

Two-Thirds of All Online Canadians Have Visited a Health Website, Up from 55% in 2000

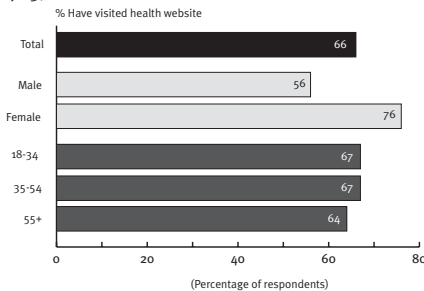
Survey results released in December, 2002 from Ipsos-Reid's Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report show that more Canadians have looked for online health information than any other online activity. A larger proportion of online Canadians have visited a health Website than those who have sent joke emails (59%), used instant messaging (54%), conducted online banking (49%), comparison shopped (45%) or who have purchased something online (43%). In fact, besides the generic categories of sending & receiving email, and using a search engine, using the Internet to visit a health site that offers medical, nutritional, exercise, diet or alternative medicine information, is number one among 40+ activities Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report has measured over the past eight years. It is also

Women in particular are more likely to have visited an online health site, as this is one of the only online activities where females are more likely to participate than males (76% vs. 56%). It is also worth noting that this is the only the second online activity (next to purchasing online) where the participation rate among the 55 and older group (64%) is close to the 35–54 year old group (67%), and the 18–34 year old group (67%). In fact, it is the number one activity among this age group by far.

When it comes to health information, online Canadians are most interested in combating specific threats to their own health. The most popular types of health websites among those who have visited, are those which provide information on diseases, prevention and cures, as 81% have visited this kind of site. This compares to 51% for nutrition information sites, 35% for prescription drug information sites, 29% for exercise sites and 13% for support group websites.

Visitors to Health Websites

n=723, Canadians with Internet Access



an activity with relatively frequent participation levels, as 66% of those who have visited a health site do so on a monthly basis, and a smaller proportion (22%) browse weekly.

The two-thirds (66%) of all online Canadians who have ever visited a health website is an 11 point increase over the 55% who had done so the last time Ipsos-Reid measured this behaviour in the Fall of 2000.

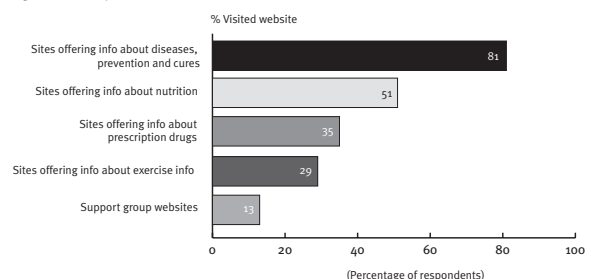
Some interesting demographic patterns also emerge in the findings.

TYPES OF HEALTH WEBSITES VISITED GRAPH

“The Internet has had a dramatic effect on empowering Canadians by making them more knowledgeable about their health” says Andrew Grenville, Senior Vice President of Ipsos-Reid's Healthcare practice. “Over the years, our research has revealed an ongoing trend in which Canadians are becoming more active participants


Types of Health Websites Visited

Q3-2002 n=781, Health Site Visitors



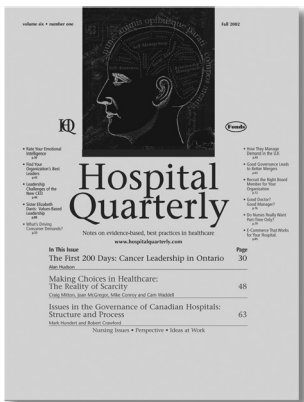
in their own health. The Internet is helping Canadians to feel less like patients and more like informed consumers.”

The Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report is the largest, most comprehensive and authoritative source of its kind about quarterly Internet trends in Canada. The results in this release are based on 1,000 telephone interviews with Canadian adults, and 1,000 online interviews, which were conducted between September 25 and October 7, 2002. With a national sample of 1,000, one can say with 95% certainty that the overall

results are within a maximum of ±3.1 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire population of Canadian adults been surveyed. The margin of error will be larger for sub-groupings of the survey population. 

For more information on this release, please contact: Steve Mossop, Senior Vice President, Ipsos-Reid, Vancouver, BC, tel: 604.257.3200, email: steve.mossop@ipsos-reid.com, or Andrew Grenville, Senior Vice President, Ipsos-Reid, Toronto, ON, tel: 416.324.2900 or email: andrew.grenville@ipsos-reid.com.

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