

PRESIDENT'S CHOICE SECOND ANNUAL HEALTHY EATING SURVEY

Healthy Eating Is A Priority For Most Canadians, But Many Are Having A Hard Time With It



Ipsos Reid

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PRESIDENT'S CHOICE SECOND ANNUAL HEALTHY EATING SURVEY

Healthy Eating Is A Priority For Most Canadians, But Many Are Having A Hard Time With It

Toronto, ON – A new Ipsos Reid survey conducted on behalf of President's Choice found that finding the time to prepare and eat healthy meals is a priority for 82% of Canadians, but not everyone finds it easy to do so. Half (50%) of Canadians agree that they know it's important to make healthy food choices, but they find it difficult to do so.

Many Canadians may be experiencing difficulty making healthy choices when buying food. Six in ten (59%) Canadians indicate that they may be overwhelmed or confused by the many different things they're supposed to look out for when shopping for healthy foods and 82% say they find it easier to make healthy choices when products clearly indicate their health benefits.

Time of day can also be a hurdle when trying to eat healthfully. When asked which meal they find it the *hardest* to eat healthfully, Canadians offer a variety of responses. One in four (24%) find it hardest to eat healthy snacks, 21% have hard time with breakfast, 16% with lunch, and 15% with dinner. Another 7% of Canadians *always* have a hard time making healthy choices.

Ipsos Reid asked Canadians what one food they could not live without and just 6% were left tongue-tied. So what foods do Canadians love the most? Two in ten (22%) can't live without



meat; 21% mentioned some sort of carbohydrate; 14% need their junk food; 13% love dairy products; 12% can't live without fruits and vegetables; and 5% mention a beverage.

It comes as no surprise then that many Canadians suggest that they're not eating as healthfully as they could because of their 'must-have' foods. Six in ten (59%) say they'd like to eat healthier but don't want to give up their favourite foods; and 54% say their family would eat more healthfully if the nutritious options tasted better. Moreover, comfort foods macaroni and cheese or pizza are real weaknesses for 40% of Canadians.

There are however specific foods that Canadians recognize are important in achieving a healthy, well-balanced diet. Seven in ten (68%) Canadians think it's important to incorporate sodium-reduced foods into their diet and 41% would like to incorporate more fibre into their diet, but find it difficult to do so.

Soy protein is another food item which receives good press in the health pages. Studies have shown that incorporating soy protein into your diet may reduce the risk of heart disease, lower cholesterol, and promote overall long term health. However, just 29% of Canadians currently incorporate soy protein into their diet on a regular basis. There are many reasons why 70% of Canadians aren't incorporating soy protein into their regular diet: 27% say they get enough protein from other sources; 25% aren't familiar with soy protein; 20% are simply not interested; 18% don't like the taste; 13% don't know how to incorporate it into their daily diet; and 5% don't know how much soy protein they should eat.

Finally, the survey finds that 60% of Canadians think the costs of eating healthfully have increased. One-third (35%) say they've remained the same, while 4% think the costs have decreased.

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These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid/President's Choice poll conducted from January 2 to January 5, 2006. 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 Census data.

Healthy Eating Is A Priority, But Many Are Experiencing Difficulties

Finding the time to prepare and eat healthy meals is a priority for 82% of Canadians. In fact, 46% strongly agree with this notion.

- Canadians 18-54 years of age are most likely to agree with this (84% vs. 77% of those 55 years if age or older).

And, half of Canadians agree (22% "strongly" and 28% "somewhat") that it's important to make healthy food choices, but say they find it difficult to do so.

- The propensity to agree that it's important to make healthy food choices, but difficult to do so *decreases* with income level: 63% of those with an annual household income of less than \$30,000 agree vs. 52% of those with \$30,000-\$59,999 vs. 44% of those with \$60,000 or more.

Difficulties When Buying Food...

Six in ten (59%) Canadians agree that "there are so many different things you are supposed to look out for when buying foods, like fat content, sugar, calories, fibre and so on, that it's impossible for an ordinary person to figure out what the right choice is." And, eight in ten (82%) Canadians say they find it easier to make healthy choices when products clearly indicate their health benefits (with 50% that "strongly agree").

- Those Canadians whose level of education is high school or less are particularly likely to feel it's hard to know what the right choice is when it comes to eating healthy (72% vs. 53% of those with higher levels of education).

Difficulties At Different Times In The Day...

When asked when they find it the *hardest* to eat healthfully, Canadians offer a variety of responses. One in four (24%) find it hardest to eat healthy snacks, 21% have hard time with breakfast, 16% with lunch, and 15% with dinner. Another 7% of Canadians *always* have a hard time making healthy choices, while 17% say they *never* do.

- Quebecers appear to be having the hardest time with lunch (29%).
- Canadians 55 years of age or older are most likely to never have a hard time eating healthfully (25% vs. 13% of Canadians 18-54 years of age).
- Women are having a harder time than men with snacks (30% vs. 17%), while men are having a harder time with breakfast (24% vs. 18% of women).

And, The There's Taste!

When asked what one food they could not live without, all but 6% of Canadians have something to say.

- Two in ten (22%) can't live without meat, such as beef (4%), chicken (4%) or steak (3%);
 - 21% mention some sort of carbohydrate, such as bread (10%) or pasta (4%);
 - 14% couldn't live without junk food, such as chocolate (7%) or pizza (4%);
 - 13% couldn't live without dairy products, such as cheese (6%) or milk (5%);
 - 12% can't live without fruits (8%) and vegetables (4%); and,
 - 5% couldn't live without beverages, such as coffee (3%).
- Men are more likely than women to mention some sort of meat (30% vs. 14%), while women are slightly more likely to mention junk food (16% vs. 11% of men), dairy products (15% vs. 10%), and fruits and vegetables (15% vs. 9%).

Many Canadians suggest that they're not eating as healthfully as they could because of taste. Six in ten (59%) say they'd like to eat healthier but don't want to give up their favourite foods; and 54% say their family would eat more healthfully if the nutritious options tasted better.

- Canadians 18-54 years of age are more likely than those 55 or older to say they'd like to eat healthier but don't want to give up their favourite foods (62% vs. 54%).

- Men are more likely than women to say their family would eat more healthfully if the nutritious foods tasted better (60% vs. 48%).

Moreover, comfort foods like macaroni and cheese or pizza are real weaknesses for 40% of Canadians.

- Again, Canadians 18-54 years of age (45% vs. 30% of those 55 or older) and men (45% vs. 35% of women) are more likely to agree.

Sodium, Fibre, & Soy And The Healthy Diet

Seven in ten (68%) Canadians think it's important to incorporate sodium-reduced foods into their diet, with 41% that "strongly agree" with this. In addition, 41% say they would like to incorporate more fibre into their diet but find it difficult to do so.

- Women are more likely than men to place importance on incorporating sodium-reduced foods into their diet (71% vs. 65%).

Studies have shown that incorporating soy protein into your diet may reduce the risk of heart disease, lower cholesterol, and promote overall long term health. However, just 29% of Canadians currently incorporate soy protein into their diet on a regular basis. There are many reasons why 70% of Canadians aren't currently incorporating soy protein into their regular diet: 27% say they get enough protein from other sources; 25% aren't familiar with soy protein; 20% are simply not interested; 18% don't like the taste; 13% don't know how to incorporate it into their daily diet; and 5% don't know how much soy protein they should eat.



The Cost Of Eating Healthfully

Finally, the survey finds that 60% of Canadians think the costs of eating healthfully have increased. One-third (35%) say they've remained the same, while 4% think the costs have decreased.

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