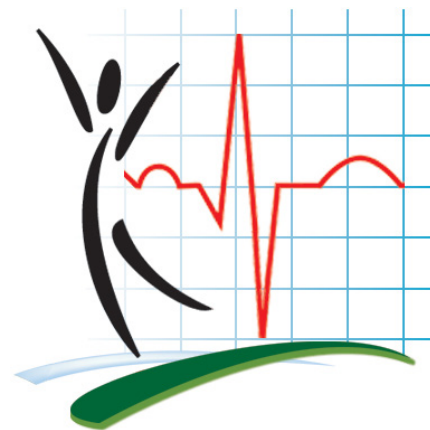


Health Fact Sheets

The 10 leading causes of death, 2012



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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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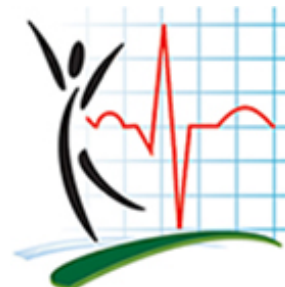
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Health Fact Sheets

The 10 leading causes of death, 2012



The number of deaths is used as the ranking criteria for leading causes of death. Ranking causes of death is an informative way to present mortality statistics, supplementing other measures of mortality such as death rates and life tables. The methodology used to select the leading causes of death was developed by the National Center for Health Statistics of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Heron).

Statistics shown in this fact sheet come from the Canadian Vital Statistics Death Database. These data are collected from all provincial and territorial vital statistics registries and contain demographic and medical (cause of death) information on all deaths in Canada.

The proportion of deaths for the 10 leading causes of death is declining

The relative burden of the 10 leading causes of death has been declining since 2000, while the proportion of all other causes of death increased. In 2012, the 10 leading causes of death were responsible for 184,869 deaths, representing 75% of all deaths in Canada, compared to 80% in 2000 (Table 1).

The ranking of the 10 leading causes of death was fairly consistent from 2000 to 2012, with the exception of 2010 and 2012, where accidents (unintentional injuries) moved into fourth position, ahead of chronic lower respiratory disease.

Table 1

Ranking, number and percentage of deaths for the 10 leading causes of death, Canada, 2000, 2011 and 2012

Cause of death	2012			2011			2000		
	rank	number	%	rank	number	%	rank	number	%
All causes of death	...	246,596	100.0	...	243,511	100.0	...	218,062	100.0
Total, 10 leading causes of death	...	184,869	75.0	...	182,795	75.1	...	175,149	80.3
Malignant neoplasms (cancer)	1	74,361	30.2	1	72,736	29.9	1	62,672	28.7
Diseases of heart (heart disease)	2	48,681	19.7	2	47,911	19.7	2	55,070	25.3
Cerebrovascular diseases (stroke)	3	13,174	5.3	3	13,332	5.5	3	15,576	7.1
Accidents (unintentional injuries)	4	11,290	4.6	5	10,961	4.5	5	8,589	3.9
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	5	11,130	4.5	4	11,243	4.6	4	9,813	4.5
Diabetes mellitus (diabetes)	6	6,993	2.8	6	7,255	3	6	6,714	3.1
Alzheimer's disease	7	6,293	2.6	7	6,377	2.6	7	5,007	2.3
Influenza and pneumonia	8	5,694	2.3	8	5,787	2.4	8	4,966	2.3
Intentional self-harm (suicide)	9	3,926	1.6	9	3,896	1.6	9	3,606	1.7
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis (kidney disease)	10	3,327	1.3	10	3,297	1.4	10	3,136	1.4

All other causes	...	61,727	25.0	...	60,716	24.9	...	42,913	19.7
... not applicable									
Note: The order of the causes of death in this table is based on the ranking of the 10 leading causes of death in 2012.									
Source: Vital statistics - Death database, CANSIM Table 102-0561 (www.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a05?lang=eng&id=1020561) .									

Cancer, the leading cause of death, accounted for 74,361 deaths in 2012 or 30% of all deaths, a proportion that has remained almost unchanged since 2000 (29%). The second leading cause of death was heart disease, accounting for 20% of all deaths, followed in third rank by stroke (cerebrovascular diseases) with 5%.

Four out of ten leading causes had the same ranking for men and women

In 2012, males and females shared eight of the 10 leading causes of death. However, only four leading causes of death had the same ranking: cancer (first), heart disease (second), chronic lower respiratory diseases (fourth), and influenza and pneumonia (eighth).

Table 2
Ranking and number of deaths for the 10 leading causes of death by sex, Canada, 2012

Cause of death	Males			Females			Male-female ratio ¹
	rank	number	%	rank	number	%	
All causes of death	...	124,235	100.0	...	122,361	100.0	102
Malignant neoplasms (cancer)	1	39,080	31.5	1	35,281	28.8	111
Diseases of heart (heart disease)	2	25,816	20.8	2	22,865	18.7	113
Accidents (unintentional injuries)	3	6,465	5.2	5	4,825	3.9	134
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	4	5,683	4.6	4	5,447	4.5	104
Cerebrovascular diseases (stroke)	5	5,581	4.5	3	7,593	6.2	74
Diabetes mellitus (diabetes)	6	3,702	3.0	7	3,291	2.7	112
Intentional self-harm (suicide)	7	2,972	2.4	13	954	0.8	312
Influenza and pneumonia	8	2,586	2.1	8	3,108	2.5	83
Alzheimer's disease	9	1,900	1.5	6	4,393	3.6	43
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	10	1,888	1.5	12	994	0.8	190
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis	11	1,612	1.3	9	1,715	1.4	94
Sepsis	13	1,173	0.9	10	1,438	1.2	82
All other causes	...	25,777	20.7	...	30,457	24.9	85
... not applicable							
¹ Number of male deaths per 100 female deaths.							
Note: The order of the causes of death in this table is based on the ranking of the 10 leading causes for males.							
Source: Vital statistics - Death Database, CANSIM Table 102-0561 (www.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a05?lang=eng&id=1020561) .							

The third leading cause of death for males was accidents (unintentional injuries); this cause ranked fifth for females. In 2000, accidents ranked fifth for males and seventh for females.

Suicide was the seventh leading cause of death for males in 2012, the same rank compared to 2000. For females, suicide ranked 13th in 2012 but ranked 10th in 2000. In Table 2, the sex ratio (number of male deaths per 100 female deaths) in 2012 shows that suicide is more than three times higher for males than for females. This is confirmed by a study of suicide rates in Canada (Navaneelan).

Alzheimer's disease ranked sixth for females and ninth for males. The sex ratio shows that in 2012, more than twice as many females as males died from this cause of death. In 2000, Alzheimer's disease ranked fifth for females and 10th for males.

Although stroke has ranked third for females since 2000, for males it went from third in 2000 to fifth in 2012.

For females, diabetes was in seventh place in 2012, down from sixth place in 2000. Sepsis ranked 10th among females in 2012, and 15th in 2000.

Age differences

Chart 1 clearly shows that there were differences between age groups in the leading cause of death in 2012. In the 1-to-24 age group, more than half of the deaths were attributable to external causes of death such as accidents (unintentional injuries), with 38%, and suicide, with 20%. Deaths from cancer ranked third, with 9%, followed by homicide, with 5%.

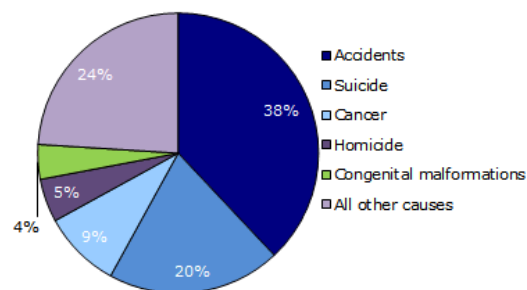
In the group aged 25 to 44, the leading cause of death was accidents (unintentional injuries), with 23%, followed closely by cancer, with 21%, and suicide, with 16%. In this age group, heart disease (ranked fourth) moved into the top five causes of death.

In the 45-to-64 age group, 44% of the deaths were attributable to cancer, and 16% to heart disease.

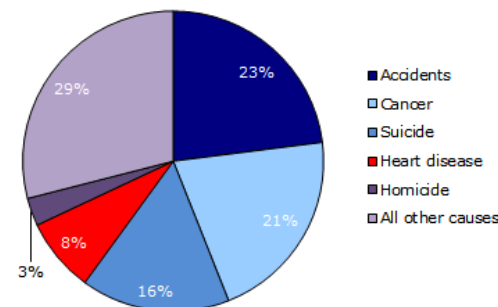
In the 65-and-over age group, where the number of deaths was numerous, deaths due to chronic conditions were among the top five leading causes of death. Cancer and heart disease accounted for nearly half of the deaths in this age group, followed by stroke and chronic lower respiratory diseases, at 6% and 5% respectively, and Alzheimer's disease, at 3%. For the 85-and-over category, heart disease outranked cancer and Alzheimer's disease surpassed chronic lower respiratory diseases.

Chart 1 Percentage distribution for the 5 leading causes of death in Canada, 2012

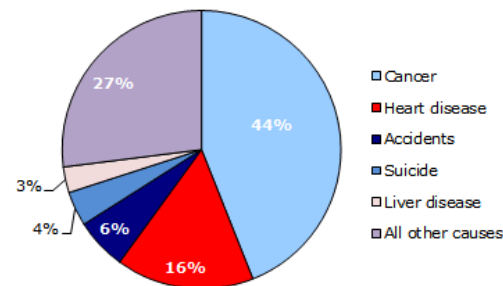
Age group: 1 to 24 years
Number of deaths = 2,695



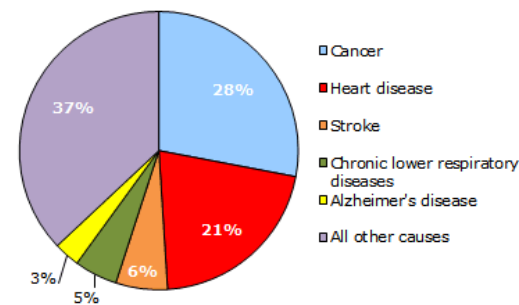
Age group: 25 to 44 years
Number of deaths = 7,488



Age group: 45 to 64 years
Number of deaths = 40,858



Age group: 65 years and over
Number of deaths = 193,737



Source: Vital Statistics - Death Database, CANSIM Table 102-0561.

References

Heron, M. 2007. "Deaths: Leading causes for 2004." *National Vital Statistics Reports*. 56 (5).

Navaneelan, Tanya. 2012. "Suicide rates: An overview." *Health at a Glance*. Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 82-624-X.

Data

Additional data on leading causes of death are available from CANSIM tables 102-0561, 102-0562 and 102-0563.