

Canadians' Awareness of Pulmonary Hypertension Low

*Confusion Exists over Symptoms,
Most Don't Know Disease Can Become Quickly Lethal*

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Toronto, ON – A new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Chrome Communications has revealed that Canadians' awareness of pulmonary hypertension appears to be quite low. While one in three (37%) Canadians claim to be 'familiar' (12% highly/26% somewhat) with the disease, a solid majority (61%) says they're 'unfamiliar' (40% highly/20% somewhat) with it.

- There appears to be a varying degree of familiarity across the country, with the proportion of those unfamiliar with the disease rising to 87% in Quebec, but drops to 63% in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and less in Ontario (55%), British Columbia (55%), Alberta (42%) and Atlantic Canada (41%).
- The data also reveals a familiarity gap among age groups, with younger Canadians (23%), aged 18 to 34, being much less likely than those aged 35 or older (44%) to report being familiar with the disease.

Canadians appear to associate a wide-spectrum of symptoms with this disease, including unexplained shortness of breath (39%), a fast heart rate (27%), hypertension (26%), fatigue (24%), dizziness (22%), blurred vision (21%), headaches and/or migraines (19%), nausea (9%), sexual dysfunction (7%), vomiting (5%), and skin irritation (2%). However, one quarter

(24%) of Canadians didn't know which of the above were actually symptoms of pulmonary hypertension. Despite being least familiar, Quebecers (19%) were among the least likely to say they didn't know what the symptoms were with Atlantic Canada (15%) being the lowest.

In fact, though, from among the above, only unexplained shortness of breath, fatigue and dizziness are common symptoms of pulmonary hypertension, which suggests that many Canadians are uninformed or simply guessed at what the symptoms were. While those who claimed to be 'familiar' with the disease were less likely to say they didn't know what the symptoms were, they were more likely to name a wide variety of incorrect symptoms as being associated with pulmonary hypertension.

Regarding the differences between regular hypertension and pulmonary hypertension, six in ten (59%) say that they wouldn't be able to explain the differences. Three in ten (28%) said that they could do so but with 'difficulty' (10% a great deal/18% some), while just one in ten (9%) said they could do so quite 'easily' (2% very/7% somewhat). Further, one in three (34%) Canadians who said they were 'familiar' with the disease also claimed that they couldn't explain the differences between these two diseases.

Thinking about whether they believe pulmonary hypertension is a fatal disease, two thirds (66%) believe it is, either within a short period of time (13%) or over a long period of time (53%). Just one in ten (12%) believes that one cannot die from pulmonary hypertension, and one quarter (22%) don't know if this is a possibility. In fact, this disease is lethal, within a short period of time.

Canadians also appear to be split on who is most commonly affected by pulmonary hypertension. Nearly one half (44%) believes that it is most common in men aged 45 or older, while 22% think it is men of any age. One quarter (24%) believes women aged 45 and older



are most commonly affected, but 18% think it affects women of all age just as commonly. Interestingly, 5% think it most commonly affects Caucasians, while 3% think it affects children the most. Two in ten (16%) don't know. In truth, this disease does not discriminate, and is equally as common in all people, regardless of gender, race or age.

Finally, focusing on the best methods to delay the progression of pulmonary hypertension, nearly one half (45%) believes the best way to do this is by 'staying active', while others think the key is to have healthy eating habits (32%) or by taking medication (14%). One in ten (8%) don't know what the best method is. In reality, only taking medication slows down the progression of pulmonary hypertension.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Chrome Communications from October 21 to October 23, 2008. For this survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1,000 Canadian adults 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 population of Canada 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 that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data.

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