

Wait Times in Canada – A Comparison by Province, 2011



At least 8 out of 10 Canadian patients are receiving priority area procedures, such as hip replacements, cataract surgery and cancer radiation treatment, within medically recommended wait times.

- In 2010, more than 80% of Canadian patients received hip replacements (84%) and cataract surgery (83%) within wait time benchmarks, while the proportion of patients receiving knee replacements and hip fracture repairs within recommended waits was slightly lower, at 79% and 78%, respectively.
- Almost all (98%) Canadians who needed radiation treatment received it within the clinically recommended time frame.
- wait times tend to be shorter in Canada's three largest provinces (Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia)
- In some provinces, more than half of knee replacement and cataract patients wait longer than the recommended time frames for their procedures, while in others, almost 9 out of 10 patients receive treatment within the wait time benchmark.
- The proportion of patients who received knee replacement surgery within the recommended six-month wait ranged from 42% in Nova Scotia and 57% in Manitoba to 83% in Quebec and 89% in Ontario.
- For cataract surgery, 48% of patients in Alberta and 62% of patients in Saskatchewan received their surgery within the recommended 16 weeks, compared with 88% of patients in Ontario and 89% of patients in New Brunswick.
- Wait times for hip fracture repair and radiation therapy do not vary as widely across Canada. Provinces performed between 72% (Saskatchewan) and 82% (Manitoba) of hip fracture repairs within the recommended 48 hours of a patient's admission to hospital.
- 85% (Nova Scotia) to 100% (Manitoba) of patients received radiation treatment within the 28-day benchmark of being ready to receive care.
- Ontario and Prince Edward Island reported that 90% or more of patients received hip replacement surgery within the recommended 182 days.
- At least 95% of patients received bypass surgery within benchmarks in all provinces where data is available, but the picture may be too favourable. There is no consistency, as of yet, in how urgency levels are applied across jurisdictions.
- Though wait times information is more limited for diagnostic imaging than for other priority area procedures, waits for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans were longer than for computed tomography (CT) scans. Currently, no pan-Canadian benchmarks exist for CT and MRI scans. **HQ**

Sources:

Wait Times in Canada—A Comparison by Province, 2011. Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). http://www.cihi.ca/CIHI-ext-portal/internet/en/document/health+system+performance/access+and+wait+times/release_21mar11?WT.ca=homepage_banner_032111_heat_e