

The Canadian Community Health Survey, Cycle 2.2, Nutrition (2004)— A Guide to Accessing and Interpreting the Data

The *Canadian Community Health Survey, Cycle 2.2, Nutrition (2004)—A Guide to Accessing and Interpreting the Data* was released online on July 6, 2006 by the Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada. This Guide was developed to be a basic reference to assist those interested in making use of the CCHS 2.2 data. Users of this survey require additional knowledge about the kinds of nutrition-related data presented and how to interpret them in a meaningful way. Health Canada partnered with Dr. Susan Barr, Professor of Nutrition at University of British Columbia, to write this user-friendly guide.

What is the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) Cycle 2.2, Nutrition?

The CCHS 2.2, a joint initiative of Statistics Canada and Health Canada, is the first survey to provide national nutrition data since the Nutrition Canada Survey was carried out almost 35 years ago. This cross-sectional survey, conducted in 2004, provides information at the national and provincial levels, and included an over-sampling of Aboriginal populations off-reserve. The CCHS 2.2 is a rich source of dietary data gathered using a one day 24-hour recall for the total group and a repeat recall for a sub-sample. Information on Body Mass Index, household food security and physical activity, nutrients, foods, food groups and eating patterns are among the variables contained in the data set. The CCHS 2.2 data was released in waves—the first on July 6, 2005 contained the general health questionnaire component. The second release on July 6, 2006, contained nutrient data. Data on foods and food groups is planned for release in the fall of 2006.

What is covered by the Guide?

The Guide was developed to contribute to the capacity of the CCHS 2.2 data users to understand the data, and to promote consistency in how the data are interpreted. To these ends, the Guide focuses on four areas. They cover a description of the CCHS in general and details of cycle 2.2 in particular, CCHS 2.2 data tables and their access, and a discussion of comparisons between CCHS 2.2 results with those of other surveys. A feature of this Guide is an overview of the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) and discussion of the interpretation of the CCHS 2.2 nutrient data relative to the DRIs.

In addition to the DRIs, the Guide explores other issues related to the appropriate interpretation and application of the data (e.g. interpretation of the food security and the fruits and vegetables modules, children's weight classification); methodological issues such as under-reporting of dietary intake; why analysed data are reported the way they are in tables or text; and data limitations. It also includes a list of links (e.g. to the questionnaires and the 24-hour recall method that were used) and references.

The Guide presents sample tables and addresses how to access CCHS 2.2 data as well as tables and reports from Health Canada and Statistics Canada. Feature reports related to data on adult and child obesity and the eating habits of Canadians have been produced by Statistics Canada and are available on the Statistics Canada web-site.

How to access the Guide

To access the Guide in PDF or HTML formats, or to order a printed version, visit our website at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/cchs-guide-escc_e.html. The Interpretative Guide to CCHS 2.2 Data complements the workshops and documents that Statistics Canada produces for this survey.

By addressing the complexities and interpretive challenges of these data, it is anticipated that the Guide will increase confidence that one can use these data appropriately and to their fullest extent. We would like to hear from you. Once you have had an opportunity to review the Guide and use it as a reference, let us know what you think. If you would like further information, please contact us at: healthy_eating@hc-sc.gc.ca