

Almost Half (45%) of Canadians Don't Place Health Near the Top of their Priority List

*Sun Life Canadian Health Index Creates Five Categories of
Canadians: Overconfident, Overextended, Health Achievers,
Resilient and Inhibited*

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Sun Life Canadian Health Index Creates Five Categories of Canadians: Overconfident, Overextended, Health Achievers, Resilient and Inhibited

Toronto, ON – Two weeks into the new year, many Canadians are likely still continuing with their New Year's resolutions to lead healthier lifestyles. But almost half (45%) of all Canadians don't place health near the top of their priority list according to a new poll conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of Sun Life Canadian Health Index. The Sun Life Canadian Health Index is unique because it places Canadians in five major health categories based on attitudes towards healthy lifestyles, perceived health and reported behaviours – **Overconfident** (23% of the Canadian population) **Overextended** (22%), **Health Achievers** (22%), **Resilient** (18%) and **Inhibited** (16%).

The five health profiles are described in the following ways:

Those Canadians who are **Overconfident** consider their health status to be high and they are not concerned about staying healthy in the future. However, their behaviours and motivation are not necessarily strong enough to support their optimistic outlook. The risk is that they aren't laying the foundation for healthy habits needed to maintain their health as they age. Canadians who are overconfident with their health are believed to have average health but perceive themselves to be healthier than they really are.

Canadians who are **Overextended** place healthy behaviours at the bottom of a long list of priorities, including the demands of a career and family obligations. Lack of knowledge, time and money were cited as major barriers to healthier habits. Canadians who are overextended health-wise are less likely to devote time to staying healthy or doing everything possible to maximize their health. They are also more likely to admit that they participate in unhealthy behaviour such as eating fast food, skipping meals and cutting back on meals and exercise when stressed out.

Those who are labelled as **Health Achievers** are fully engaged in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They take full responsibility for their own health and take part in the right behaviours to support it. It's important to note that this group says they don't "go it alone" – they report having support systems in place to help them achieve their healthy lifestyle.

Canadians who are deemed as **Resilient** value a healthy lifestyle and show motivation to engage in healthy behaviours. However, pre-existing health conditions make it difficult to lead the healthy lifestyle they desire. Even though they seem to want to do the right things, they are challenged to do so because of existing health conditions.

Lastly, Canadians who are **Inhibited** reported behaviour indicates that they are only marginally less healthy than average, however their perception of their own health is much poorer. They feel responsibility for their health lies not just with themselves but also with external supports. This group would like support, but they don't always reach out to ask for help.

Health Segments Across the Country

Canadians across the country differ in the health. The following chart details the various segments and how they compare from coast-to-coast:

Table 1: Distribution of Population Segmentation by Province

	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	B.C.
Overconfident	19%	23%	23%	22%	23%
Overextended	22%	15%	24%	26%	22%
Health Achievers	25%	23%	20%	19%	25%
Resilient	21%	22%	15%	18%	13%
Inhibited	13%	16%	17%	14%	17%

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid/Sun Life Financial poll conducted from October 12 to 26, 2010. For this survey, a sample of 3,989 Canadians from 18 to 80 years of age from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. 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. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 2 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

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ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2006 Census data. The Sun Life Canadian Health Index™ is composed of a series of sub-indices composing attitudinal, behavioural and perceived measures, each benchmarked to 100. The 2010 Sun Life Canadian Health Index™ measures the attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of Canadians relating to their personal health. This first of what will be a series of studies yielded an overall index score of 68.5 on a scale of 0 to 100. A person who scored high on the overall Sun Life Canadian Health Index™ also scored high on each of the individual attitudinal, behavioural and perceived health components. The overall index is a blend of scores in three sub-indices: Perceived Health Index (score = 70.9), Attitudinal Health Index (score = 67) and Behaviour Health Index (score = 67.7).

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

***Sean Simpson
Senior Research Manager
Ipsos Reid
Public Affairs
(416) 572-4474***

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