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Deaths - 2004 - Previous release

Life expectancy in Canada for both sexes combined surpassed 80 years for the first time in 2004, increasing from 79.9 years to 80.2.

Between 1979 and 2004, life expectancy among men rose 6.4 years, while among women, it increased only 3.8 years.

Life expectancy rose in 2004 for both sexes, but the growth was stronger among men. For men, life expectancy increased by 0.4 years to 77.8 years, while for women, it went up by only 0.2 years to 82.6.

Women born in 2004 are expected to live about 4.8 years longer than their male counterparts. This was down slightly from 5.0 years in 2003.

The widest gap between male and female life expectancy during the last quarter century was in 1979 at 7.4 years. The gap in female-male life expectancy in 2004 was the smallest in the past 25 years.

Infant mortality rate remains stable

In comparison to 2003, Canada's infant mortality rate remained stable in 2004 at 5.3 infant deaths for every 1,000 live births. During the past 25 years, the rate has declined by 52%.

In 2004, the infant mortality rate among boys fell to 5.5 per 1,000 live births, down from 5.7 in 2003. However, the rate among girls increased from 4.8 to 5.0 per 1,000 live births.

In 2004, infant mortality rates were below the national average in seven regions: Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and the Northwest Territories.

Between 2003 and 2004, infant mortality rates increased in British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec and Yukon Territory. The highest increase was in Yukon. Death increase one of smallest in the past 25 years

In total, there were 226,584 deaths registered in Canada in 2004, up only 415 or 0.2% from 2003. This was one of the smallest annual increases in the number of deaths in the past 25 years.

In 2004, a total of 114,513 men died, down 0.3% from 2003 and just the fifth decline since 1979. At the same time, the number of women who died rose 0.7% to 112,071. It was the smallest increase in female deaths in the past four years.

Gains in the overall number of deaths since the mid-1990s have been almost exclusively the result of continuing increases in female deaths. Deaths among men reached a plateau during the mid-1990s. Deaths among women could soon outnumber those among men

Deaths among women could soon outnumber those among men, according to mortality data.

For every 100 female deaths in 2004, there were 102 male deaths. This sex ratio in 2004 was the smallest during the past quarter-century, and was well below the ratio of 135 in 1979.

At birth, boys still outnumber girls by a ratio of about 106 to 100 in Canada. The sex ratio for deaths fell below the sex ratio for births in 2000 and the falling trend continued.

Because of higher mortality among men at every age group, men tend to make up the majority of deaths at all ages, with one exception.

For several years, women have comprised the majority of deaths over the age of 80, for the simple reason that they make up the majority of the over-80 population.

Regions: Deaths down in three provinces, two territories

The number of deaths declined in three provinces and two territories in 2004: New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Provincially, the largest relative increase in deaths (+3.4%) occurred in Prince Edward Island, followed by Nova Scotia.

Prince Edward Island was also the only province with an excess of female deaths; for every 100 female deaths, there were only 95 male deaths.

Female and male deaths were approximately equivalent in numbers in five provinces: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. All other provinces and territories had an excess of male deaths.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3233.

The 2004 issue of the publication Deaths (84F0211XWE, free) is now available from the Publications module of our website.

For general information or to order custom tabulations, contact Client Services (613-951-1746; hd-ds@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Dai, Shiang Ying

(613-951-1759), Health Statistics Division.

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