Sources of Potentially Avoidable Emergency Department Visits, 2013–2014

Visits from the community

1 in 5* visits were for conditions that could be treated at a doctor’s office or clinic

- Of these, 34% were for upper respiratory infections, sore throats and antibiotic therapies
- Nearly 3× as likely for children younger than 5 as for seniors 85 and older
- Nearly 2× as likely for rural patients as for urban patients

More than 1.4 million visits to Canadian EDs were potentially avoidable

Visits from long-term care

1 in 3 seniors in long-term care made an ED visit

- 24% of visits were for potentially preventable conditions; of these, 56% were for pneumonia and urinary tract infections
- 10% of visits were less- or non-urgent; a quarter of these were because of falls†

Notes

* Includes only visits where patients were discharged home and not admitted to a hospital bed.
† Includes only visits where patients were not admitted to a hospital bed.
ED: Emergency department.
Data for visits from the community is from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Yukon.
Data for visits from long-term care is from Ontario, Alberta and Yukon.

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