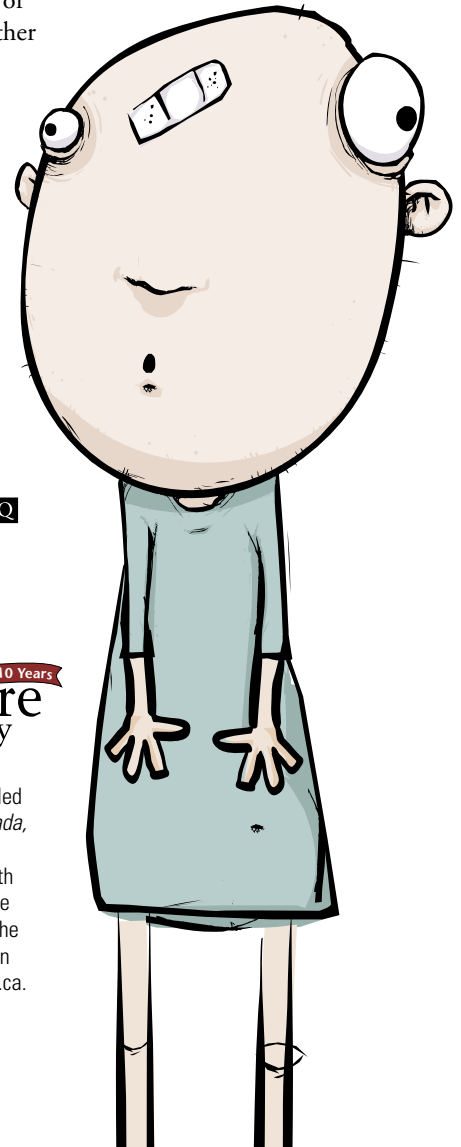


Patient Safety



1. In 2005, one in 10 adults with health problems in Canada reported receiving the wrong medication or wrong dose during the past two years. In 2002, one in 10 adults, and one in 12 children, contracted a nosocomial infection while in an acute care hospital;
2. Between April 2003 and March 2006, one in 141 babies born in hospitals outside of Quebec experienced birth trauma, such as injuries to a baby's scalp and nervous system or skull fractures; this represents more than 1,700 cases yearly.
3. One in 21 mothers giving birth by vaginal delivery experiences obstetrical traumas, such as third- or fourth-degree perineal lacerations, lacerations of the cervix, vaginal wall or sulcus, or injury to the bladder or urethra. Between April 2003 and March 2006, there were, on average, more than 9,100 reported obstetric traumas in Canadian hospitals outside of Quebec each year.
4. 3.6 out of every 1,000 patients in Canadian hospitals (outside of Quebec and parts of Manitoba) experience a pulmonary embolism, which occurs when a blood clot or globule of fat or tissue travels through the veins and into the lung. It usually originates in a vein in the leg, when it is known as deep vein thrombosis.
5. The risk of pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis generally increases with age, with patients 60 and over at higher risk than younger patients. However, the rate among children 4 and under is statistically significantly higher compared to that for older children up to 17 years of age.
6. Foreign objects left in after a surgical procedure are less common than many other adverse events, affecting about one in 3,000 surgical patients in Canadian hospitals outside of Quebec and parts of Manitoba. This still represents more than 200 cases per year between April 2003 and March 2006.
7. Previous studies show that obese patients are at higher risk of having a foreign object, such as a sponge or surgical instrument, left behind after surgery. Other higher risk groups include patients who undergo emergency operations, have an unexpected change in operation or have a change in nursing or surgical staff during a procedure. Patients aged 17 and under are at a lower risk than adults.
8. In 2003, adverse blood transfusion events in Canada were reported in about one in 4,100 cases.
9. In a survey conducted in 2006, 8% of primary care doctors reported that patients had received the wrong drug or dose, or had preventable drug interactions in the last 12 months. In 2005, 18% of nurses surveyed reported that patients in their care had occasionally or frequently received the wrong medication or dose in the previous year.
10. In 2006, 10% of Canadian primary care physicians reported routinely receiving computerized alerts about potential drug interactions or dose problems. (Another 31% said that they received this information using a manual system.) Canada's 10% compares with 23% in the United States, 40% in Germany and 80% or more in Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. **HQ**



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These factoids were compiled from *Patient Safety in Canada*, a recent analysis from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), and come from a variety of sources. The full analysis can be found on CIHI's website at www.cihi.ca.

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