

Why are more Canadians living past 100?

In June, Dr. Parminder Raina, the CLSA lead principal investigator, appeared on TVO's *The Agenda*. He was one of three panelists discussing an important question impacting families, communities and governments: Why are more Canadians living past 100?

Centenarians are the second-fastest growing age group in Canada, and their aptitude for longevity is a complex interaction of genetics, environment and lifestyle. It comes down to more than just biology, Dr. Raina told the panel.

“Biology works in relation to our context – where we live and how we interact with other people,” he explained. “There are certain genetic predispositions that put us on the right track, but those could all be marred [by] problems if we don't live well, or if we are not happy, or socially isolated, or if our environmental context is poor.”

But how exactly do those factors interact to affect our health and how we age? And what can we do increase our odds of living long and living well? Nearly 500 research teams across Canada and around the world are using the information you have provided over the years to answer questions about the factors that contribute to healthy aging.

In this newsletter, you will read about recent CLSA findings, discover how trainees are using the CLSA platform, and hear from a CLSA participant about his aging journey.



Dr. Parminder Raina of McMaster University appeared on TVO's *The Agenda* in June.



In July, members of the CLSA Operations Council gathered in Burlington, Ontario, to begin planning for the next wave of data collection, known as Follow-up 4. The wave is expected to launch in late 2024 and run until 2027.

Thank you for your ongoing participation in the CLSA. Your contributions are having an impact and enabling critical research on healthy aging.

If you have not yet participated in the current wave of data collection, we will be in touch soon. Behind the scenes, we are actively gearing up for the next wave of data collection, known as Follow-up 4, which will launch in late 2024 and run until 2027. We look forward to speaking to you again soon!

Remember, you can always reach out to us if you have a question about your participation through email (info@clsa-elcv.ca) or by phone **1-866-999-8303**.

Participant Spotlight



Gord, 83, is a retired political communications manager. He enjoys curling, staying politically active, and caring for his seventh Doberman. He has been a participant in the CLSA since June 2012.

How important is staying active to you as you age?

“I’ve never curled before. But 10 years ago, I said, ‘Well, let’s try.’ There are all kinds of opportunities out there. If you just want to play cards, fine. But it’s amazing. We turn over the ice surface at the curling club in the summer to a pickleball club, and most of the people there are not 30 anymore, you know. But they’re all working out, and they’re all staying in shape.”

If you are interested in being featured in a future CLSA newsletter, contact us at info@clsa-elcv.ca or by phone at **1-866-999-8303**.

Trainee Spotlight

“The CLSA helped me grow as a student and researcher by honing my research and data analysis skills through the use of different statistical techniques and study designs. This opportunity has given me the valuable skills and tools necessary to become a leader in my field.”

Shawn Hakimi is a PhD candidate in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. His research practice is situated at the nexus of physical activity epidemiology and gerontology, specifically focused on movement behaviour and healthy aging.



In Brief

Federal investment supports CLSA research projects across the country

In 2023, the Government of Canada awarded 26 research teams a combined total of \$1.8 million in grants to support the development of CLSA research projects. The funding opportunity is intended to help Canadian researchers in accessing and analyzing the CLSA data. Read more about the funded projects here: clsa-elcv.ca/2023_catalyst

Using the CLSA to mobilize COVID-19 research

Published on the Canadian Institutes of Health Research website, the CLSA Impact Story of the Year spotlights COVID-19 research conducted within the CLSA. By using the CLSA COVID-19 questionnaire data, in combination with other data provided by participants, researchers were able to explore the impact of the pandemic on mental health, mobility, caregiving, vaccination rates, social isolation, loneliness and alcohol consumption. Read more: cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/53522.html

Social Participation and Successful Aging

How do we age successfully? What does “successful aging” even mean?

A research team from the University of Toronto recently examined successful aging in Canada using data from the CLSA.

The researchers previously defined successful aging as: “A state wherein an older adult achieves a sense of physical, psychological, mental, social and self-rated well-being even in the context of chronic health conditions and physical disability.”

For this study, the elements of successful aging included:

- No limitations in activities of daily living
- No mental illness in the preceding year
- No serious cognitive decline or pain that prevents activity
- Adequate social support
- High levels of happiness
- Self-reports of good physical health, mental health and successful aging

What is social participation?

Social participation involves connecting with others – “doing things with or for others, contributing to society, and/or receiving resources from society.” Based on data from a sample of 7,623 CLSA participants, this study investigated the association between six different types of social participation and successful aging:



church or
religious
activities



educational
or cultural
activities



service club
or fraternal
organization
activities



community or
professional
association
activities



volunteer
or charity
work



recreational
activities

The **key finding** was that those who participated in volunteer or charity work and recreational activities “were **more likely** to achieve successful aging” in later life than those who did not “engage in these activities.”



One in four adults faced barriers to health care during the first year of the pandemic

One in four adults over age 50 experienced challenges accessing health-care services during the first year of the pandemic, a McMaster University study has found. The research, published in February 2023 in *CMAJ Open*, analyzed data collected from nearly 24,000 middle-age and older adults participating in the Canadian Longitudinal Study of Aging to identify factors associated with unmet health care needs during the pandemic. Read more: clsa-elcv.ca/pandemic_care



Women working rotating shifts especially likely to be frail, CLSA study finds

The first study to investigate the relationship between shift work and frailty for middle-age and older adults has found that exposure to shift work was associated with frailty versus only working daytime hours, especially for women on rotating shifts. The results of the study, led by researchers at York University, suggest that circadian clock disruption that comes with night shift work may play a role. Read more: clsa-elcv.ca/shiftwork_frail



CLSA research identifies metabolites that influence common aging-linked conditions

Using CLSA data, a team of researchers at McGill University identified dozens of blood metabolites that influence a number of common disease and traits linked to aging, inflammation, and metabolism. Understanding the genetic map and role of metabolites in common diseases could provide opportunities for targeted therapies. The researchers further confirmed that increased levels of one of these metabolites — orotate, which they tied to lower bone mineral density — was associated with an increased risk of hip fracture. Read more: clsa-elcv.ca/metabolites

CLSA Events

In October, the CLSA hosted an online event for participants living in central areas of Canada. The 90-minute webinar provided an update on CLSA research activities. To view the recording, visit: clsa-elcv.ca/clsa_update_central. Webinars for French-speaking participants, and those living in Atlantic and Western Canada, will take place in 2024.

Keep in Touch

CLSA interviews are scheduled every three years – a lot can change during that time. Have you moved, changed your telephone number or email address since you were last contacted by us, or have you recently created an email address that you can share?

We also invite you to add an alternate contact to ensure we don't lose touch with you. We may contact your alternate contact should we be unable to reach you. Visit our online form, or contact us by email or phone to add a contact.

 Web: clsa-elcv.ca/update-your-details

 Phone: **1-866-999-8303**

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