



For Immediate Release

***Choosing Wisely Canada* to Help Physicians and Patients Make Smart Choices**

Ottawa (April 2, 2014) — In a first for Canada, nine national medical organizations today released lists of 40 tests, treatments and procedures that patients do not need in all circumstances. The lists have been developed to spur dialogue between doctors and their patients and to ensure delivery of high-quality medical care.

The lists are based on definitive evidence that these specific interventions provide no benefit to patients. They are the foundation of *Choosing Wisely Canada*, a campaign launched today to help physicians and patients engage in conversations to make smart and effective choices to ensure high-quality care.

Clear and straightforward materials have been created for both physicians and patients to support decisions on what procedure is required or necessary, and what is not. For example, *Choosing Wisely Canada* would not recommend the ordering of diagnostic imaging for lower-back pain of less than six weeks duration unless there are red flags.

“Choosing Wisely Canada is about changing the culture that more is always better when it comes to medical tests and procedures,” said Dr. Wendy Levinson, founder of *Choosing Wisely Canada*, and a faculty member at the University of Toronto. “The goal of this is about providing good care with the right patient getting the right test and treatment and avoiding unnecessary tests and procedures.”

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) is a lead partner in the campaign, which is focusing on linking best available medical evidence to both physicians and their patients.

“The Choosing Wisely Canada lists and materials being developed are not only a valuable conversation starter, but also a way for patients to get good, useful and trustworthy information,” said Dr. Chris Simpson, CMA President-Elect. “Choosing Wisely Canada will empower both physicians and their patients to be true partners in care.”

The nine national medical organizations participating in the first phase of *Choosing Wisely Canada* are:

- [Canadian Cardiovascular Society.](#)
- [Canadian Association of Radiologists.](#)
- [Canadian Medical Association Forum on General and Family Practice Issues.](#)
- [Canadian Orthopaedic Association.](#)

Choosing Wisely Canada



In partnership with the
Canadian Medical Association

- [Canadian Society of Internal Medicine.](#)
- [Canadian Rheumatology Association.](#)
- [Canadian Geriatrics Society.](#)
- [Canadian Association of General Surgeons](#)
- [The College of Family Physicians of Canada.](#)

The societies each submitted [“Top 5” lists of tests, treatments and procedures that physicians and patients should question.](#) The CMA Forum on General and Family Practice Issues and the College of Family Physicians of Canada submitted a joint list.

Choosing Wisely Canada has been well received by various [public and patient advocacy groups](#), many of whom praised the effort to provide information for patients that will allow them to better engage with physicians in the management of their care.

To date, 30 Canadian medical specialty societies are at various stages of engagement in the campaign.

“*Choosing Wisely Canada* started in Ontario, but its reach is growing every day and this is now a truly national effort,” said Dr. Levinson. “The lists being released today will set the stage for more in the future. We have only just begun.”

The French version of the campaign is *Choisir avec soin* and was adapted in collaboration with the Quebec Medical Association.

Choosing Wisely Canada is modelled after the successful *Choosing Wisely*® campaign in the United States, launched by the American Board of Internal Medicine’s, ABIM Foundation.

For more information and to access campaign material visit www.choosingwiselycanada.org

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) is the national voice of Canadian physicians. Founded in 1867, the CMA is a voluntary professional organization representing more than 80,000 of Canada’s physicians and comprising 12 provincial and territorial medical associations and 60 national medical organizations. CMA’s mission is to serve and unite the physicians of Canada and be the national advocate, in partnership with the people of Canada, for the highest standards of health and health care.

Lucie Boileau

Senior Advisor, Communications and Public Outreach

lucie.boileau@cma.ca

Tel.: 800-663-7336 / 613-731-8610 ext. 1266 Cell: 613-447-0866

Choosing Wisely Canada



In partnership with the
Canadian Medical Association

Partner Quotes

Canadian Medical Association Forum on General and Family Practice Issues

“I have been very pleased to be involved in helping develop the *Choosing Wisely Canada* materials because this is the type of information I have always felt would be useful when I talk with patients,” said Dr. Lisa Bonang, Chair of the CMA Forum on General and Family Practice Issues and a family doctor in Musquodoboit Harbour, NS. “Having it at hand now will help both doctors and patients.”

Canadian Society of Internal Medicine

“The Canadian Society of Internal Medicine promotes the health and well-being of Canadian patients, their communities, and their health care systems, the *Choosing Wisely Canada* initiative embodies that mission by providing trustworthy and valuable information. Our members are committed to helping patients navigate complex healthcare choices and are proud to be part of this important campaign.” said Dr. Christine Soong, Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto and Hospital Medicine Program Director, Mount Sinai Hospital and the University Health Network.

Canadian Rheumatology Association

“Today people have access to more information than ever before, though sometimes it is very difficult to know what advice can be counted on,” said Dr. Carter Thorne, a rheumatologist in Newmarket, Ont. and past-president of the Canadian Rheumatology Association. “*Choosing Wisely Canada* is based on the best evidence that will help doctors and patients engage in more effective discussions re tests and treatments.”

Canadian Cardiovascular Society

“*Choosing Wisely Canada* has linked experts in various fields of medicine to develop lists of procedures and tests that doctors and patients should question together,” said Dr. Heather Ross, a Toronto cardiologist and vice-president, of the CCS. “More than that, however, *Choosing Wisely Canada* delivers the message that ‘more is not necessarily better’ when it comes to health care.”

Canadian Geriatrics Society

“Canada is faced with an aging population and if we are going to meet the growing and evolving needs of our society we will need more initiatives like *Choosing Wisely Canada* that get important information into the hands of patients and their families,” said Dr. José Morais, a Montréal geriatrician and president of the Canadian Geriatrics Society



In partnership with the
Canadian Medical Association

Canadian Association of Radiologists

“The CAR is proud to be a part of this timely campaign aimed at assisting patients and their physicians. Patient safety and quality care are of utmost importance and Choosing Wisely Canada makes it easy for everyone to understand some of the choices faced in today’s healthcare environment” said CAR President Dr. Jacques Lévesque.

Canadian Association of General Surgeons

“Choosing Wisely Canada not only provides information about tests and procedures patients may not need, but also key advice on ways patients can actively look after their own health. It’s win-win,” said Dr. Christopher de Gara, professor surgery at the University of Alberta in Edmonton and vice-president of the Canadian Association of General Surgeons.

Canadian Orthopaedic Association

“For the Canadian Orthopaedic Association, providing high-quality care for patients is job one and the Choosing Wisely Canada initiative is an important new tool to support that goal,” said Dr. Edward Harvey, an orthopaedic surgeon in Montréal and president of the COA.

College of Family Physicians of Canada

“More is not necessarily better when it comes to health care,” says Dr. Jamie Meuser, Associate Executive Director and Director of Continuing Professional Development with the CFPC. “Doing a lot of tests can be wasteful – even harmful. The CFPC supports the Choosing Wisely Canada initiative as a way of ensuring high quality health care for our current patients as well as those who will be counting on our health system in the future.”

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

“When it comes right down to it, doctor-patient communication is integral to patient trust and quality care,” said Cecil Rorabeck, OC, MD, FRCSC, FACS, President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. “We applaud these organizations for leading a necessary culture change that will encourage healthy conversations, informed decision making and better stewardship of Canadians’ health and of the health care system.”



The Royal Canadian Legion

“Choosing Wisely Canada involves a healthy conversation on both sides of the examining table to empower patients to make smart, effective and informed choices,” said the Royal Canadian Legion

Canadian Association of Social Workers

“The Choosing Wisely Canada campaign will help physicians and patients better develop shared knowledge to support informed and more effective choices and high-quality care for patients,” said Fred Phelps, MSW RSW ,Executive Director, Canadian Association of Social Workers

Patients Canada

“We believe that all efforts to help patients and doctors to collaborate on making medical decisions is a good thing. Choosing Wisely Canada not only does that, it also works towards dealing with the major problem of over treatment without blaming either. We are proud to join the group of partners,” said Sholom Glouberman, Patients Canada.