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**Canadians Not Heeding Doctors' Sun Safety Advice**

**By News Canada**

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Poll reveals Canadians' apathy for sun safety practices

(NC)—Although more than 90 per cent of Canadian family doctors feel that the combination of wearing a wide brimmed hat in conjunction with sunscreen is an effective method of protection against the sun's rays, only 21 per cent of Canadians wear a wide brimmed hat every time they go outdoors, according to a recent poll of Canadian family doctors and the general population. Surprising news, considering that the poll also showed that 94 per cent of Canadians feel it is important to protect their skin against the sun's rays, including 73 per cent who feel it is very important. The poll was sponsored by Tilley Endurables as part of its ongoing sun safety awareness education program.

"Even though we live in Canada, everyone should still be protecting their skin against the sun's rays," says Dr. Charlene Linzon, dermatologist. "Skin diseases caused by sun exposure in Canada are on the rise, yet Canadians remain reluctant to practice proper sun safety measures."

**Doctors know best**

Despite ongoing education efforts, Canadians are not making sun safety practices part of their everyday lives. Family doctors continue to see many patients with skin conditions as a result of sun exposure, according to the poll. As a result of exposure to the sun, doctors most often see sunburns (61 per cent), skin cancer (49 per cent), and premature aging or wrinkles (40 per cent). Doctors say that an average of 71 per cent of these conditions could be avoided if patients use sun protection such as sunscreen in conjunction with a wide brimmed hat.

"Despite awareness of the dangers of sun exposure – even when outside for only a short time or on a cloudy day – people still think that sunburns can't happen to them. It's also surprising how many adults don't take the time to protect themselves, even if they do practice sun safety with their kids," says Dr. Linzon. "By simply avoiding peak sun hours, and using simple sun safety measures such as applying

## Canadians Not Heeding Doctors' Sun Safety Advice

effective sunscreens and wearing wide brimmed hats – which dramatically reduce the harmful impact of the sun's rays – Canadians can safely enjoy time spent outdoors."

### **Wisdom comes with age**

Of the Canadians polled, older people are more likely than others to feel it is very important to protect their skin from the sun's rays and as a result are more devoted to their sun safety practices. Eighty-one per cent of respondents aged 65 and older feel it is very important to protect their skin from the sun's rays, compared to 61 per cent of respondents aged 18–24. Additionally, older Canadians are more likely to wear a wide brimmed hat usually or every time they go outdoors – 55 per cent of those 55 and older, compared to 36 per cent of respondents aged 18–24.

"Sun safety is important at every age and you don't need to be 'sunbathing' to be affected by the sun's rays," says Dr. Linzon. "It is particularly important for young Canadians to protect themselves from the

sun, as melanoma – one of three types of skin cancer – is the fourth most common cancer among those aged 15–34, and can be lethal if not detected and treated early. In addition, young people especially don't seem to realize that wrinkles and signs of premature aging result from the sun, and that a baseball cap doesn't give your face the protection it needs. Children, teens and young adults need adequate sun protection such as using sunscreen, protective clothing and wide brimmed hats."

### **Listen to your mother; practice sun safety like your dad!**

In the battle of the sexes, of those polled, women are more likely than men to feel protecting their skin from the sun's rays is very important (80 per cent versus 65 per cent respectively). However, women are not practicing sun safety to the same extent as men.

Fifty-one per cent of men report they wear a wide brimmed hat usually or every time they go outdoors, compared to 45 per cent of women.

"Although women are aware of the conditions caused by sun exposure, particularly wrinkles and premature aging, and are aware of the importance of protecting one's skin, they are not as diligent about sun protection for themselves," says Dr. Linzon. "Regardless of their excuse, whether it be convenience, time or fashion, women need to make sun safety part of a daily health regimen."

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The poll, conducted by Pollara and sponsored by Tilley Endurables, is based on interviews conducted with a random sample of 1,205 Canadians 18 years of age and older and 150 general practitioners, between April 1 and April 10, 2002. The results of the sample from the general public are accurate to within +/- 2.9 per cent, while results from the sample of general practitioners are accurate to within +/-

8.1 per cent, nineteen times out of twenty.

Source: Tilley Endurables

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## **Support For Organ Donation High: Survey**

### **By News Canada**

Family consent key

(NC)—Canadians overwhelmingly support the idea of organ donation. A 2001 survey by the Environics Research Group of more than 1,516 Canadians revealed that 96% of Canadians support the idea of organ and tissue donation. They also have a fairly good knowledge of the official way to express their intention to donate with their provinces and territories.

A total of 46% of Canadians have signed their cards or registered their intentions to be a donor with their province or territory. However, 45% remain uncommitted. Only 9% say they have decided not to donate.

89% of those who have signed up (46%) have also discussed their wishes with their families. The challenge facing Canada is to get the 45% who remain uncommitted to take the decision, sign up and then tell their families. It is a life-saving, life-improving decision... and it could be your last.

For more information on organ and tissue donation and how you can donate, visit

on the Internet.

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