

Majority (52%) of Canadians Living with Chronic Pain Agree that their Employer Doesn't Like when they Miss Work as a Result of Pain

Nine in Ten (91%) Agree that Pain Has to be Severe before they Consider Staying Home from Work

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Nine in Ten (91%) Agree that Pain Has to be Severe before they Consider Staying Home from Work

Toronto, ON – Despite the pain they experience, a majority (52%) of those living with chronic pain agree with the notion that their employer doesn't like it when they have to take time off work as a result of their pain according to the results of a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Jurstina. However, nine in ten (91%) agree that their pain has to be severe before they consider staying home from work, while a similar number (88%) report that they typically go to work rather than stay home when they experience pain.

In light of the magnitude of the problems associated with this condition, it is troubling to see that six in ten of those afflicted (62%) said their workplace does not have a wellness program that includes a component about preventing or living with chronic pain.

Despite the various types treatments available for pain, nearly one half (47%) disagree that they are satisfied with the treatments that they are currently taking to manage their pain. In fact, most (76%) 83%? said that they would be willing to seek an alternative form of treatment to mitigate the effects of their condition.

Middle-Aged Canadians Are Feeling the Effects of Pain More Than Others...

While chronic pain clearly affects every age group, it is clear that Canadians age 35-54 feel the effects more than all other age groups.

- Five in ten (46%) of those afflicted with chronic pain between the age of 35 and 54 say they suffer from depression as a result of their pain. Four in ten (36%) of those between the age of 18 and 34 said the same, while only three in ten (32%) of those age 55+ felt the same way.
- Seven in ten (66%) of those between 35 and 54 say they are unable to lead their life as they used to as a result of their pain. Six in ten (62%) of those 55 and up said the same, while five in ten (50%) of those age 18-34 agreed with this statement.
- Seven in ten (69%) of in the 35-54 subgroup say that their pain has led them to become less confident in their abilities compared to six in ten (62%) of those age 55 plus who felt the same way. Six in ten (58%) of those in the 18-34 group agreed with this notion.
- A staggering six in ten (59%) of those not working who experience chronic pain between the age of 35 and 54 are not currently working as a result of this condition.

Those Experiencing Severe Chronic Pain...

The data reveals a very difficult situation for those who experience severe chronic pain. The following are some of the highlights:

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- Those with severe pain have been suffering for 11 years on average, compared to 10 years among those with moderate pain, and 8 years for those with mild pain, suggesting the pain becomes more aggravated the longer one experiences it.
- Most (88%) of those with severe pain are unable to lead their life as they used to as a result of their pain, and 10% have stopped trying to lead their life as usual.
- A majority (65%) of those with severe pain and are currently not employed say they're not working as a direct result of their chronic pain condition, compared to 30% of those with moderate pain or 16% of those with mild pain (16%).
- Those who experience severe pain and are still working are working an average of 35 hours a week, when they used to work 41 hours per week before their chronic pain conditions began. Over the course of a month, those with severe pain miss on average 3.4 days a month as a result of their chronic pain condition.
- Most (93%) of those with severe chronic pain says it affects their ability to perform their job, and are most likely (47%) to believe that their employer could be more supportive of them in managing their pain. A staggering 70% believe that their condition is holding them back in their career, and 87% say their job aggravates their pain. Almost all (86%) severe chronic pain sufferers experience breakthrough pain.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between Sep 29 and Oct 2, 2009, on behalf of Jurstina. For this survey, a national sample of 1,003 adults who suffer from chronic pain from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online, of which 517 are working. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample



universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.1 percentage points 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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