A survey conducted in 2004 indicates that approximately 78% of Alberta seniors reported that they enjoyed excellent, very good, or good health. (Note: Source: The 2004 Public Survey About Health and the Health System in Alberta, Alberta Health and Wellness.)

According to Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007:

- More than one third of seniors reported their perceived health as either very good or excellent (38.5%). When it came to mental health, 61.3% reported their perceived health as either very good or excellent. This was lower than the general population, who reported 74.6% had very good or good health.

- Smoking and drinking are less common among seniors. Just over one tenth of seniors (11.6%) considered themselves daily or occasional smokers, compared to 21.9% of the total provincial population. In 2007, 5.8% of seniors rated themselves as heavy drinkers, compared to 23.9% of Albertans (over 12 years). Heavy drinking is defined as five or more drinks on one occasion, at least
once a month in the past year.

- Close to four out of ten (39.2%) Alberta seniors reported being either physically active or moderately active. However, more than half of seniors reported they were overweight or obese, with 17.5% reporting they were obese. More senior men (56.4%) reported they were overweight or obese compared to senior women (48.9%).

- Less than half of seniors (39.8%) reported eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day. This was similar to rates reported by the total population. Senior men were less likely to report adequate fruit and vegetable intake, with 35.0% reporting five or more servings a day, compared to 43.9% of senior women.

- Conversely, Alberta seniors reported much lower levels of stress compared to the total population. When asked if they perceive quite a lot of stress in their lives, only 10.5% of Alberta seniors agreed, compared to 22.0% of the general population.

- The majority of seniors (62.5%) reported a strong or very strong sense of belonging to the local community. This was slightly higher than the general population at 60.7%.

SENIORS REPORT HIGHER LEVELS OF DISABILITY

In 2006, 47.0% of Alberta seniors reported they had a disability, that is, their everyday activities were limited because of a healthrelated condition or problem. In comparison, only 11.3% of 15 to 64 year old Albertans reported that they had a disability.

Of the seniors who reported a disability, 35.9% reported that their disability was severe or very severe. Seniors' disabilities most commonly affected their mobility (34.4%), agility (32.3%), pain (29.2%) and hearing (20.5%). (Note: Source: Statistics Canada, A
SENIORS MORE LIKELY TO RECEIVE CARE FOR LONG-TERM HEALTH CONDITION

According to Statistics Canada’s 2007 General Social Survey, seniors aged 65 years and older were more likely than non-seniors to be receiving care for a long-term health condition or physical limitation. In Alberta, 53.7% of those receiving care were aged 65 years and older.

Older seniors were even more likely to be receiving care. Of all those receiving care 14.3% were aged 75 to 84 years and 31.0% were aged 85 years or older.

Credit: Vegreville Observer