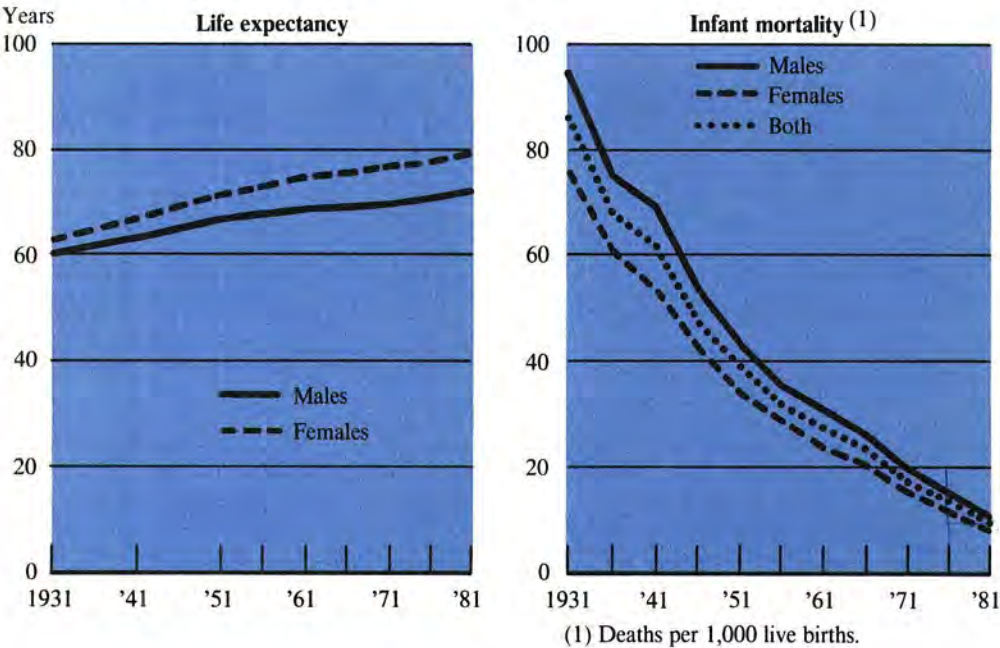


Chart 3.1
Trends in life expectancy and infant mortality, 1931-81



disability days. Over 200,000 patients separated from hospital in 1978 were treated for heart disease. **Cancer** accounted for more than one of every five deaths; 40% of persons who died were in their working years or younger. Over the previous decade the death rate gradually increased due largely to a 50% increase in deaths from cancer of the respiratory system. Over 220,000 patients treated for active or suspected cancer were separated from hospital in 1978.

Respiratory diseases have had a relatively stable overall pattern with a small increase proportionate to the population increase. These diseases strike at all ages, though 78% of fatal illnesses occur after age 65. The average hospital stay is seven to eight days. Nearly twice as many men as women die from respiratory disease, largely due to the much higher male death rate from the category bronchitis, emphysema and asthma.

From the Canada Health Survey, it was estimated that more than one in 10 Canadians had a respiratory problem during 1979. Respiratory conditions were more prevalent among males in childhood and old age, but in the working age population occurrence was higher among women.

Fatal cerebrovascular disease (stroke) is primarily a condition of old age, with only 15% of deaths

occurring before age 65. Deaths among men are more common at earlier ages, but elderly women over age 75 account for a large proportion of deaths from this condition. While the death rate declined slightly in the previous 10 years, the rate of hospital care increased by almost one-third. More men than women are admitted to hospital, but the days of care provided in hospital for women suffering from stroke exceeds that for men by over 30%.

Accidents and violence. Reliable data on morbidity in traffic accidents are unavailable. The morbid states may vary considerably, from a simple fracture to total paralysis, but the statistics do not show such distinctions. However, for every person killed in a traffic accident in 1975, approximately 36 were injured.

Alcoholism. While drunkenness increases primarily the risks of morbidity, mortality and disability due to accidents, the alcoholic is exposed to a wide variety of other risks which may damage physical and mental health, such as cirrhosis, the onset of various cancers, social conflicts with family and others, occupational hazards such as industrial accidents, drop in performance, loss of employment, alcoholic psychoses and suicide.

There were an estimated 635,000 alcoholics in 1978, a total more than doubled since 1965. An