



Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada

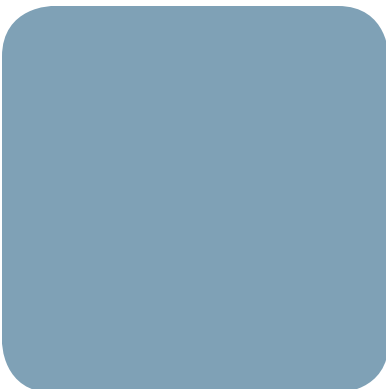
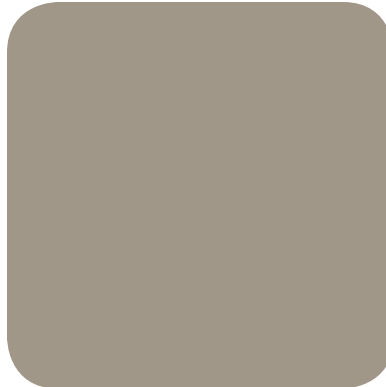
Your health and  
safety... our priority.

Votre santé et votre  
sécurité... notre priorité.



# Health Canada Ontario Region

*Helping Ontarians  
maintain and improve  
their health.*



Canada 

## The Federal Health Department - An Overview

Health Canada is the federal department responsible for helping Canadians maintain and improve their health. It assesses the safety of drugs and many consumer products, it helps to improve the safety of food, and it provides information to Canadians to help them make healthy decisions. The department ensures that health services are available and accessible to First Nations and Inuit communities.

Health Canada works with the provinces to ensure that the country's health care system serves the needs of all Canadians. In partnership with provincial and territorial governments, Health Canada provides national leadership to develop health policy, enforce health standards and regulations, promote public health and disease prevention, and enhance healthy living for all Canadians. It also works closely with other federal departments, agencies and health stakeholders to reduce health and safety risks to Canadians.



## The Province of Ontario

Ontario is Canada's most populous province with over 12 million people - almost 40% of Canada's population - and is projected to grow. Although the province stretches over one million square kilometres, more than 80% of Ontarians live in urban centres, mostly around the Golden Horseshoe area near the lower Great Lakes. Ontario is home to 167,000 registered First Nations people and the largest Francophone community outside of Québec.

The Government of Ontario is responsible for administering the health care system and providing services to the Ontario

public through such programs as health insurance, drug benefits, assistive devices, care for the mentally ill, long-term care, home care, community and public health, and health promotion and disease prevention. It also regulates hospitals and nursing homes, operates psychiatric hospitals and medical laboratories, and co-ordinates emergency health services.

Ontario's health care system is as complex as the province is diverse. It includes 160 publicly funded, not-for-profit hospitals, with annual expenditures of about \$14 billion. On the whole, Ontario spends approximately \$38 billion annually on health care. Ontario has more than 22,000 licensed physicians and close to 110,000 registered nurses.



## Health Canada in Ontario

Health Canada, Ontario Region, has approximately 650 employees. The Region's dedicated workforce includes scientists, laboratory analysts, occupational health physicians, administrators, community health and primary care nurses, product safety inspectors, environmental health officers, and program consultants.

The department has a food laboratory, a pharmaceutical-testing laboratory and a drug analysis laboratory in Toronto (Scarborough), and nursing and community health stations in First Nations communities - some in rural or remote areas. In addition, there are Health Canada offices in Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Guelph, Kingston, Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay.

This document provides a glimpse of how Health Canada works for Ontarians through its regional programs and services.

## Office of the Regional Director General

The Regional Director General is the department's senior representative in Ontario and is responsible for the delivery, co-ordination and coherence of Health Canada programs that are delivered in Ontario. The RDG represents the interests of Health Canada on a number of inter-departmental initiatives and promotes positive relationships with other levels of government, health partners and the general public.

## First Nations and Inuit Health

**First Nations and Inuit Health** provides or funds public health programs and services for 134 First Nations communities in Ontario and provides primary care services on-reserve in remote and isolated areas where no provincial services are readily available. In addition, First Nations and Inuit Health provides prescription drug, dental and other ancillary health services to First Nations people, regardless of residence.

### Did You Know?

In Ontario, Health Canada serves First Nations people by operating 46 health centres, 40 health stations, 28 health offices, 22 nursing stations and four satellite nursing stations, as well as nine treatment centres for the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program, and two centres for solvent abuse. Over the next few years, the federal hospital in Moose Factory will merge with the local, provincial hospital under an agreement signed with the Province of Ontario and communities in the Weeneebayko area located on the James Bay Coast.

## Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety

**Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety** helps Canadians maintain and improve their health by promoting living, working and recreational environments that are healthy and safe, by reducing the harm caused by tobacco, alcohol, controlled substances, environmental contaminants and unsafe consumer and industrial products, and by preventing unacceptable risks to people and the environment from the use of pest control products.

In Ontario Region, this work is carried out through seven program areas:

- **Product Safety**
- **Safe Environments**
- **Tobacco Control**
- **Drug Strategy and Controlled Substances**
- **Drug Analysis Service**
- **Workplace Health and Public Safety**
- **Pest Management Regulatory Agency**

### Did You Know?

- Anyone holding a garage sale is legally responsible for ensuring that the products they sell, whether new or used, are considered safe under the *Hazardous Products Act*. For answers to questions about garage sales and other product safety issues, call 1-866-662-0666.
- Half of all Canadian-made chemicals are produced in Ontario.

## Health Products and Food

The **Health Products and Food** program contributes to the departmental mandate of helping Canadians to maintain and improve their health by managing the risks and benefits to the public's health from health products and food. It takes an integrated approach, which includes:

- minimizing health risk factors to Canadians while maximizing the safety provided by the regulatory system for food and health products, such as drugs, medical devices, blood, tissues and organs; and,
- promoting conditions that enable Canadians to make healthy choices and providing information so that they can make informed decisions about their health.

The national Health Products and Food Branch has presence in Ontario in the following areas:

- **Food Laboratories**
- **Inspectorate Operational Centre**
- **Inspectorate Laboratories**
- **Canada Vigilance Regional Office (previously the Regional Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring Office)**
- **Regional Public Involvement and Outreach**
- **Regional Food Liaison**

### Did You Know?

- Health Canada's *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* is one of the most requested of all federal government publications.
- The Ontario Operational Centre is responsible for the inspection of over 50% of the pharmaceutical industry and approximately 60% of the medical device industry in Canada.
- The Canada Vigilance Regional Office receives more than 2,000 voluntary reports annually concerning adverse reactions to prescription and non-prescription drugs and to natural health products.

## Supporting Ontario Region

The activities of Health Canada's Ontario Region are supported by competent and dedicated staff in the offices of Strategic Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs; Strategic Planning and Analysis; Communications, Marketing and Consultation; Human Resources; Information Management Services; Finance and Material Management; and, Capital Assets, Administration and Security. The Ontario Region strives for excellence in people management, ensuring a healthy workplace and an effective and sustainable workforce. All units work collaboratively with their counterparts in the National Capital Region and across all regions in Canada.

### Did You Know?

Acts for which Health Canada has total or partial responsibility include:

- *Canada Health Act*
- *Department of Health Act*
- *Food and Drugs Act*
- *Hazardous Products Act*
- *Pest Control Products Act*
- *Tobacco Act*
- *Canadian Institutes of Health Research Act*
- *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*

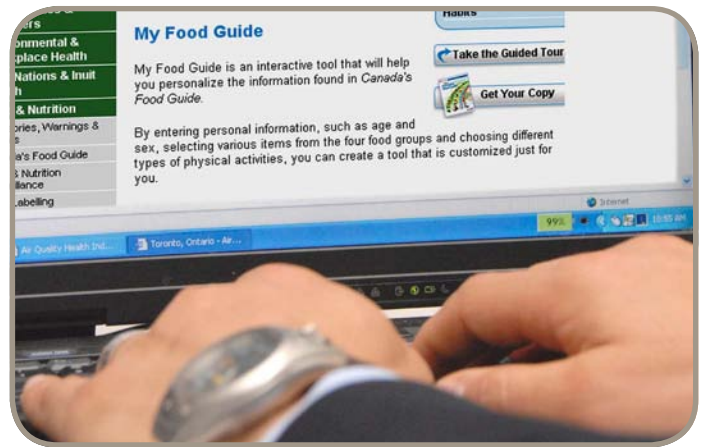
## Health Portfolio Partners

Although separate organizations, the following agencies are members of the federal health portfolio, reporting to the federal Minister of Health and working together and with Health Canada to improve and protect the health of Canadians.

The **Public Health Agency of Canada** was created in 2004 to deliver on the Government of Canada's commitment to protect the health and safety of Canadians. The agency is headed by the Chief Public Health Officer.

Focused on more effective efforts to prevent chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease, prevent injuries, and respond to public health emergencies and infectious disease outbreaks, the Public Health Agency of Canada works closely with provinces and territories to keep Canadians healthy and help reduce pressures on the health care system. The agency also works with government and non-government partners to support a range of population health grants and contributions programs aimed at improving the health of communities and individuals.

For more information about the Public Health Agency of Canada, visit [www.publichealth.gc.ca](http://www.publichealth.gc.ca) or call the regional office at 416-973-0003.



The **Canadian Institutes of Health Research** is the Government of Canada's major federal funding agency for health research. Its mission is to create new scientific knowledge and to catalyze its translation into improved health, more effective health services and products, and a strengthened Canadian health care system. Composed of 13 "virtual" institutes of networks of researchers brought together to focus on important health problems, the organization provides leadership and support to more than 11,000 health researchers and trainees across Canada, including Ontario.

Contact the Canadian Institutes of Health Research at 613-941-2672, toll free at 1-888-603-4178, or visit [www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca)

### Did You Know?

A University of Toronto research team has identified 18 genes that may predict whether a person will respond to treatment for hepatitis C. The end result will be better targeting of treatments and may encourage 'responder' patients to start and continue treatment for hepatitis C.

More information about Health Canada, including a variety of interesting and informative health-related publications, can be found on the department's website: [www.healthcanada.gc.ca](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca)

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