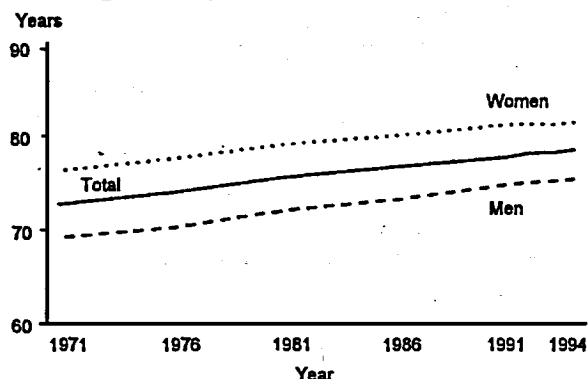


Life Expectancy at Birth, Canada, 1971-1994



Source: Statistics Canada

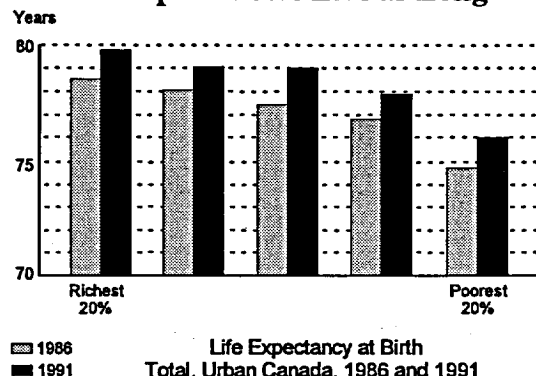
Canadians live longer . . .

product. Canadian health indicators continue to show a steady improvement. For example, Canadian life expectancy continues to rise. Moreover, the percentage of Canadians, particularly those over sixty-five, who report that they are limited in their daily activities has dropped steadily. Our infant mortality rate is 6.2 per 1000 live births, down about 75 percent over the last thirty years. Investments in Canada's health system have contributed significantly to a reduction in untimely deaths.

Our physical environment is a determinant of human health. We need to understand the vital processes involved in what is essentially a reciprocal relationship. Studies indicate that children are at higher risk of health effects from some pollutants, and almost 64 percent of Canadians feel that their health has been affected by environmental pollution.

Many Aboriginal people in Canada's Arctic have high levels of PCBs in their bodies because they depend on marine mammals as a dietary staple. These mammals store persistent organic pollutants in their fatty tissue, which are in turn transferred to humans when they are consumed. These pollutants often come from countries other than Canada.

Poorer People Do Not Live as Long

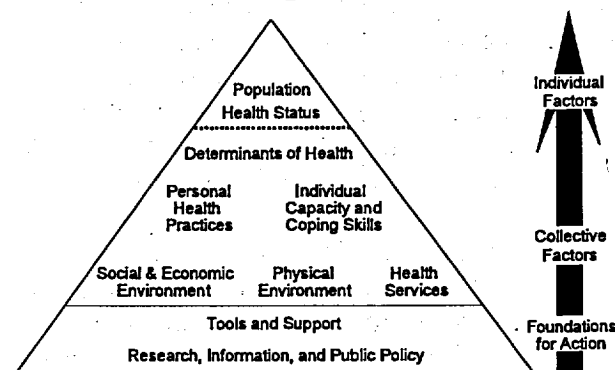


Source: Statistics Canada

. . . but lifespan is still linked to income.

Other environmentally linked risks to health exist. Admissions to hospital for emergency or urgent respiratory distress are still strongly associated with levels of pollutants such as ground level ozone and sulphates. Over the past fifteen years, the incidence of malignant melanoma, the most lethal form of skin cancer, has doubled. Chloro-fluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) are implicated in the depletion of the protective stratospheric ozone layer. Thinning of that layer leads to greater intensity of ultraviolet radiation and an increased risk to human health.

A Framework for Population Health



Source: Health Canada

Governments and health experts understand that a series of factors affect population health.