



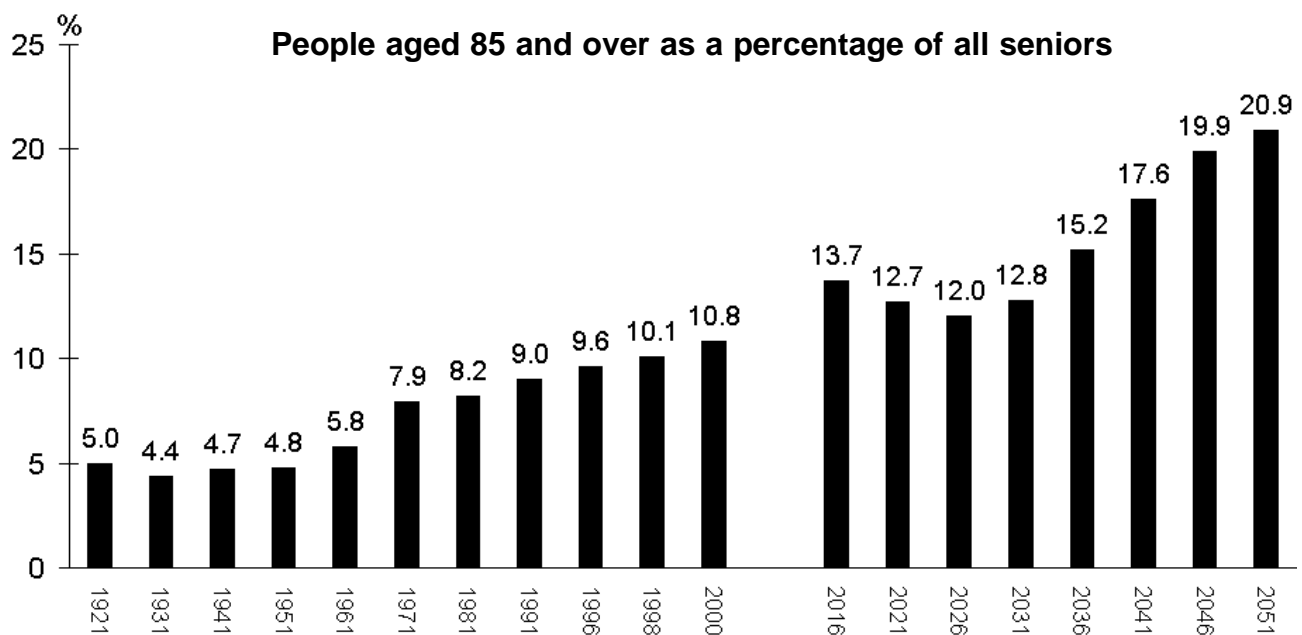
Canada's Oldest Seniors

Seniors aged 85 and over represent the fastest growing segment of the senior population. In 2000, there were over 400,000 Canadians aged 85 and over, up from 140,000 in 1971 and only 21,000 in 1921. In fact, about one in 10 Canadian seniors is now 85 or over, up from one in 20 in the early 1920's.

As with the overall senior population, the number of people in the oldest age groups is also expected to increase rapidly in the approaching decades. Statistics Canada has projected, for example, that there will be almost 2 million Canadians aged 85 and over in 2051, almost five times the current figure. In fact, by the middle of the new century, there will be more people aged 85 and over in Canada than there were aged 65 and over in the 1970s.

The largest share of those in the 85 and over category are still in their eighties. Still, in 1996, there were 85,000 Canadians aged 90-94, almost 13,000 aged 95-99, and over 3,000 aged 100 and over. As well, women represent a substantial majority of the oldest segment of the population. Indeed, women made up 70% of all people aged 85 and over in 2000, whereas they represented 60% of those aged 75-84 and 53% of the population aged 65-74.

The growth in the size of the population in the very oldest age categories is of importance because people in this age range generally have greater needs than younger seniors for such things as social support and health care. In 1996, for example, seniors aged 85 and over made up almost half (46%) of all seniors in health-related institutions, whereas they represented only about 10% of the total senior population.



Source: Statistics Canada