

# Chronic pain lowering economy's productivity

## Survey finds employees don't get needed treatment

BY BECKY RYNOR, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE



Generic painkillers are pictured. A Nanos Research survey found more than 18 per cent of adults suffer from chronic pain.

**Photograph by:** Tim Boyle, Getty Images

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QUEBEC — Misunderstood and often under treated, pain is taking a toll on the economy and "debilitating" productivity in the Canadian workplace according to a survey released Thursday.

"Our growing pain crisis will only intensify if we don't provide appropriate treatment to people on a timely basis," said Dr. Roman Jovey, a spokesman for painexplained.ca, an advocacy group committed to raising awareness of under-treated pain in Canada.

"It is a national embarrassment that our medical system pays so little attention to a problem that is so common and costly."

Nanos Research polled 4,000 adult, employed Canadians over 2007 and 2008.

It found more than 18 per cent of adults suffer from chronic pain.

Of the 600 moderate to severe chronic pain sufferers given a more detailed survey, it found almost 60 per cent had lost their job, suffered loss of income or had a reduction in responsibilities as a result of their pain. The survey also indicated that pain had a significant effect on absenteeism, with an average of 28.5 lost work days per year.