

Health Events and Health Status in Newfoundland and Labrador

Practice Points

Rates of hospitalization for heart attack and stroke are high in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) when compared to the rest of Canada and are strongly influenced by health behaviours, which are also poor in NL.

Methods

1. Data from Statistics Canada Health Characteristics, Annual Estimates and the Canadian Institutes for Health Information's Your Health System: In Depth (hospitalization data) were examined from 1 Apr 2022–31 Mar 2024.
2. For the majority of the data examined, higher rates or percentages are deemed worse when compared to other provinces. Instances where the reverse is true (higher percentages are better) are noted in Table 3.
3. Red = three provinces with highest rates; Yellow = middle four provinces; Green = three provinces with lowest rates.

Results

Table 1. Hospitalized Rates per 100,000 Population by Province

	NL Rank	Canada	NL	AB	BC	MB	NB	NS	ON	PE	QC	SK
Heart Attack	2	213	282	173	168	211	271	281	175	250	299	190
Strokes	2	139	159	133	133	134	142	135	142	169	N/A	132
Self-Harm	2	62	81	51	71	37	50	41	59	55	N/A	84

1=highest rate; 10=lowest rate

Table 2. Health Status by Percentage of Population and Province

	NL Rank	Canada	NL	AB	BC	MB	NB	NS	ON	PE	QC	SK
18+ Obese *	2	30	41.9	31.1	25.5	33.7	43.2	35.9	29.7	36.4	28.6	38.4
12-17 Obese or	2	139	159	133	133	134	142	135	142	169	N/A	132
Overweight *	1	30.1	37.5	31.5	30.7	26.8	37.5	30.2	30.5	32.1	27.8	28.6
Diabetes	1	7.8	12.4	7.3	6.9	7.5	9.6	9.8	7.9	8.9	8	7.4
High blood pressure	1	18.8	26.6	17	18	18.2	18.9	19.1	21	21.4	21.9	23
Mood disorder	3	11.4	13.5	12.2	13.6	11.1	12.9	14.4	11.8	9.9	8.2	13.2
Anxiety disorder	1	14.8	19	15.8	15.2	13.2	16.4	17.8	14.5	14.7	14.1	15.2

1=highest rate; 10=lowest rate

*Self-reported

Table 3. Health Behaviours by Percentage of Population and Province

	NL Rank	Canada	NL	AB	BC	MB	NB	NS	ON	PE	QC	SK
Current smoker (daily or occasional)	1	11.6	16.3	11.4	8.9	11.7	13.2	15.1	10.8	15.5	13.2	14.9
Heavy drinking	1	19.7	25	20.7	18.9	21.4	21.3	21.5	18.1	23.6	21.4	19.9
18+ Physical activity**	10	53.9	50.3	58	62.4	52.8	50.6	55.4	51.5	51.3	51.7	52.2
12-17 Physical activity**	6	45.2	50.3	51.2	53.6	48.6	34	53.5	38.7	55.7	46.8	50.6
Fruit and vegetable consumption, 5 times or more per day*	10	21.8	11.9	19.4	21.2	19.7	15.9	17.7	19.9	16.6	28.6	21.9

1=highest percentage; 10=lowest percentage

*Self-reported (age 18+ average 150 minutes per week, age 12-17 average 60 minutes per day)

**Lower values are considered worse

Conclusions

1. Compared to the rest of Canada, the NL population has extremely high rates of hospitalizations for heart attacks, strokes, and self-harm.
2. There are also high rates of obesity, chronic disease, and mental disorders.
3. NL has high rates of unhealthy behaviours and low rates of healthy behaviours.
4. Well-Being NL (www.wellbeingnl.ca), which is focused on building awareness and action to influence social factors on health outcomes and quality of life, has the potential to help improve these provincial outcomes moving forward.