

Statistics - Abortion in Canada

Updated July 3, 2018

The following data were compiled from Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) annual statistics. See [Links to Sources](#) for each year's stats, including footnotes that explain and qualify the data.

In 2007, CIHI took over the collection and compilation of abortion statistics from Statistics Canada (StatsCan). For stats prior to 2007, see [Links to Sources](#).

Hospital reporting of abortion numbers is mandatory, but clinic reporting is not. However, all clinics do report for most years as far as we know (despite some CIHI footnotes to the contrary). Known exceptions are noted with stars in the first table.



Abortion Rights
Coalition of Canada

Coalition pour le droit à
l'avortement au Canada

Table of Contents

Abortion Rates	2
Gestational Age and Complication Rates (hospitals only and excluding Quebec).....	3
Abortion rates after 20 weeks, and total estimated abortions including unreported ones.....	4
Abortion rates by 12 weeks	4
Abortion rate per 1000 women of childbearing age (15-44)	4
Unreported abortions in Ontario	5
Links to Sources.....	6

Abortion Rates

Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	98,762	95,876	93,755	90,747	92,524 108,844**	83,708 100,958**	82,869 102,446**	81,897 100,194**	100,104	97,764
Hospital abortions	47,281	44,375	41,640	38,611	37,150	36,002	35,003	33,931	23,561	30,799
Clinic abortions	51,481	51,501	52,115	52,136	53,374 69,694**	47,706 64,946**	47,866 66,623**	47,966 66,263**	76,543	66,965
By Province/Territory:										
Newfoundland/Labrador	850	904	956	1,068	1,026	1,054	223 *	1,051	1,019	978
Prince Edward Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nova Scotia	2,119	2,126	2,119	2,125	2,157	2,119	2,077	2,061	1,924	1,908
New Brunswick	1,082	1,096	1,104	1,098	1,056	1,058	1,036	528*	676*	827*
Quebec	27,697	27,295	27,139	26,106	26,245	25,400	25,253	25,083	24,193	23,393
Ontario **	32,331	32,150	30,268	28,765	28,114 44,434**	27,386 44,636**	25,108 43,865**	23,746 42,043**	39,679**	38,383
Manitoba	3,978	4,025	4,247	4,150	3,998	3,988	3,873	4,015	3,759	3,668
Saskatchewan	1,806	1,889	2,019	1,915	1,928	2,015	1,921	1,960	1,855	2,082
Alberta	12,590	13,062	13,150	13,084	13,372	13,287	13,376	13,815	13,358	12,948
British Columbia	15,770	12,914*	12,461*	12,149*	14,341	7,128 *	9,574 *	9,196*	13,166	13,116
Yukon	116	139	128	147	155	145	121	102	116	116
Northwest Territories	328	171	57	40	45	35	211	255	266	277
Nunavut	95	105	107	100	87	93	96	85	93	68

* **2016/2015/2014:** Fredericton NB clinic did not report. **2014:** At least one BC clinic did not report. **2013:** At least one BC clinic did not report. Newfoundland clinic did not report. **2012:** At least two BC clinics did not report. **2008-10:** One BC clinic did not report.

** Ontario started reporting unfunded clinic abortions for 2015, and new totals also became available for 2011 to 2014. Strikeouts in the table were the previously reported numbers. The apparent increase represents a change in reporting, not an actual increase. See page 5 for explanation on unreported Ontario abortions.

Gestational Age and Complication Rates (hospitals only and excluding Quebec)

Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Gestational age: (Hospitals only, and excluding Quebec) See Links to Sources for some data prior to 2007.										
8 weeks or less	9,976	9,338	8,366	8,300	7,974	7,563	7,390	7,214	7,330	7,366
9 – 12 weeks	13,399	12,685	11,860	11,191	10,799	10,798	10,186	9,652	8,701	8,241
13- 16 weeks	2,442	2,062	1,957	1,794	1,853	1,767	1,740	1,705	1,585	1,657
17 – 20 weeks	1,023	1,019	951	846	823	839	822	853	836	846
21+ weeks	549	558	552	537	549	563	564	605	587	616
Unknown	5,641	5,533	5,128	4,908	4,577	4,542	4,741	4,710	4,522	4,192
Total	33,030	31,195	28,814	27,576	26,575	26,072	25,443	24,739	23,561	22,918
Complication rate: (Hospitals only, and excluding Quebec)										
None	32,136	30,473	28,161	26,927	25,980	25,462	24,878	24,175	23,060	22,471
Hemorrhage	343	261	227	231	221	264	231	236	174	176
Infection	130	115	101	107	109	72	76	64	70	53
Retained products of conception	124	121	101	89	97	109	102	108	112	89
Combination	82	85	91	82	69	61	73	67	60	51
Other	215	140	133	140	99	104	83	89	85	78
Total	33,030	31,195	28,814	27,576	26,575	26,072	25,443	24,739	23,561	22,918

Abortion rates after 20 weeks, and total estimated abortions including unreported ones

Abortion clinics that are not affiliated with a hospital do not perform abortions past 20 weeks (often stated as 22 weeks from last menstrual period, “LMP”). About one-third of reporting hospitals don’t report details on gestational ages, presumably all in Quebec, but we can assume that the proportion of 21+ week abortions are similar for that one-third. Therefore, taking into account the total estimated numbers of abortions for 2016: **97,973***– the estimated percentage of abortions at 21+ weeks is **0.6 percent.****

* Adding in estimated missing 2016 numbers from New Brunswick: **209**, based on adding the difference from 2013 numbers.

** Our estimated number of abortions for 2015 was 100,612, representing an apparent decrease for 2016.

Abortion rates by 12 weeks

Only hospitals report abortion numbers by gestational limits. The 2016 CIHI data show that 13.6% of hospital abortions are done after 12 weeks. For clinics however, some do not go past 16 weeks, while less than a third go as far as 20 or 22 weeks (see <http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/list-abortion-clinics-canada.pdf>). Our estimated calculation for 2016 is as follows:

3,119	Number of hospital abortions after 12 weeks (13.6%)
570	Estimate of number of hospital abortions after 12 weeks in CIHI’s “Unknown” category (using 13.6% estimate)
6,696	Number of clinic abortions after 12 weeks, based on a liberal estimate that 10% of all clinic abortions (66,965) occur after 12 weeks.
10,385	Total estimated abortions done after 12 weeks.

Therefore, based on the total number of 97,764 reported abortions, an estimated **89.4%** are done by 12 weeks.

Abortion rate per 1000 women of childbearing age (15-44)

CIHI does not publish the abortion rate per 1000 women of childbearing age, even though this is a standard measurement used throughout the world. We have calculated it as follows:

6,728,190: Canada’s population of women in the age group 15-44, from CANSIM, 2017: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/Page.cfm>

14.5 / 1000 Abortion rate per 1000 women aged 15-44, based on official CIHI data for 2016: **97,764**

Unreported abortions in Ontario

- In 2015, CIHI finally started reporting the unreported abortions from Ontario, going back to 2011. See Note and Table below.
- **Previous data:** In 2010 in Ontario, 18,402 abortions were done by non-funded clinics and doctor’s offices and not reported to CIHI (as FOI’d by an [anti-choice activist](#)). In 2014, there were 21,725 unreported abortions in Ontario ([anti-choice source](#)). This ongoing phenomenon began in the 1990s, but these abortions had never been counted by StatsCan or CIHI until now. They are all (or virtually all) first trimester abortions. Some other provinces also have small numbers (not statistically significant) of unreported abortions occurring in doctors’ offices. These abortions are billed by the individual doctors to provincial Medicare, so provincial records exist for them but they are not shared with CIHI.
- **Why did Ontario have so many unreported abortions?** The large majority of unreported abortions occur in Ontario because the NDP Bob Rae government only funded the five Toronto clinics that existed around 1990, as well as the Ottawa Morgentaler Clinic. They were funded as “Independent Health Facilities,” a Liberal program that was completed by Rae’s NDP government. Since then, several more abortion clinics have opened, but as they fell outside the IHF program, they weren’t funded. These non-funded clinics include the Brampton Women’s Clinic, Mississauga Women’s Clinic, and Women’s Care Clinic in Toronto. However, patients pay only the costs that are apart from the doctor’s fee, which is paid by OHIP.
- But the Ontario clinics **should be fully funded** by the Ontario Ministry of Health. The 1995 clarification to the *Canada Health Act* by Health Canada (<http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/backgrounders/HC-letter-Jan1995.pdf>) instructed all provincial/territorial Health Ministers to fully fund any private clinic doing medically required procedures, and that user fees charged directly to the patient were illegal. The Progressive Conservative government under Mike Harris did not abide by these requirements, and Ontario has been violating the *Canada Health Act* ever since.

Note and table from [CIHI 2015 report, Table 1:](#)

“To improve the accuracy of Ontario’s reported abortion volumes, the methodology has been updated. Total volumes were derived by using the total abortion volumes reported to the National Physician Database (NPDB) at CIHI and adding both hospital-based abortions for non-Ontario residents and hospital-based medical-method-only abortions for Ontario residents (as reported to the Discharge Abstract Database and the National Ambulatory Care Reporting System). For Ontario, volumes reported in the column Number of induced abortions reported by clinics include services from non-hospital settings. Volumes for non-hospital settings (clinics/surgical facilities/physician offices) were estimated using the total abortion volumes as described above and subtracting hospital-based abortions. This methodology results in induced abortions occurring in physician offices and in clinics being included in non-hospital settings volumes. This estimation approach for non-hospital volumes was required because information on the location where the service is rendered (e.g., clinic, hospital, physician's office) may not be included in the NPDB data.”

Year	Number of induced abortions reported by Ontario hospitals	Number of induced abortions reported by clinics in Ontario	Ontario total	Canada total
2011	12,483	31,951	44,434	108,844
2012	12,137	32,499	44,636	100,958
2013	11,408	32,457	43,865	102,446
2014	10,977	31,066	42,043	100,194

Links to Sources

Original CIHI statistics (including footnotes that qualify above data):

- 2007: http://www.cihi.ca/CIHI-ext-portal/pdf/internet/TA_07_ALLDATATABLES20101124_EN
2008: http://www.cihi.ca/CIHI-ext-portal/pdf/internet/TA_08_ALLDATATABLES20101124_EN
2009: http://www.cihi.ca/CIHI-ext-portal/pdf/internet/TA_09_ALLDATATABLES20111028_EN
2010: http://www.cihi.ca/CIHI-ext-portal/pdf/internet/TA_10_ALLDATATABLES20120417_EN
2011: http://www.cihi.ca/cihi-ext-portal/pdf/internet/TA_11_ALLDATATABLES20130221_EN
2012: http://www.cihi.ca/CIHI-ext-portal/pdf/internet/TA_11_ALLDATATABLES20140221_EN
2013: http://www.cihi.ca/web/resource/en/data_induced_ab_en.xlsx (Excel spreadsheet)
2014: https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/induced_abortion_can_2014_en_web.xlsx (Excel spreadsheet)
2015: <https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/induced-abortion-can-2015-en-web.xlsx> (Excel spreadsheet)
2016: <https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/induced-abortion-can-2016-en-web.xlsx> (Excel spreadsheet)

Earlier StatsCan data (Available in different formats):

- 2002 to 2006: <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a05?lang=eng&id=1069005>
2001 to 2005: <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/olc-cel/olc.action?objId=82-223-X&objType=2&lang=en&limit=0>
2001 to 2003: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/060315/dq060315c-eng.htm>
1970 to 2001: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-223-x/2004000/4153194-eng.htm>

A more accessible source for a summary of the above StatsCan data may be: <http://abortionincanada.ca/stats/annual-abortion-rates/>
(be warned this is an anti-choice site).

StatsCan gestational age stats from 1995-2003:

<http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/StatsCan-gestation-times-1995-2003.xls>

If you get a password prompt, click OK and it will open the file as read-only. You will see 3 tables (tabs at bottom). This data was purchased from StatsCan by the National Abortion Federation around 2005 and is not publicly available except on ARCC's website. Therefore, no data on gestational ages is available for the years 2004-2006, or before 1995.

This document is located at: www.arcc-cdac.ca/backgrounders/statistics-abortion-in-canada.pdf