



INSIGHT INTO CANADIANS LIVING WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES - A SURVEY OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES & PHYSICIANS

Fact Sheet - Summary of Results

Disease management

- Most (78%) people with type 2 diabetes said that diabetes has changed their daily lives.
- Over half (56%) of people with type 2 diabetes said that diabetes has impacted the lives of their family and friends.
- One in two (51%) people with type 2 diabetes reported they did not manage to be physically active as recommended by their health care professional:
 - The main reason reported for not exercising was lack of energy (37%)
 - Being active every day is a step towards better health and a healthy body weight and is also an important part of managing diabetes. *Canada's Physical Activity Guide* recommends building 30 to 60 minutes of moderate physical activity into daily life for adults¹.
- Two in three (63%) people with type 2 diabetes have difficulty following a diet recommended by their health care professional:
 - The most important reason cited for not following a diet recommended by their health care professional was expense
 - As noted in the 2007 edition of Canada's Food Guide, it is recommended that adults consume between seven and 10 servings of fruits and vegetables per day, as well as six to eight servings of grains and two to three servings of meat².
- Type 2 diabetes is a complex disease wherein people living with type 2 diabetes are most likely prescribed several medications for different conditions (e.g. high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol). On average, people with type 2 diabetes are prescribed five medications to effectively manage their different conditions, which can represent approximately eight pills daily:
 - More than half (57%) of people with type 2 diabetes did not take or forgot to take some of their pills, or did not follow their dosing schedule as recommended by their physician.
- Four in ten (41%) people with type 2 diabetes gained weight since they started taking their oral diabetes medication.
- Close to half (47%) of people with type 2 diabetes said their blood glucose was somewhat/not very/not at all controlled.

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Awareness and education

- All (100%) people with type 2 diabetes surveyed were aware that their disease could lead to complications such as cardiac problems, amputations and dialysis:
 - Even though type 2 diabetes can lead to complications such as stroke, heart disease, kidney disease, blindness, amputations and nerve damage³, most (63%) were not very worried about complications.
- The longer a patient was diagnosed with the condition, the more severe their perception was of their disease:
 - 72% of people surveyed diagnosed within one year perceived the disease to be severe or somewhat severe as opposed to 94% of people surveyed who had been diagnosed for over six years.
- While two in three (65%) people with type 2 diabetes said they were somewhat/not very or not at all knowledgeable about their disease, 67% were very or extremely interested in improving their knowledge of type 2 diabetes.
- Almost half (52%) of people with type 2 diabetes said they are not aware of undesirable side effects associated with oral diabetes medications.
- The Canadian Diabetes Association's recommended HbA1c goal level, is ≤ 7 . Also known as A1C, HbA1c refers to glycosylated hemoglobin, a compound formed when glucose binds with hemoglobin in red blood cells. While measurements of HbA1c levels are used to give people living with type 2 diabetes an idea of their average blood sugar control over three months, over half (55%) of people surveyed with type 2 diabetes did not know what their target HbA1c levels should be.
- Perceptions and awareness of specific type 2 diabetes complications were identical irrespective of socioeconomic class, education, insurance coverage, gender or age.

Epidemiology and resources

- More than two and a quarter million Canadians are estimated to have diabetes.⁴ As many as one third of these people are unaware they have this condition⁵.
- It is estimated that over three million Canadians will be diagnosed with diabetes by 2010⁶.
- Type 2 diabetes accounts for about 90 per cent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes and is one of the fastest growing diseases in Canada⁷.
- The majority of physicians (79% GPs, 92% endos) believe that provincial governments and the medical community should improve their support of people with type 2 diabetes.
- Two-thirds of physicians (66% GPs, 67% endos) would like to spend more time with their patients, mainly to better educate them on diabetes:
 - This is important since most patients (84%) consult their physician for information on diabetes.

- One-third of GPs and two-thirds of endocrinologists feel there are not enough effective treatments for their diabetes patients.
- Limited access to medications is influencing physician prescribing behaviours as patients covered by public insurance are not receiving the same standard of care as patients covered by private insurance.
- Most physicians (79% GPs, 89% endos) are worried that new products will not be covered by provincial formularies, thereby limiting their ability to properly treat their patients.

Methodology

- Survey and data analysis were conducted by P\SL Research Canada a global organisation dedicated to putting information at the service of medicine.
- The results of the survey, completed in February 2007, were obtained by means of an Internet-based questionnaire conducted nationally with 700 respondents.
- Respondents were broken down into the following groups: General practitioners (160 respondents), endocrinologists (40 respondents), people with type 2 diabetes (500 respondents).
- For the general practitioner group, a sample of this size yields a margin of error of ± 8 per cent 19 times out of 20.
- For the endocrinologist group, a sample of this size yields a margin of error of ± 14 per cent 19 times out of 20.
- For the patient group, a sample of this size yields a margin of error of ± 4 per cent 19 times out of 20.

References:

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