

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from March 19 to March 20, 2020, among 1,000 adults in Canada. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.1 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

Which of the following statements best describes how you personally feel about the COVID-19 outbreak?

It is a major crisis – 82%
It is a minor crisis – 13%
It is not a crisis at all – 3%
Not sure – 2%

Again thinking about the COVID-19 outbreak, which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

The worst is definitely behind us – 6%
The worst is probably behind us – 16%
The worst is probably ahead of us – 45%
The worst is definitely ahead of us – 27%
Not sure – 7%

Some Canadians Forgoing Social Distancing in COVID-19 Crisis

Three-in-ten say it is “reasonable” to attend a gathering of 10 people or fewer—against the advice of health authorities.

Vancouver, BC [March 21, 2020] – While more than seven-in-ten Canadians are resigned to a worsening situation on account of the COVID-19 outbreak, some believe specific activities that could spread the virus are still sensible at this time, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, 72% of Canadians think the worst is “definitely” or “probably” ahead of us when it comes to COVID-19.

Albertans (82%), Atlantic Canadians (81%) and residents aged 55 and over (76%) are more likely to believe that the situation will worsen.

Over the past two weeks, health authorities and governments of all levels have urged Canadians to abide by social distancing guidelines and increase the physical space between people to avoid spreading the illness. These recommendations include working from home instead of at the office and avoiding in-person visits to loved ones.

More than one-in-five Canadians (22%) believe visiting elderly relatives, such as parents or grandparents, is “reasonable” at this time—including 28% of those aged 18-to-34, 26% of men and 27% of Ontarians.

Three-in-ten Canadians (30%) think it is “reasonable” to hold a gathering of 10 people or fewer at this time.

“Toronto’s chief medical officer of health, Dr. Eileen de Villa, stated on March 18 that having people over for dinner or coffee is not social distancing,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “Yet we see that 41% of Canadians aged 18-to-34, 38% of Albertans and 34% of men believe this is reasonable behaviour during the COVID-19 outbreak.”

Significantly fewer Canadians think it is “reasonable” at this point to eat inside restaurants (15%), hold a gathering of more than 10 people (13%) and exercise at gyms or fitness facilities (12%).

Across the country, 82% of Canadians refer to the COVID-19 outbreak as a “major crisis”, including 85% of women, 85% of Quebecers and 92% of Atlantic Canadians.



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Conversely, 13% of Canadians believe the outbreak represents a "minor crisis", while only 3% believe it is "not a crisis at all."

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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