


## The Impact of Epilepsy in Western Canada



*The Impact of Epilepsy on Canadians* survey was conducted on-line and on paper between August 9 and October 14, 2011 by Leger Marketing to explore how Canadian adults living with epilepsy are impacted in respect to quality of life, health and access to care and treatment.

The survey reveals that Canadian adults struggling to control the common seizure disorder face serious health obstacles, including access to specialized care and treatment options, as well as numerous social impacts. Stigma, lack of independence, and social and work barriers are identified by respondents among the top challenges that need to be addressed.

In addition to the challenges identified on a national level, the survey also highlights key regional disparities defining the differences in quality of life, health and access to care and treatment.

### Key Survey Findings:

- Western Canadians are among the *least* likely to have seen a neuropsychologist (12% versus 21% in Ontario and 23% in Quebec).
- People living with epilepsy in Western Canada (61%) are much less likely to indicate that they're getting the best possible care (versus Quebec at 82%).
- Only slightly more than half (54%) of those in the West say they receive timely access to an epilepsy specialist (versus 80% in Quebec).
- Westerners and Ontarians (both at 54%) agree that they are affected by the stigma surrounding epilepsy versus those living in Quebec (36%).
- Respondents in the West (80%), Ontario (80%) and Atlantic Canada (83%) are in agreement that epilepsy should be classified as a disability (versus Quebec 70%).
- Three-in-10 (33%) respondents from the West have had their driver's license revoked due to seizures, which is on par with Quebec residents (31%).
- Westerners and Ontarians (23%) with epilepsy are more likely to pay out-of-pocket for their medication versus Quebec (8%).
- Almost half of respondents living in the West (44%) aren't aware that government disability benefit programs even exist versus Ontario (37%) and the national average (32%).

## The Impact of Epilepsy in Ontario



*The Impact of Epilepsy on Canadians* survey was conducted on-line and on paper between August 9 and October 14, 2011 by Leger Marketing to explore how Canadian adults living with epilepsy are impacted in respect to quality of life, health and access to care and treatment.

The survey reveals that Canadian adults struggling to control the common seizure disorder face serious health obstacles, including access to specialized care and treatment options, as well as numerous social impacts. Stigma, lack of independence, and social and work barriers are identified by respondents among the top challenges that need to be addressed.

In addition to the challenges identified on a national level, the survey also highlights key regional disparities defining the differences in quality of life, health and access to care and treatment.

### Key Survey Findings:

- More Ontarians believe their seizures could be better controlled (38% versus 25% among those in the West and 27% among those in Quebec).
- Ontarians and Westerners (both at 54%) agree that they are affected by the stigma surrounding epilepsy versus those living in Quebec (36%).
- At 80%, respondents in Ontario, the West (80%) and Atlantic Canada (83%) are in agreement that epilepsy should be classified as a disability (versus Quebec 70%).
- People in Ontario living with epilepsy have been prescribed a higher number of drugs in the past (4.3 versus 3.6 for those in the West and Quebec).
- Relative to Quebec (30%), Ontarians are much more likely to agree that they can't get a job if they disclose they have epilepsy (46%).
- People in Ontario (61%) are more likely to mention the biggest challenge they face is lack of independence (versus 48% in the West and 51% in Quebec).
- Ontarians (53%) are more likely to agree their family is overprotective when compared to Quebecers (37%) or Western residents (35%).
- More than three-in-ten (37%) Ontarians are unaware that government disability benefit programs even exist, which is almost in line with the response on a national level (32%).
- Ontarians and Westerners (both at 23%) with epilepsy are more likely to pay out-of-pocket for their medication versus Quebec (8%).
- Residents in Ontario (41%) are considerably more unsure as to whether or not social services are available to them versus Quebec (18%).



The Impact  
of Epilepsy on  
Canadians

## The Impact of Epilepsy in Quebec



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The survey reveals that Canadian adults struggling to control the common seizure disorder face serious health obstacles, including access to specialized care and treatment options, as well as numerous social impacts. Stigma, lack of independence, and social and work barriers are identified by respondents among the top challenges that need to be addressed.

In addition to the challenges identified on a national level, the survey also highlights key regional disparities defining the differences in quality of life, health and access to care and treatment.

### Key survey findings:

- Quebec residents are more likely to be seeing a specialist regularly (84%) compared to the national average (68%), especially a neurologist (68% in Quebec versus 53% nationally).
- At 70%, Quebec residents are least likely to believe that uncontrolled epilepsy should be classified as a disability, compared with 80% in the West and Ontario and 83% in Atlantic Canada.
- Quebecers are most likely to indicate that government disability benefit programs are not available to them (70% versus 33% in the West, 31% in Ontario and 15% in Atlantic Canada).
- Quebecers are least likely to indicate that their family is supportive (60%), a significant contrast to residents in Atlantic Canada (83%), Ontario (84%) and Western Canada (85%).
- Only 8% of respondents from Quebec indicate they pay out-of-pocket for their medication, a notable difference versus those living in the West and in Ontario (23%).
- When seeking information about epilepsy . . .
  - Social media is least likely to be used by those in Quebec (4% versus Atlantic Canada: 27%; Ontario: 20%; and the West: 11%).
  - The internet and medical journals are *less* likely to be consulted in Quebec (55% and 13%, respectively), while television is *most* likely to be consulted (18%).

*The survey, conducted by Leger Marketing, the largest solely Canadian owned polling and market research firm, was completed on-line or on paper between August 9 and October 14, 2011. 671 respondents participated in the survey in both official languages. A probability sample of the same size would yield a margin of error of +/-3.8%, 19 times out of 20.*



## The Impact of Epilepsy in Atlantic Canada



*The Impact of Epilepsy on Canadians* survey was conducted on-line and on paper between August 9 and October 14, 2011 by Leger Marketing to explore how Canadian adults living with epilepsy are impacted in respect to quality of life, health and access to care and treatment.

The survey reveals that Canadian adults struggling to control the common seizure disorder face serious health obstacles, including access to specialized care and treatment options, as well as numerous social impacts. Stigma, lack of independence, and social and work barriers are identified by respondents among the top challenges that need to be addressed.

In addition to the challenges identified on a national level, the survey also highlights key regional disparities defining the differences in quality of life, health and access to care and treatment.

### Key survey findings:

- It takes Atlantic Canadians much longer, on average, to be diagnosed with epilepsy, relative to those living in any other region (6.8 years versus 2.8 in Quebec, 3.3 in Ontario, and 3.5 in the West).
- Atlantic Canadians are more likely to drive more than 100 km to see an epilepsy specialist than in Quebec (30% in Atlantic Canada versus 11% in Quebec).
- Atlantic Canadians are less likely to have seen a neuropsychologist (8% versus 12% in the West, 21% in Ontario and 23% in Quebec).
- Residents in Atlantic Canada (42%), Ontario (41%), and the West (35%) are more likely to be unsure whether social services are available to them than those in Quebec (18%).
- Those in Atlantic Canada are less likely to mention that their education has been impacted by their seizures (31%), that they have been overlooked for a promotion (15%), and that they're having side effects from the anti-seizure medication they're taking (56%), relative to Ontarians (49%, 27%, and 73%, respectively).
- Atlantic Canadians are more likely to be unsure about whether or not social services are available to them (42%), or whether they make use of the services provided by their community epilepsy support organization (29%), relative to Quebec (18% and 14%, respectively).
- Atlantic Canadians are least likely to be paying for their epilepsy medications via some sort of public or government funding (12% versus 42% in Quebec, 25% in Ontario, and 24% in the West).

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