

BABY BOOMERS

FINDINGS FROM THE 2012 HIV/AIDS ATTITUDINAL TRACKING SURVEY

The 2012 HIV/AIDS Attitudinal Tracking Survey involved 2,000 randomly selected respondents from Canada, 16 years and older, who were interviewed by telephone to measure awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C. This fact sheet explores key findings related to baby boomers (respondents between 48 and 66 years of age).

HIV/AIDS KNOWLEDGE HAS DECLINED

- In general, baby boomers' level of knowledge about HIV/AIDS has declined over the last 9 years, which is on par with the overall survey sample.
- In general, Canadians' knowledge of HIV transmission and testing methods is declining over time.
 - Fewer Canadians are able to identify, without prompting, that HIV is transmitted through sex between a man and woman (63% vs. 76% in 2006), sex between a man and a man (52% vs. 67% in 2006), or sharing drug needles (31% vs. 35% in 2006).

HIV/AIDS RISK

- Baby boomers are less likely than the general Canadian population to have used a condom the last time they had sex (10% vs. 21% overall).
 - The most frequently cited reasons are because they are married or in a monogamous relationship (80% vs. 73% overall).
- Baby boomers are less likely than the general Canadian population to have ever had a casual sex partner (8% vs. 15% overall).
- Baby boomers are less likely to have ever been tested for HIV (30% vs. 37% overall).
- 93% of baby boomers report their self-perceived risk for HIV infection as being low.

FACTS ABOUT HIV/AIDS

- Sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBI) have often been viewed as only affecting younger people, but older Canadians are also at risk for these infections.
- The proportion of those testing HIV positive aged 50 years and older increased from 15.8% in 2007 to 18.3% in 2012.
- Sexual contact is the predominant risk factor reported for HIV test reports among Canadians 50 years and older.
- In 2012, the exposure categories of heterosexual contact and men who have sex with men accounted for 50.3% and 32.7% of positive HIV test reports among adults (≥ 15 years of age).
- As of December 31, 2012, 9.6% (2,166) of all reported AIDS cases occurred in people aged 50 to 59 and an additional 3.5% (796) for people aged 60 years or older.
- Males account for the majority of positive HIV test reports and reported AIDS cases among older Canadians (50 years and older), representing 80.9% and 90.0% of all reports in 2012 respectively.



PERCEPTION OF HIV/AIDS STIGMA & DISCRIMINATION

- Baby boomers are more likely than other respondents to say that people with HIV/AIDS can experience difficulty getting housing, health care and employment because of stigma.

HEPATITIS C KNOWLEDGE IS LOW

- In general, Canadians are less knowledgeable about Hepatitis C than HIV/AIDS.
- Baby boomers' level of knowledge about hepatitis C is on par with the general Canadian population.
 - 55% of respondents believe there is no cure for hepatitis C.
 - 50% of respondents believe that there is a vaccine to prevent hepatitis C infection.
 - Most respondents could not correctly identify the most common methods of hepatitis C transmission.
- This group is less apt to think people in their age group are likely to be affected by hepatitis C compared to other age groups (9% vs. 18% overall).
- No baby boomers considered themselves to be at high risk for contracting hepatitis C.

FACTS ABOUT OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED AND BLOOD BORNE INFECTIONS – INCLUDING HEPATITIS C

- Numerous other infections are also spread through sexual contact. In Canada, reported cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea and infectious syphilis have increased significantly among all age groups, including adults aged 30-59.
- Hepatitis C (HCV) is a chronic liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus.
- There is no vaccine to prevent or treat HCV. HCV infections can be treated with medication and in many cases, the virus can be cleared.
- In 2011, 10,741 cases of HCV were reported through the Canadian Notifiable Disease Surveillance System.
- In 2010, over 60% of newly-diagnosed HCV cases were reported in those aged 40 and up although the majority of these individuals may have contracted the virus years prior.
- Many people with HCV have no signs or symptoms, so it is important for those who may be at risk to get tested.

If you have questions related to the report, please contact: ccdic-clmti@phac-aspc.gc.ca

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Publication date: October 2014

Cat.: HP40-101/3-2014E-PDF ISBN: 978-1-100-23376-5 Pub.: 130638