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Canadian Institute  
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## Public Summary

October 2014

Information is based on data from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and the federal drug program managed by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB).

### Additional Resources

The following companion product is available on **CIHI's website**.

- Report

### Talk to Us

For data specific information:  
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## Seniors and drugs: An in-depth look

### *Drug Use Among Seniors on Public Drug Programs in Canada, 2012*

A new report by the **Canadian Institute for Health Information** takes an in-depth look at seniors and drug use. The study reveals the number and types of drugs seniors take, the cost to public drug programs, and how age and where seniors live—at home or in long-term care facilities—relate to the medications they're prescribed.

### Key findings

#### **Nearly two-thirds of seniors take 5 or more drugs.**

- Used by almost half of all seniors, statins—the most commonly prescribed drug class among this age group (65 and older)—is a type of medication used to treat high cholesterol.
- 6 of the 10 most commonly used drug classes treat heart conditions.
- Roughly 40% of seniors using public drug programs take a drug from the Beers list (a list of drugs that are potentially inappropriate for use by seniors).

#### **Seniors living in long-term care facilities take a lot more drugs, on average, than those living at home.**

- Nearly two-thirds of seniors living in long-term care (LTC) facilities take 10 or more drugs. This is more than double the proportion among seniors living at home.
- The most common drug classes taken by seniors in LTC facilities differ from those taken by seniors living at home. Drugs used to treat acid reflux and peptic ulcer disease were the most commonly used in LTC facilities, followed by 2 classes of antidepressants.