

Health Fact Sheets

Arthritis, 2013



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- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- ^P preliminary
- ^r revised
- X suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- ^E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published
- * significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

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Arthritis, 2013

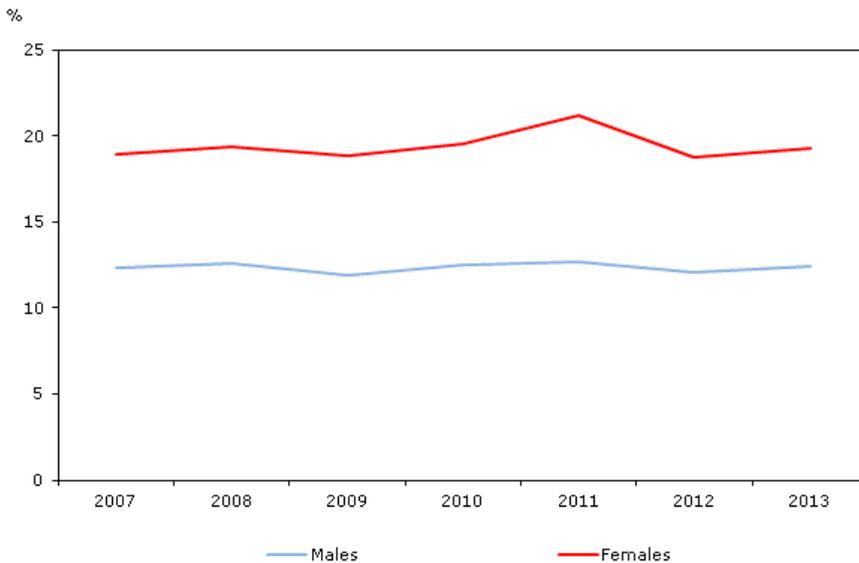
The term 'arthritis' describes many conditions that affect joints, the tissue surrounding joints, and other connective tissue. The most common types are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. The resulting pain, stiffness, swelling and/or deformity of the joints can substantially reduce quality of life.¹



The arthritis data are based on a question in the Canadian Community Health Survey that asked respondents if they had arthritis, excluding fibromyalgia.

In 2013, 15.9% (4.6 million) of Canadians aged 15 and older reported that they had been diagnosed with arthritis by a health professional (Chart 1). Since 2007, the rate of arthritis² for males has remained the same, with 12.4% reporting the condition in 2013. For females, the rate of arthritis has remained stable since 2007 around 19%, with the exception of 2011 when the rate had increased to 21.2%.³

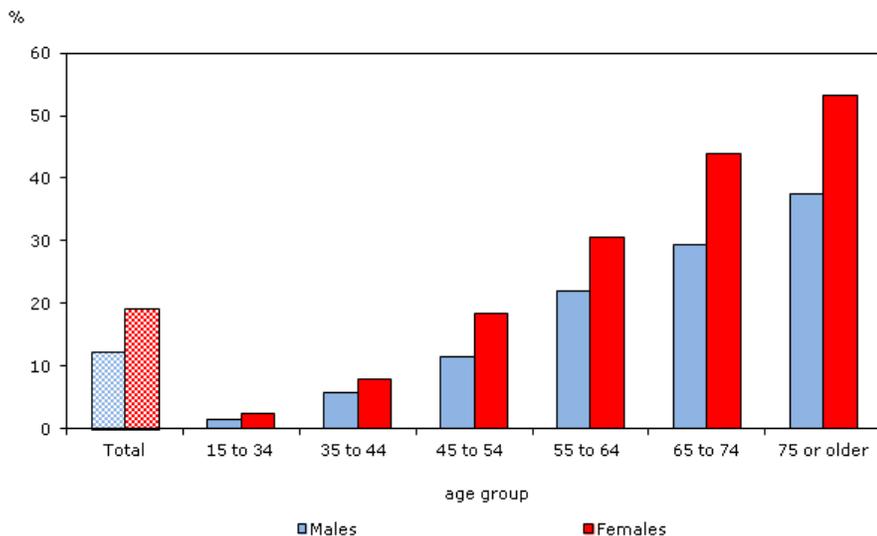
Chart 1
Percentage reporting a diagnosis of arthritis, by sex, household population aged 15 and older, Canada, 2007 to 2013



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007 - 2013.

Among both sexes, the percentage reporting arthritis increased with age, with the highest rates among those aged 75 or older. In 2013, females were more likely than males to have arthritis in all age groups (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Percentage reporting a diagnosis of arthritis, by age group and sex, household population aged 15 and older, Canada, 2013



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2013.

Quebec⁴ was the only province in which residents reported a rate of arthritis (10.1%) that was **lower** than the national average (15.9%).

The proportion of residents aged 15 years and over who reported that they had arthritis that was **higher** than the national average in:

- Newfoundland and Labrador (21.7%)
- Prince Edward Island (21.0%)
- Nova Scotia (24.3%)
- New Brunswick (20.9%)
- Ontario (17.7%)
- Manitoba (19.9%)

Residents of the other provinces and the territories⁵ reported rates that were about the same as the national average.

Because of the strong relationship between age and arthritis, a province or territory with a disproportionately younger population would be expected to have an arthritis rate below the national average. Conversely, a province or territory with an older population should have a higher arthritis rate than the national average. To remove the effect of different age distributions when making provincial comparisons, please refer to the CANSIM table 105-0503 for the age standardized rates.

End notes

- ¹ [The Arthritis Society](http://www.arthritis.ca). <http://www.arthritis.ca> (accessed May 10, 2010).
- ² Note that a person has arthritis if they reported that they had been diagnosed with arthritis by a health professional.
- ³ In the 2011 French questionnaire, the word "arthrose" was added to the arthritis question as patients tend to associate the word "arthrite" with rheumatoid arthritis and "arthrose" with degenerative arthritis. However, the word "arthrose" was omitted from the question in 2012. As a result, the arthritis estimates for the province of Quebec and subsequently the Canada level were affected. The data for the arthritis indicator in 2011 should be used with caution.

- 4 The increase seen in the 2011 arthritis rate in Quebec with the addition of the “arthrose” concept means that not having that term will cause the province to have lower rates. This could be one reason for Quebec having a lower rate of arthritis than the national rate.
 - 5 Note that the rate of arthritis in Nunavut had a coefficient of variation between 16.6% and 33.3%; use with caution.
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References

The Arthritis Society. <http://www.arthritis.ca> (accessed May 10, 2010).

Wilkins, Kathryn. 2004. “ Incident arthritis in relation to excess weight.” *Health Reports*. Vol. (volume) 15, no. (number) 1. Fall. Statistics Canada no. (number) 82-003. p. (page) 39–49. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/2004/6764-eng.pdf> (accessed May 10, 2010).

Wilkins, Kathryn. 1999. “ Hormone replacement therapy and incident arthritis.” *Health Reports*. Vol. (volume) 11, no. (number) 2. January. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. p. (page) 49–57. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/1999/4735-eng.pdf> (access May 10, 2010).

Data

Additional data from the Canadian Community Health Survey are available from CANSIM tables 105–0501 and 105-0503.