

High lipid levels call for concern, study finds

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A study led by a Simon Fraser University health scientist shows that almost half of Canadians between 18 and 79 years of age have high lipid levels – a condition known as dyslipidemia. It also found that more than 80 per cent of those with the condition are not being treated to recommended levels.

High lipids are a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease (CVD), a leading cause of death among Canadians, says SFU professor Michel Joffres. The study has just been published by the Canadian Public Health Association.

Joffres says his research team's investigation of high blood lipids in the Canadian population is the first to be undertaken in two decades.

"We were expecting to find a better level of awareness, treatment and control of high blood lipids," says Joffres. "This data shows that there is still a lot of work to be done to improve the situation at the population level.

"The last time we looked at the level of high blood lipids in the Canadian population was 1992. The recent data from the Canadian Health Measures Survey (used in the study) shows that there has been very little change since that time.

"What's concerning is that people with these high levels of [blood lipids](#) are at a higher risk of heart disease and stroke."

Joffres says the situation seems to be similar to that of the 1990s with hypertension, when there were low levels of awareness, treatment and overall control of the condition. "While we had a remarkable improvement in the level of treatment and control of hypertension since the last Canadian survey (CHHS), the data suggests that this has not been paralleled in the lipids context," he adds.

"Given the effectiveness of [treatment](#) of dyslipidemia, the potential exists to achieve a better control of the condition in Canada."

The researchers suggest that the data be integrated into CVD reduction recommendations and that it represents an important baseline for assessing progress.

It's estimated that [dyslipidemia](#) is responsible for about 4.4 million deaths globally.

Provided by Simon Fraser University

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