

Canadians and Trans Fats



Report

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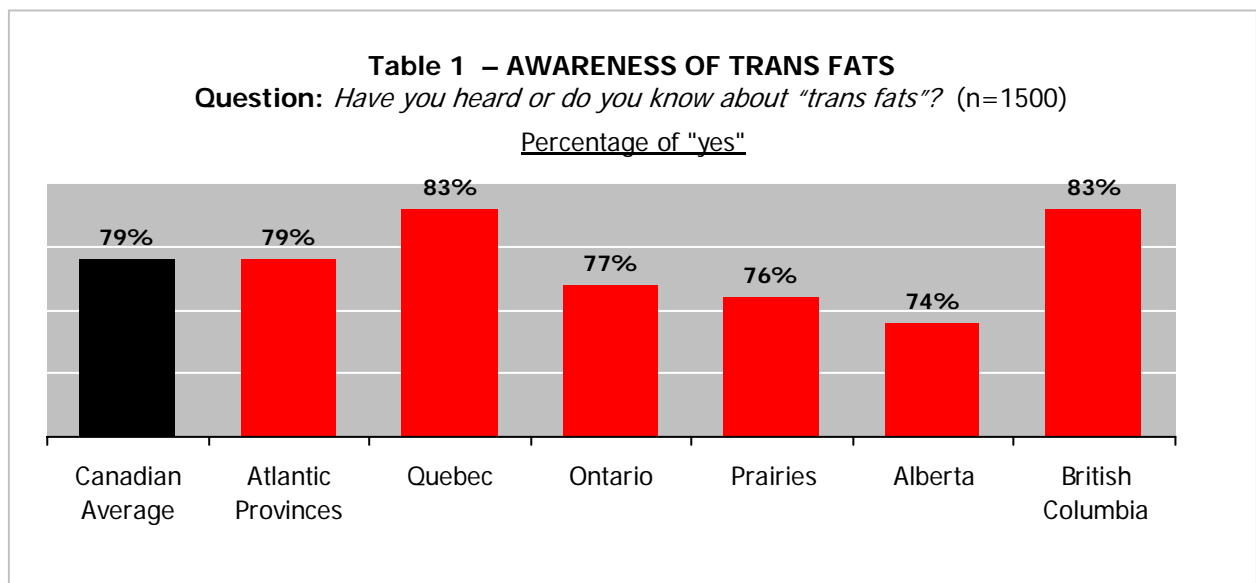
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Results

1. Eight Canadians Out of Ten Have Heard of Trans Fats

As the cold weather approaches, this often means returning to a more sedentary lifestyle when Canadians prepare to ensconce themselves in their households to face the dreariness of autumn. Troubles never come singly, as the saying goes, thus a sedentary lifestyle often means turning to chips, cupcakes, cookies and other sweets that we snack on steadily in front of the television. It's enough to rekindle the debate around trans fats, a much talked about subject in the last year, especially since new regulations aimed at limiting - even prohibiting - the use of trans fats in food products distributed in Canada are on the legislative menu of the federal government.

Canadians seem to be paying careful attention to the concern around trans fats, 79% of them say they have heard about trans fats, a proportion that does not vary according to gender. Moreover, the strongest proportion of people who know about trans fats is found in Quebec (83%).



If awareness of trans fats is comparable among men and women, the latter claim to know more about the subject. When asked about their level of knowledge regarding trans fats, 17% of respondents (among those who have heard about trans fats) said they knew a lot as opposed to 47% who knew somewhat and 36% who knew little about what trans fats are and where they are found. Among women, however, 20% consider themselves experts in the matter while among men this proportion only reaches 13%.

Table 2 – LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF TRANS FATS

Question: *Would you say you know a lot, know somewhat, or know a little about what trans fats are or where they are found?*

Base: Know trans fats (n=1219)	Total Population	Men	Women	AP	QC	ON	PR	AB	BC
Know a lot	17%	13%	20%	7%	19%	19%	15%	19%	12%
Know somewhat	47%	45%	48%	43%	55%	45%	47%	30%	50%
Know little	36%	41%	31%	50%	26%	36%	38%	61%	38%

2. A Predominantly Female Concern

If women know more about trans fats, they are also more likely to believe that the subject should be a major concern for the population. Canada wide, 51% of respondents feel that trans fats should be a major concern, a proportion that attains 59% among women (versus 43% among men). If you add the 35% of Canadians who believe that trans fats should be a minor concern, close to nine out of ten Canadians (86%) are of the opinion that trans fats should be monitored, whereas only 4% say that it is not really a concern at all.

Concern about trans fats also increases with age. If 41% of respondents between 18 to 24 years of age say it is a major concern, a full 60% think the same among those 55 years of age or older. Also, the level of knowledge of trans fats has a direct influence on respondents' level of concern. Among those who know a lot on the subject, 74% say that it should be a major concern, versus 60% among those who know somewhat about it and 39% among those who know little.

Table 3 – CONCERN ABOUT TRANS FATS

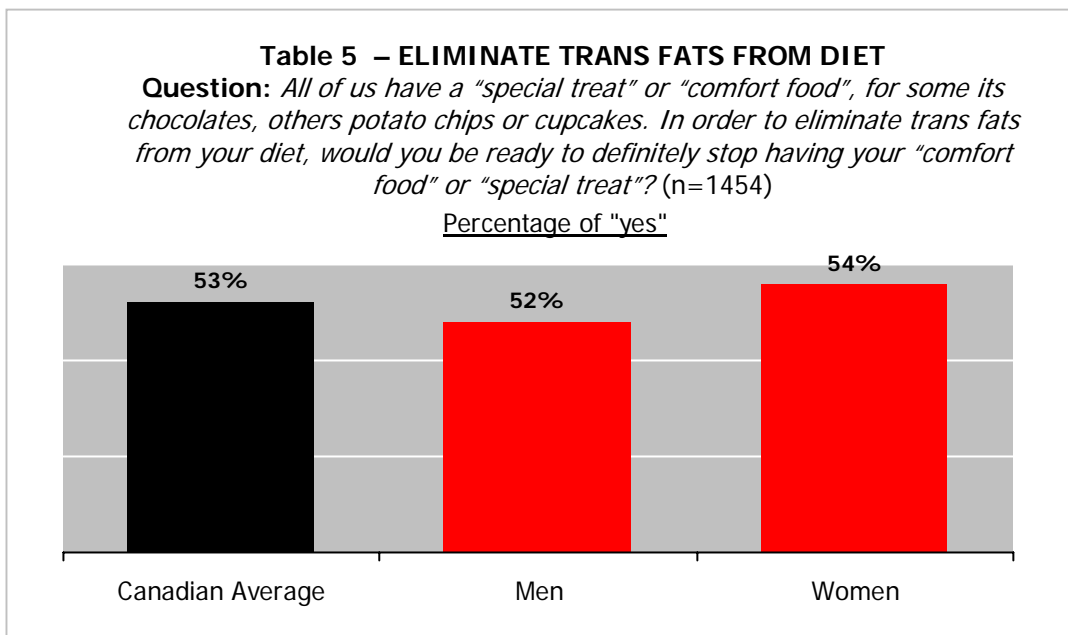
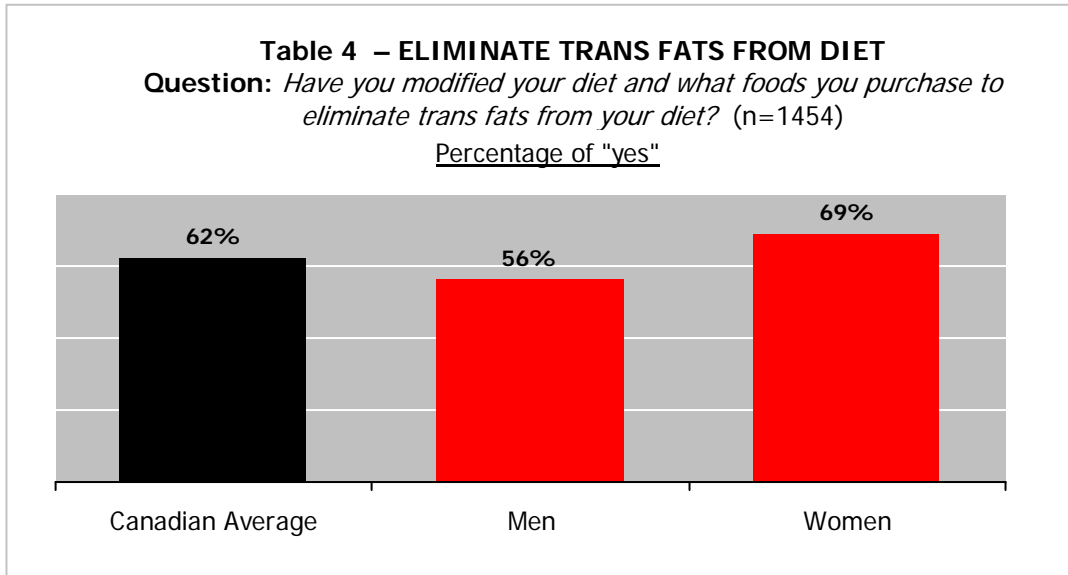
Question: *To what extent do you feel that Canadians should be concerned about this subject matter? Should it be a major concern, minor concern, or not really a concern at all?*

(n=1454)	Total Population	Male	Female	AP	QC	ON	PR	AB	BC
Major concern	51%	43%	59%	48%	59%	50%	50%	43%	47%
Minor concern	35%	42%	28%	39%	31%	34%	32%	39%	42%
Not really a concern at all	4%	5%	4%	2%	4%	5%	6%	5%	2%

3. Many Canadians Change Diet to Eliminate Trans Fats

As proof of how seriously Canadians take the issue of trans fats, two-thirds (62%) of respondents say they have made changes to their diet and more than half (53%) would be willing to stop having their favourite treat in order to eliminate trans fats from their diet.

It is interesting to note that women are more likely to have actually changed their diet (69% versus 56% among men). However, when it comes to forgoing their special treat completely, the proportion of men and women who are ready to make the ultimate sacrifice is comparable.



Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1,500 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres from September 6 to September 11, 2005. Up to ten call-backs were made in the case of non-response.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to region, gender and language spoken at home to ensure a sample representative of the entire Canadian adult population. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1,500 respondents is $\pm 2.6\%$, 19 times out of 20.

Questionnaire

T1

NEW SUBJECT

T1. Have you heard or do you know about "trans fats"?

Yes	1	
No	2	=> QT3
Don't Know / Refused	9	=> / FIN

T2

T2. Would you say you know a lot, know somewhat, or know a little about what trans fats are or where they are found?

Know a lot	1
Know somewhat	2
Know little	3
Don't Know/Refused	9

T3

T3. To what extent do you feel that Canadians should be concerned about this subject matter? Should it be a major concern, minor concern, or not really a concern at all?

Major concern	1
Minor concern	2
Not really a concern at all	3
Don't Know/Refused	9

T4

T4. Have you modified your diet and what foods you purchase to eliminate trans fats from your diet?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know/Refused	9

T5

T5. All of us have a "special treat" or "comfort food", for some its chocolates, others potato chips or cupcakes. In order to eliminate trans fats from your diet, would you be ready to definitely stop having your "comfort food" or "special treat"?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know/Refused	9
