

Backgrounder

Tobacco and vaping surveillance systems in Canada – 2019.

Measurements of usage

Government and government-funded surveillance activities:

Survey	Contact	Survey period	Expected release date
National-level			
Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) CCHS 2018.	Centre for Population Health Data client services statcan.hd-ds.statcan@canada.ca	Annual Public Use Microdata released bi-annually	
Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth		Occasional February 11, 2019 to June 28, 2019	Data release scheduled for March 2020.
Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey		Annual, beginning November 2019	January 2020
Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey	hc.cstads.questions-ectade.sc@canada.ca	Bi-annual In the field 2018-2019	Will be released by Health Canada.
COMPASS	Scott Leatherdale, University of Waterloo sleather@uwaterloo.ca	Annual since 2012-2013	2018-2019 results released in August 2019
Provincial			
B.C. Adolescent Health Survey 2018.	mccreary@mcs.bc.ca	2008, 2013, 2018	Released.
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Monitor	survey@camh.ca	Annual	
Ontario Student Drug Use Health Survey	survey@camh.ca	Bi-annual survey, 1977 to 2017.	

Canadian Community Health Survey.

Since 2015, the CCHS has included a question on past 30 day use of electronic cigarettes. This question is part of optional content on Tobacco Product Alternatives, and is not asked across Canada. Results for Ontario in 2015 found that 3% of Ontarians over 12 had used a vaping product in the past 30 days (2.9% of those over 19 years of age).^{1 2} In 2019, Health Canada reported that beginning in 2020, an additional 10 questions on smoking/nicotine use were being added to the core questions of CCHS.³

Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey

Health Canada has funded student smoking surveys since the mid 1990s, most recently as the biennial Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Survey (CSTADS), conducted by Propel Centre at the University of Waterloo.⁴ In 2019, the federal government issued a Request for Information soliciting interest from data collectors for the 11 planned cycle (2020-2021).⁵

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CAMH Monitor

Since 2013, the CAMH monitor has asked about the use of e-cigarettes. In 2017, questions were asked only of lifetime and past-year use. In 2017, it reported “[past year] electronic cigarette use did not change significantly between 2013 (10.5%) and 2017 (8.5%) among the total sample”.⁶

B.C. Adolescent Health Survey

The survey is administered by the McCreary Centre Society between January and June 2018 (during the coming-into-force of the federal law legalizing e-cigarette sales). The survey is administered to 38,000 BC students between grades 7 and 12. In 2018, questions on past-30 day use of electronic cigarettes were asked of all students (in 2013 it was asked only of cigarette smokers). 21% of BC students were reported to have vaped with nicotine, compared with 7% of students who had smoked a cigarette. Vaping with nicotine included 64% of smokers students (by inference 17% of non-smoking B.C. youth are vaping with nicotine).⁷

COMPASS

COMPASS is a prospective cohort (2012-21) collecting longitudinal data annually from 65,000+ grade 9 to 12 students in Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, British Columbia, and Nunavut on a variety of chronic disease (CD) and mental health (MH) risk factors and outcomes, including tobacco and e-cigarettes. COMPASS also measures annual ongoing changes to health interventions surrounding the participating students. This enables evaluation of interventions as natural experiments using the quasi-experimental design inherent in COMPASS. To date, more than 50 school boards, 200+ schools, and 200,000+ students have participated in COMPASS to date. Data can be examined using annual repeat cross-sectional data or the linked longitudinal data.^{8 9}

Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth

This Statistics Canada survey surveys health behaviours of more than 90,000 Canadian children aged 1 to 17. The initial survey was conducted between February 11, 2019 and June 28, 2019. Included in the questionnaire are some questions for youth aged 12 to 17 years old related to tobacco and e-cigarettes or other tobacco alternatives (past 30 days, and frequency).¹⁰ The pilot survey was administered in 2016 and also included questions on e-cigarette use.¹¹

Ontario Student Drug Use Health Survey.

A bi-annual study conducted by CAMH of Ontario students in grades 7 through 12.¹² Questions on vaping are included in the “Form B” versions of the English questionnaires.^{13 14}

Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey

Health Canada replaced the long-running Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS) with the Canadian Tobacco Alcohol and Drug Survey (CTADS) in 2012. The last wave of CTADS survey was conducted in 2017. In 2019, Health Canada let it be known that a new Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey would be conducted under Statistics Canada’s “Rapid Stats” program.¹⁵

Endnotes

- 1 OTRU. Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy Monitoring Report: Use of Tobacco and Alternative Products https://otru.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2017_SMR_Tobacco_Alternative_Products.pdf
- 2 Statistics Canada. Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) – 2018 http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.pl?Function=assembleInstr&a=1&&lang=en&Item_Id=839130
- 3 Personal communications
- 4 Statistics Canada Canadian Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CTADS) <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canadian-student-tobacco-alcohol-drugs-survey/2016-2017-summary.html>
- 5 https://buyandsell.gc.ca/cds/public/2019/04/10/4c646cec3069b182bbc6c7d5edadec85/ABES.PROD.PW__SS.B008.E35029.EBSU000.PDF
- 6 CAMH Monitor eReport 2017. <https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdfs---camh-monitor/camh-monitor-2017-ereport-final-pdf.pdf?la=en&hash=A411E25BB4E8838EE41F89D46799C3E527352B21>
- 7 McCreary Centre. Results of the 2018 BC Adolescent Health Survey https://www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/balance_and_connection.pdf
- 8 University of Waterloo. Compass system. <https://uwaterloo.ca/compass-system/>
- 9 Personal correspondence
- 10 Statistics Canada. Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth – 2019 http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=1209093&UL=1V&
- 11 Statistics Canada. EQ - PILOT - Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth, Youth version http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Instr.pl?Function=getInstrumentList&Item_Id=314505&UL=1V&
- 12 <https://www.camh.ca/en/science-and-research/institutes-and-centres/institute-for-mental-health-policy-research/ontario-student-drug-use-and-health-survey---osduhs>
- 13 <https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdf---osduhs/form-a-es-grades-7-8-2019-osduhs-pdf.pdf?la=en&hash=A039632AFDB550AE081FA8302B8368DD22329FD0>
- 14 <https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdf---osduhs/form-b-ss-grades-9-12-2019-osduhs-pdf.pdf?la=en&hash=7376FDA2387F5E3B5EE95FE5E7B7124502FAD404>
- 15 Personal Communication.