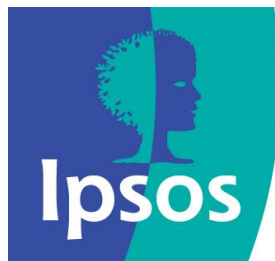


AVOIDING THE FLU SHOT IN BC

Majority (58%) Have Not Gotten a Flu Shot This Year

Majority of Shot Avoiders (57% BC) Think Side Effects More Problematic than Getting the Flu

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Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, BC – In spite of warnings from health officials, a majority of adults in British Columbia, especially those under the age of 35 years, have not gotten a flu shot this year, according to a new Ipsos Reid online poll. The poll also shows that a majority of those who have not gotten the flu shot believe that the side effects can cause more problems than getting the flu.

Getting the Flu Shot

Slightly more than four-in-ten British Columbians (42%) say they have gotten the flu shot this season (October and onwards). Residents aged 55 years and older are far more likely to have gotten the shot.

- Six-in-ten (61%) residents 55+ years have gotten the shot, compared to less than four-in-ten (36%) 35 to 54 year olds and three-in-ten (29%) under the age of 35 years.

Those who have not gotten a flu shot are also not intending to get one this season. Only 5% of British Columbians without the shot say that they ‘definitely will’ or ‘probably will’ get the flu shot this season.

Attitudes Toward the Flu Shot

Most British Columbians (81%) agree that **'it is easy and convenient to get a flu shot for those who want one.'** Convenience also seems to be a non-issue for most of those without a shot this year. About seven-in-ten British Columbians (73%) without a flu shot agree that it is convenient to get one.

Residents are split on whether **'there may be side effects of the flu shot that cause more problems than getting the flu.'** Overall, 43% agree and 41% disagree that the side effects might be worse than getting the flu. While overall opinion is split, a majority (57%) of those who have not gotten the flu shot agree that the side effects may be worse than the flu itself (20% disagree).

Roughly six-in-ten (59%) residents agree that **'the benefits of the flu vaccine outweigh the risks.'** Not surprisingly, agreement with this statement is very high among those who have had a flu shot (93% agree, 2% disagree) and much lower among those who have not had a flu shot (35% agree, 41% disagree).

There are slightly more residents who agree (43%) than disagree (39%) that **'the H1N1 influenza issue is being sensationalized in this province.'** This view is held more strongly on Vancouver Island (54% agree).

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll of 803 adult British Columbians conducted online using Ipsos Reid's national online household panel between January 13 and 17, 2014. These data were

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statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 2011 Census data. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 3.9 percentage points had all British Columbia adults been surveyed. 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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