



Canadian Heart Health Initiative

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Impact of Cardiovascular Disease Per Year

- About 76,000 deaths (40% of total)
- Accounts for a major share of health care utilization: about 8 million days of hospitalization, and 13% of the 220 million prescriptions dispensed
- Direct health care costs: \$8.3 billion (16% of the total)

Risk Profile

Two in three adult Canadians, aged 18-74 years, have one or more of the following major risk factors:

- Smoking (27% are regular smokers - at least 1 or more cigarettes per day)
- High blood pressure (15% have diastolic blood pressure 90 mm Hg or more and/or are being treated)
- Elevated blood cholesterol (43% have total plasma cholesterol level 5.2 mmol/L or more)

One in three adult Canadians cannot name any of the major risk factors for heart disease.

Other Risk Factors

- 37% of adult Canadians lead a sedentary lifestyle
- 48% are overweight
- 4% report that they have diabetes

Partnerships

Since 1987, the Canadian Heart Health Initiative has created extensive networks and coalitions involving the ten Provincial Departments of Health, the Heart and Stroke Foundations, as well as over 1,000 organizations in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Some networks and coalitions are:

Conference of Principal Investigators of Heart Health (COPI)
Provincial Heart Health Networks
G7 Telematics in Health Care Applications
Canadian Heart Health Network
Réseau international : La santé du cœur en francophonie
Victoria Declaration Implementation Group
International Heart Health Networks (Chinese, South Asian)

Potential for Prevention

- Among the provinces, British Columbia has the lowest rates of coronary heart disease (CHD) mortality. If British Columbia's rates were to apply to other provinces, Canada would have about 8,000 fewer CHD deaths per year.
- Quebec has the lowest rates of stroke mortality. If Quebec's rates were to apply to other provinces, Canada would have about 2,000 fewer stroke deaths per year.
- For each CHD or stroke death, there are an additional one or two non-fatal, typically disabling events.
- For CHD Canada ranks in the middle of a list of industrialized countries. The rates of heart disease in France and Japan are 1/3 and 1/5 respectively of the rate in Canada.

Community Demonstration Programs

Ten Provincial Heart Health Teams

- Each Provincial Heart Health Program has implemented a five-year research demonstration program to study implementation of integrated approaches to reducing CVD risk factors at the community level.
- The Programs are directed by Principal Investigators. Since 1989, over 310 provincial and community projects have been implemented in 35 demonstration areas across Canada.

Evaluation & Dissemination

- The provincial Heart Health Programs have gathered process and outcome evaluation data from the community interventions. An evaluation of the Initiative, as a whole, is underway.
- The dissemination research phase, which the provinces are now entering, opens new scientific ground by developing and testing efficient methods to disseminate evidence-based preventive interventions at the national, provincial and community levels.

Research Platform

Canadian Heart Health Database

Heart Health Surveys carried out in all ten provinces have made possible the creation of an epidemiological, CVD risk factor database, which contains risk profiles of 23,129 individuals.

Nutrition Database

Nutrition surveys have been carried out or are in the process of being implemented in seven provinces. The surveys will lead to a Canadian Nutrition Database.

Evaluation Database

Qualitative and quantitative information on indicators of inputs, processes, impacts and outputs of the provincial and federal heart health programs is being compiled into the Evaluation Database.

The Databases are unique resources for health services research with application to non-communicable disease prevention issues, beyond heart health.

Publications

- The Catalonia Declaration: Investing in Heart Health (1995)
- Canadians and Heart Health: Reducing the Risk (1995)
- Promoting Heart Health in Canada: A Focus on Heart Health Inequalities (1993)
- Heart Health Equality: Mobilizing Communities for Action (1992)
- Victoria Declaration on Heart Health (1992)
- Canadian Heart Health Surveys: A Profile of Cardiovascular Risk (*Cdn. Medical Assn. Journal*, 1992)
- Promoting Heart Health in Canada: A Focus on Cholesterol (1992)
- Main Findings Report of the Canadian Blood Pressure Survey (1989)
- Promoting Heart Health in Canada: Report of the Federal-Provincial Working Group on Cardiovascular Disease Prevention (1988)

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