

Health Fact Sheets

Arthritis, 2014



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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 <i>Statistics Act</i> |
| ^E | use with caution |
| F | too unreliable to be published |
| * | significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$) |

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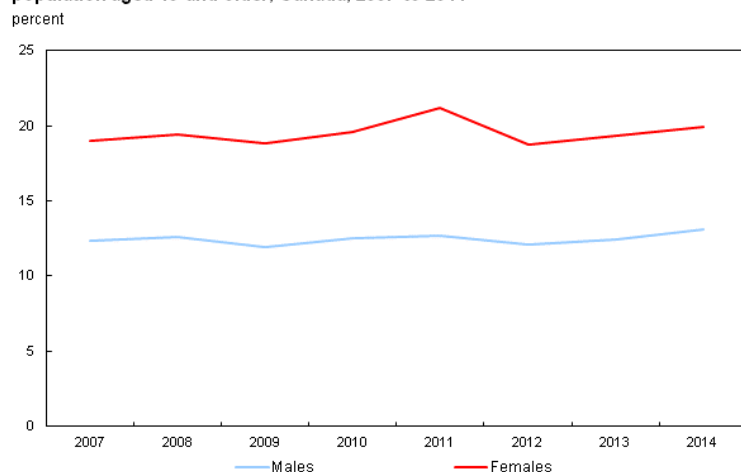
Arthritis, 2014

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 aged 15 and over if they had arthritis,² excluding fibromyalgia.

In 2014, 16.5% of Canadians aged 15 and older (around 4.8 million people) reported that they had been diagnosed with arthritis by a health professional (Chart 1). The rate of arthritis has been fairly stable since 2007 - around 12% for males and around 19% for females.³

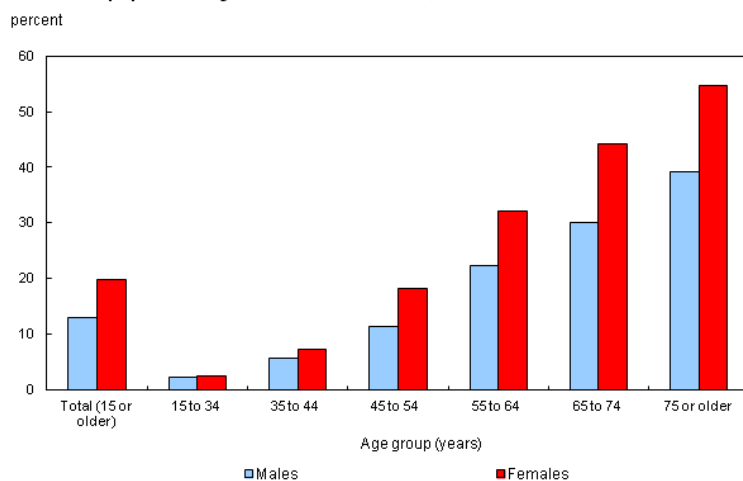
Chart 1
Percentage reporting a diagnosis of arthritis, by sex, household
population aged 15 and older, Canada, 2007 to 2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007 to 2014.

Among both sexes, the percentage reporting arthritis increased with age, with the highest rates among those aged 75 or older. In 2014, females were more likely than males to have arthritis in all age groups starting at age 45. For those aged 15 to 44, there was no difference between the sexes (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Percentage reporting a diagnosis of arthritis, by age group and sex,
household population aged 15 or older, Canada, 2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2014.

One of the symptoms of arthritis is stiffness or pain in joints. In 2014, pain and discomfort was more than four times as likely amongst those with arthritis. Of the Canadians aged 15 and over with arthritis, 43.8% reported usually having pain or discomfort that prevented some to most of their activities,⁴ compared with only 9.7% of those who did not have arthritis.

The proportion of residents aged 15 years and over who reported that they had arthritis was **lower** than the national average (16.5%) in:

- Quebec³ (11.0%)
- Nunavut⁵ (11.7%)

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

- Newfoundland and Labrador (25.4%)
- Prince Edward Island (21.2%)
- Nova Scotia (25.0%)
- New Brunswick (25.0%)
- Ontario (18.5%)
- Manitoba (19.3%)

Residents of the other provinces and the territories 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.

Notes

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- ¹ The Arthritis Society. <http://www.arthritis.ca> (accessed May 10, 2010).
 - ² Note that a respondent is considered to have arthritis only 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 addition of the word "arthrose" in the question about arthritis in 2011 caused an increase in the rates of arthritis in Quebec. The exclusion of the word "arthrose" after 2011 then resulted in a decrease in the rate of arthritis in Quebec and may be the reason behind the province having a rate lower than the national average.

The 2011 data for the arthritis indicator should be used with caution.
 - ⁴ Respondents were asked if they are usually free of pain and discomfort. If not, they were then asked about how often their pain or discomfort prevents their activities. The questions come from the Health Utilities Index (HUI) Mark 3, developed at McMaster University by Health Utilities Inc.
 - 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

- Wilkins, Kathryn. 2004. " Incident arthritis in relation to excess weight." *Health Reports*. Vol. (Volume) 15, no. (number) 1. Statistics Canada no. (number) 82-003. p. (page(s)) 39–49. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/2004/6764-eng.pdf>.
- Wilkins, Kathryn. 1999. " Hormone replacement therapy and incident arthritis." *Health Reports*. Vol. (Volume) 11, no. (number) 2. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. p. (page(s)) 49–57. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/1999/4735-eng.pdf>.

Data

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