



The Heavy Burden of Obesity

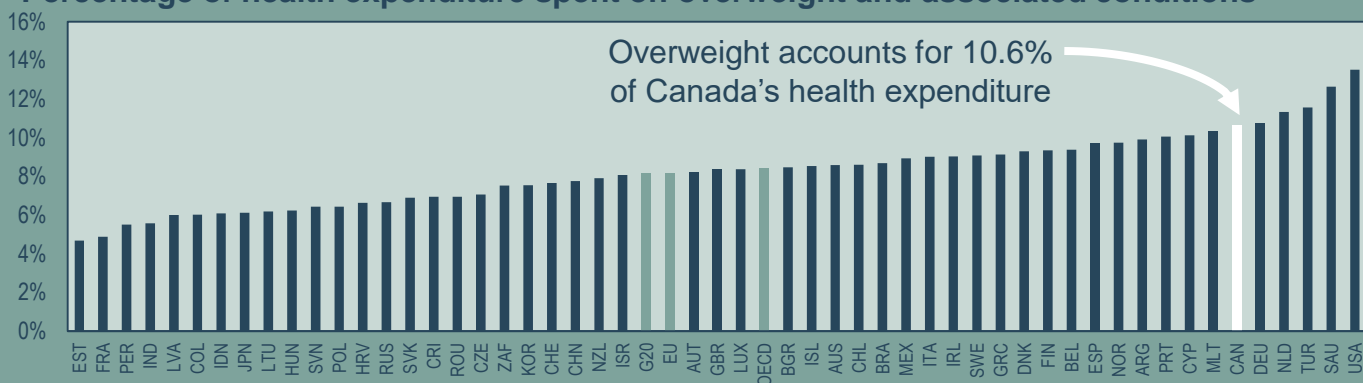
The Economics of Prevention

More than **one in four** adult are obese in Canada. As a result, Canadians live on average **3 years** less due to overweight. The impact on the economy is large: overweight accounts for **10.6% of health expenditure** – one of the highest rates across all countries analysed. Overweight lowers labour market outputs by the equivalent of **579 thousand full-time workers** per year. Combined, this means that overweight reduces Canada's **GDP by 3.6%**. To cover these costs, each person in Canada pays an additional **CAD 659 in taxes** per year.



Canada

Percentage of health expenditure spent on overweight and associated conditions



To tackle the obesity epidemic, Canada has put in place a number of policies, including mandatory restrictions on TV advertising to children in the Quebec province. Mandatory food labelling has recently been proposed. However, more can be done



A mixed package – which includes menu labelling, prescribing physical activity and workplace wellness programmes – could prevent 86 thousand non-communicable diseases by 2050, save CAD 81 million per year in health cost, and increase employment and productivity by the equivalent of 5 thousand full-time workers per year

Implementing a mixed policy package or policies to encourage reformulation would **prevent non-communicable diseases, reduce health expenditure and increase the productivity of the workforce:**

20%

Achieving a 20% calorie reduction for foods high in sugar, salt, calories and saturated fats could prevent 387 thousand non-communicable diseases by 2050, save CAD 339 million per year in health cost, and increase employment and productivity by the equivalent of 15 thousand full-time workers per year

Public health actions to promote healthier lifestyles have a positive impact on population health and are an excellent investment:

On average, for every 1 CAD invested, up to 6 CAD are returned in economic benefits