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Toronto, ON – With the holiday season in full swing, healthy lifestyles will take a back seat for two thirds of Canadians (65%) who agree (18% strongly/47% somewhat) they 'will likely eat foods and treats with a higher fat, calorie or sugar content than they usually do', according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Canadian Health Food Association. In a season of indulgence six in ten (58%) agree (15% strongly/43% somewhat) they 'will probably eat more than they usually do', and four in ten (38%) agree (11% strongly/27% somewhat) they 'will drink more alcoholic beverages than usual'.

Three in ten (29%) agree (6% strongly/23% somewhat) that it will be difficult to get as much sleep or rest as they usually do, and almost half of Canadians (46%) agree (13% strongly/33% somewhat) that they will experience some stress over the holidays. For many Canadians it will be a hectic holiday season that will restrict how much exercise they can do; four in ten (42%) Canadians agree (11% strongly/31% somewhat) that they 'will spend more time in public places, including shopping centres or restaurants and public venues', while a third (36%) agree (9% agree/27% disagree) that 'It will be difficult to exercise as often as I usually do over the holidays'.

Quebec residents are the most relaxed about the holidays, only a third (32%) expect to experience stress over the holidays compared to half (54%) of those in Alberta, Ontario (51%) and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (51%).



To help deal with the holiday season, six in ten Canadians expect to make healthy food choices wherever possible (63%) and find some private time for themselves (60%), and half say they will enjoy some time outdoors (54%). A quarter of Canadians (27%) will take vitamins to help them manage the holidays and a further one in ten (10%) say they will take other nutritional supplements.

British Columbia leads the provinces in healthy lifestyle, three quarters (76%) of those in B.C. say they will make healthy food choices over the holidays compared to only half of Quebecers (50%). Vitamin usage in Canada has increased in Canada recently, with nearly a third of Canadians (30%) having either started or increased their use of vitamins in the last two years. A similar proportion (27%) have started or increased their use of other nutritional supplements including vitamins, probiotics and essential fatty acids. Close to six in ten Canadians (56%) now use vitamins and supplements, including two thirds of women (64%) and the over 55s (63%).

Three quarters of those who take natural health products use them to benefit their overall health and well being (76%). Other popular reasons are for bone and joint health/disease (23%), for the immune system (20%), and for cough, cold and flu (18%). A minority use natural health products for sleep and/or rest (17%), energy levels (15%), managing the effects of stress (13%), and fitness, weight management and/or body building (11%). Other specialist uses include gastrointestinal health/disease (11%), beauty, such as hair, skin, nails (10%), cardiovascular health/disease (8%), allergies (7%), and eyesight (6%).

Despite the over-eating and lack of exercise expected over the holiday season, many say they have made healthier lifestyle choices in the past two years such as making healthier food choices (57%), drinking more water (49%), wearing sunscreen (27%) and cutting down on fat

in their diet (45%). Four in ten have started or increased regular exercise (37%) and incorporating simple physical activities in their daily life (40%).

Thinking more generally about the winter, Canadians expect to get less physical activity (39%), and spend less time outside than most other seasons (47%). This varies by province, with Quebecers less likely to be indoors over winter (46%) compared to those in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where seven in ten (69%) say they will be spending less time outside. Over winter, four in ten (40%) say they will likely eat more food with higher carbohydrate, fat and/or sugar content, and three in ten (31%) say they will eat less healthy foods than most other seasons.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted in December 2011, on behalf of the Canadian Health Food Association. For this survey, a sample of 1,026 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and political composition to 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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