirds (68%) said yes, one-quarter (25%) said no they were not, while 7% weren’t sure.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/Parmalat poll conducted from January 11th to January 13th, 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.

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Canadians On Dietary Changes And Making Healthier Choices

Nearly half (46%) of Canadians say they plan to make specific changes to what they eat and drink in the next six months in order to be healthier (54% do not).

- Atlantic Canadians (56%) are the most likely to say they plan to make specific changes to what they eat and drink in the next six months in order to be healthier, closely followed by residents of Alberta (51%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (46%), Quebec (45%), British Columbia (43%), and Ontario (43%).
- Canadians 18-34 years of age are more likely than their elders to say they plan to make specific changes to what they eat and drink in the next six months in order to be healthier (55% vs. 42%).

Given a list of three possible reasons why they don't *always* opt for healthier food and beverage options when they are available, one-third (32%) says healthier foods and beverages are "inconvenient or more time consuming to prepare," one-quarter (23%) doesn't think they "taste as good as the original versions" and 6% say don't think they "work as well in recipes." Another 21% mention some other reason and 5% don't know why. Two in ten (21%) Canadians say they *always* opt for healthier food and beverage options when they are available.

- Canadians 18-54 years of age are more likely than their elders to say "healthier foods and beverages are "inconvenient or more time consuming to prepare" (36% vs. 23%).
- The likelihood of always opting for healthier options appears to increase with age: 12% of Canadians 18-34 years of age say they always opt for healthier food and



beverage options when they're available; 19% of Canadians 35-54 years of age say they same; and 31% of Canadians 55 and older say they always opt for healthier options when they're available.

Canadians On Omega-3 Fatty Acids

When asked how much they have read, seen, or heard about Omega-3, 20% of Canadians say they have heard "a lot" and 30% say they have heard "some," and 25% say they have heard or "a little." Just 24% of Canadians say they've heard "nothing at all" and 1% "don't know."

- Residents of Alberta (34%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (27%), British Columbia (26%), Ontario (26%), and Atlantic Canada (24%) are more likely than residents of Quebec (15%) to say they've heard "nothing at all."
- Canadians 18-34 years of age are more likely than their elders to say they've heard "nothing at all" (30% vs. 22%).
- Men are more likely than women to say they've heard "nothing at all" (30% vs. 19%).
- Canadians without a university degree are more likely than those with a university degree to say they've heard "nothing at all" (28% vs. 15%).

All respondents were informed that, "Omega-3 is the name given to a family of polyunsaturated fatty acids. The omega-3 fatty acids are essential to life and good health; they protect against disease and can treat illness. Omega-3 essential fatty acids can be obtained from foods and beverages."



Respondents were then asked whether or not they were aware of which foods and beverages contain Omega-3, 51% said “yes” and 48% said “no.”

- Residents of Quebec (57%) are the most likely to say they are aware of which foods and beverages contain Omega-3, followed by residents of Ontario (52%), British Columbia (49%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (49%), Alberta (45%), and Atlantic Canada (44%).
- Canadians 35 years of age or older are more likely than those 18-34 years of age to say they are aware of which foods and beverages contain Omega-3 (54% vs. 45%).
- Women are more likely than men to say they are aware of which foods and beverages contain Omega-3 (57% vs. 46%).
- Canadians with a university degree are more likely than those without to say they are aware of which foods and beverages contain Omega-3 (69% vs. 45%).

Respondents were then asked which of a list of six sources of Omega-3 they’d be willing to add to their diet or increase in their diet. Approximately eight in ten (83%) say they would add/increase cheese to their diet (17% would not).

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (91%), Alberta (90%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (88%), and Quebec (87%) and are more likely than residents of British Columbia (76%), and Ontario (78%) to say they would add or increase cheese.

Eight in ten (81%) say they would add/increase eggs to their diet (19% would not).

- Residents of Quebec (87%), Alberta (83%), Atlantic Canada (81%), Ontario (81%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (79%) are more likely than residents of British Columbia (69%) to say they would add or increase eggs.

Eight in ten (80%) say they would add/increase milk to their diet (20% would not).

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (93%) are more likely than residents of British Columbia (71%), Quebec (77%), Alberta (80%), Ontario (81%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (81%) to say they would add or increase milk.
- Canadians 18-34 years of age are more likely than their elders to say they would add or increase milk (87% vs. 77%).

Seven in ten (72%) say they would be willing to add or increase yogurt (27% would not).

- Canadians 18-34 years of age are more likely than their elders to say they would add or increase yogurt (80% vs. 69%).
- Women are more likely than men to say they would add or increase yogurt (78% vs. 66%).

Two-thirds (67%) of Canadians say they would be willing to add or increase oil-rich fish such as salmon, herring, or sardines (33% would not).

- Atlantic Canadians (76%) and British Columbians (74%) are most likely to say they would be willing to add or increase oil-rich fish such as salmon, herring, or sardines,



followed by residents of Alberta (67%), Quebec (67%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (64%), and Ontario (63%).

- The likelihood of adding or increasing oil-rich fish such as salmon, herring, or sardines appears to increase with age: 57% of Canadians 18-34 years of age say they would; 68% of Canadians 35-54 years of age say they would; and 75% of Canadians 55 and older say they would add/increase oil-rich fish such as salmon, herring, or sardines.

Just one-third (33%) of Canadians would add or increase fish oil supplements such as cod liver oil (67% would not).

- Atlantic Canadians (43%) are most likely to say they would be willing to add or increase fish oil supplements such as cod liver oil, followed by residents of British Columbia (37%), Ontario (34%), Quebec (30%), Alberta (27%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (27%).
- Canadians 35 years of age or older are more likely than those 18-34 years of age to say they would add or increase fish oil supplements such as cod liver oil (37% vs. 23%).

Earlier in the survey 58% of Canadians said they have milk with their breakfast (including in their cereal), 24% said they have yogurt for breakfast, 20% have cheese with their breakfast (including cream cheese), and 18% have margarine with their breakfast. Two in ten (20%) Canadians say they don't usually eat breakfast.

- Residents of Alberta (29%) are most likely to say they don't eat breakfast, closely followed by residents of Atlantic Canada (26%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (22%), British Columbia (19%), Ontario (19%), and finally Quebec (15%).



- Women are more likely than men to say they have milk (62% vs. 55%) and/or cheese (24% vs. 17%) with their breakfast.

Finally, Canadians were asked whether or not they thought they were getting enough Omega-3 in their diet, two-thirds (68%) said yes, one-quarter (25%) said no they were not, while 7% weren't sure.

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (76%) and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (75%) are most likely to say they are getting enough Omega-3 in their diet, closely followed by residents of British Columbia (70%), Quebec (70%), and Ontario (66%). Residents of Alberta (58%) are the least likely to say they are getting enough Omega-3 in their diet.

-30-

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- 8 -

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