

Aging Gracefully: The Science of Living Well



A Message from the CLSA Research Team

Welcome to the 2017 issue of **Aging Gracefully**, the annual newsletter for the more than 51,000 participants enrolled in the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA).

The CLSA is now in its seventh year, and we are making significant progress against our ultimate goal of collecting data from 51,000 Canadians over 20 years. Part of what makes the CLSA unique and particularly valuable to researchers is the fact that it is a *longitudinal study*, meaning that we will

collect data from you, our participants, not just once, but many times over the course of two decades.

When you reflect on the past 20 years of your own life, you may be surprised at how much has changed. Maybe you've switched jobs, moved to a new city, welcomed a new addition to your family, or experienced a change in your physical or mental health. Now imagine what may change in the next 20 years. By sharing your information with the CLSA, you give researchers the unique opportunity to explore the physiological, mental, physical, and socioeconomic factors that influence the way people age, and ultimately find ways to help future generations live longer, healthier lives.

In this newsletter, you will read about the CLSA's progress to date, including updates on data collection and exciting news about the study's most recent milestones and developments. You will also learn more about your fellow participants and discover how your data are contributing to important health research.

As a participant in the CLSA, you are our most valuable partner. The data you share with us is the lifeblood of our study, and we and the entire research community are grateful for your ongoing participation. Thank you again for your commitment to Canadian research on health and aging. We look forward to updating you for many years to come.

CLSA Participant Snapshot

51,000 Participants
21,000 Telephone Interviews
30,000 In-Person Interviews

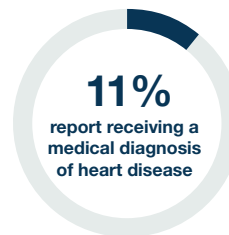
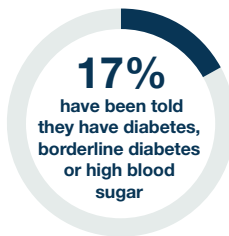
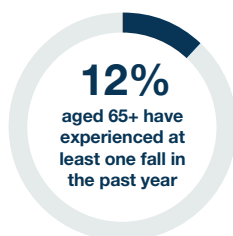


Male 49% Female 51%

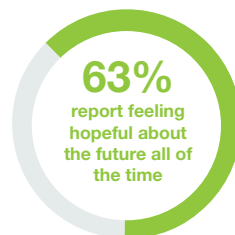
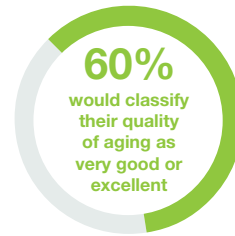
Age Breakdown



Common Health Conditions:



On The Bright Side:



2017 Update

CLSA Data Collection Update

The CLSA's Data Collection Sites (DCS) and Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) sites are on track to complete Follow Up 1 (the most recent wave of data collection, which began for some participants in 2015) and launch Follow Up 2 in the spring of 2018. Participants who had CLSA interviews in 2015 will soon be contacted to schedule their next telephone interview, or in-home interview and visit to a data collection site.

CLSA investigators and staff realize that as our participants age, they may experience changes in their lives that have the potential to affect their ability to participate in the study in the future. For this reason, we've introduced a number of new tools to facilitate ongoing data collection from participants whose circumstances may have changed since baseline, or may change in the future.

- A web-based questionnaire is being developed to allow participants who are no longer able to participate in data collection site (DCS) visits or computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) to continue to participate in the study.
- A decedent questionnaire has been developed to collect end-of-life information from family members, friends, or caregivers of CLSA participants who pass away during the course of the study.
- A proxy questionnaire will be introduced in 2018 to allow participants who have identified a proxy to answer questions on their behalf if needed.

Tapping into CLSA Data

Did you know: the CLSA will celebrate a major data access milestone in early 2018.

There are now almost 100 projects that have been approved for researchers using CLSA data! Approved projects span the disciplines of biological, clinical, social and population health, and full descriptions of the projects are available at www.clsa-elcv.ca/researchers/approved-project-summaries.

This CLSA butterfly word cloud represents the topics currently being studied using CLSA data according to how often the keyword is used.



Share your Feedback with the CLSA

We are grateful for your ongoing participation in the CLSA and appreciate your commitment to research on healthy aging. Your insights and expertise are important to us, and we want to learn more from you to help improve our methods of sharing information with our valued participants, specifically through the Aging Gracefully participant newsletter.

In the spirit of increased engagement and collaboration within the CLSA, we are looking for a group of participants to share their feedback about the Aging Gracefully newsletter, and review future editions before they're

distributed, as part of a participant editorial review board. We hope you'll share with us your thoughts about the content, format, and frequency of Aging Gracefully. For example: What do you like reading about? What would you like to hear more about? Is the newsletter too long, too short, too detailed, or not detailed enough? Would you like to receive updates from the CLSA more frequently, or is an annual publication sufficient? Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

If you are interested in sharing your feedback with the CLSA and/or reviewing future participant newsletters, please send your full name, location, email address and telephone number to Katherine Galley, Interim Communications Manager at galleyk@mcmaster.ca.

CLSA Participant *Spotlight*



Mur Meadows, 55, is an actor, voice artist and writer. He joined the CLSA in 2014.

Q: Why did you join the CLSA?

A: I joined the CLSA to be part of Canadian medical history and inspire myself to live a better life.

Q: What do you hope the CLSA will accomplish?

A: By collecting data from more than 51,000 people across Canada, medical professionals will discover how an individual's lifestyle and general environment can affect their future and how they will age.

Q: What is your personal approach to healthy aging, or your healthy aging philosophy?

A: My approach [to healthy aging] is to avoid fast/processed foods, limit how much sugar I consume, make sleep a good habit, stay hydrated, and exercise with daily walking and weekly weight training. I have many passions, and am following the dreams I've had since childhood. I am also spiritual, and meditate regularly to alleviate stress and worry. My philosophy is to stay in touch with my inner child; have a sense of play, be curious, and laugh a lot.



Alice Cole, 84, a competitive runner, was recently named Athlete of the Year by the Quebec Athletics Federation. She joined the CLSA in 2014.

Q: Why do you think research related to health and aging is important?

A: Research helps us find new ways to remain healthy as we age. It has been proven that being active in our later years contributes to a longer, happier life. Being involved in a sport gives us confidence and helps keep our bodies and minds agile and alert.

Q: What do you hope the CLSA will accomplish?

A: I hope it will prove that being active, doing any kind of physical activity, even walking, can contribute to a longer, healthier life.

Q: What is your personal approach to healthy aging, or your aging philosophy?

A: I believe we have to avoid creating obstacles for ourselves by thinking "I'm too old." We are never too old to get involved in a sports activity. All it takes is starting gradually and getting proper guidance.



Peter Dent, 73, is a jazz pianist, composer and choir conductor. He joined the CLSA in 2014.

Q: Why did you join the CLSA?

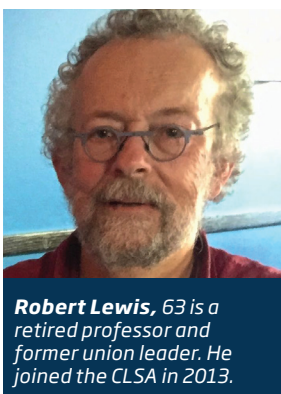
A: I participated in two previous epidemiological studies (one about the prostate and one about the shingles vaccine), and I was quite happy with my experiences, so when I was approached to participate in the CLSA, I was glad to do so.

Q: What do you hope the CLSA will accomplish?

A: I hope that it will provide insights for healthy aging and living longer, given the large sample and diverse collection of evidence such as genetic and lifestyle information. I believe it will tell us a great deal about the aging process and if not how to live longer, then how to age more healthily.

Q: What is your personal approach to healthy aging, or your healthy aging philosophy?

A: I'm not getting any younger, so I've done a better job with nutrition – my wife is particularly interested in nutrition and we're basically following a Mediterranean diet. I also try to keep fit and remove unnecessary stress in life. I believe stress is not studied enough as an unhealthy factor that can lead to negative health outcomes.



Robert Lewis, 63 is a retired professor and former union leader. He joined the CLSA in 2013.

Q: Why did you join the CLSA?

A: [Aging] is actually my area of study – I was previously a professor of sociology and gerontology – and I've always been interested in research. The information also seemed relevant to me personally. The more you know about yourself, the better.

Q: Why do you think research related to health and aging is important?

A: For one thing, we don't know much about healthy aging – it's generally been a topic that people avoid. In my academic experience, we've had to fight to develop courses about the social aspects of aging. Aging is also something that's happening to everybody (or at least, those who are lucky), so it's a universal experience.

Q: What is your personal approach to healthy aging, or your healthy aging philosophy?

A: I believe it's absolutely essential to stay active in all ways – be physically active and socially active, volunteer and really enjoy life. Think about your physical and mental health, but don't make them so central to your life that they become goals in themselves.

Thank You



The CLSA Operations Committee in Hamilton, Ontario. July, 2017.

Thank You to Our Supporters

The CLSA is funded through support from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Canada Foundation for Innovation, provincial funders and partners, as well as affiliated universities and research institutes. For a full list of our supporters, please visit:

www.clsa-elcv.ca/partners.

The CLSA continues to host events to share our appreciation with our participants and showcase how your data are being used for research projects. All events are livestreamed on the CLSA website, and recordings of the following events are now available for viewing:

Register for future events at: clsa-elcv.eventbrite.com

University of Victoria – “Cognition in the CLSA”

University of Calgary – “CLSA Research Update”

McGill University - “Eating for longevity: eat better, live better, longer” (presentation in French)

University of Manitoba – “Living Longer, Living Better: Insights from the CLSA”

Sherbrooke University – “Drugs and deprescription: For whom? Why? How?” (presentation in French)

View recordings of previous events at: www.clsa-elcv.ca/stay-informed/new-clsa

CLSA Events

Keeping in Touch



Just a friendly reminder to let us know if your contact details change. Staying in touch with you is extremely important to us. If you have an email address, please let us know. Keeping in touch by email is a fraction of the cost of postage and helps us direct those resources towards CLSA research. You can provide us with this information at:

www.clsa-elcv.ca/update-your-details

info@clsa-elcv.ca

1-866-999-8303

Health Insurance Number Reminder

As we prepare for the start of Follow Up 2, it is especially important that we have your most up-to-date contact information. If you have given your consent for the CLSA to use your provincial health insurance number, but were unable to provide the number at the time of your interview, please contact the CLSA by phone at 1-866-999-8303 or by email at info@clsa-elcv.ca so we can update this

For the latest CLSA updates:
www.clsa-elcv.ca

