



Early Release of Selected Estimates Based on Data From the 2020 National Health Interview Survey

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About This Early Release

In this release, the National Center for Health Statistics' (NCHS) National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) Early Release (ER) Program provides estimates for 17 key health indicators based on data from the 2020 NHIS. These estimates are being published prior to final data editing and final weighting to provide access to the most recent information from NHIS. Estimates of key health indicators are also provided in two data query tools in addition to the table below. The data query tools provide estimates in both a tabular and graphical format, and they allow for viewing of estimates over a longer range of time. Quarterly estimates shown below are also available in the [Interactive Quarterly Early Release Estimates](#) tool. Biannual 2020 estimates shown by various demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are available in the [Interactive Biannual Early Release Estimates](#) tool. The table below includes estimates based on the full year of 2020 NHIS data, which are not available in either tool. In January 2019, the NHIS launched a redesigned questionnaire, and also revised the approach to sample weighting. Following this redesign, the original key health indicators published in reports based on the 1997–2018 NHIS were reevaluated, and the new key health indicators are shown in Table 1 below. Estimates for these indicators will be updated as each new quarter of NHIS data becomes available. Details about the NHIS and indicators can be found in the [Technical Notes](#). In 2020, some changes to standard interviewing procedures were required due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a follow-back component was added to NHIS in the second half of 2020, where a portion of 2019 NHIS respondents were reinterviewed in 2020. Though NHIS survey weights account for these changes, 2020 estimates may still be impacted by these changes (see [Technical Notes](#)).

Table 1. Percentages (and 95% confidence intervals) of selected key health indicators for adults aged 18 and over, by quarter: United States, 2020

Selected key health indicator ¹	Quarter 1, 2020 (Jan–Mar)	Quarter 2, 2020 (Apr–Jun)	Quarter 3, 2020 (Jul–Sep)	Quarter 4, 2020 (Oct–Dec)	2020 (Jan–Dec)
Health status					
Disability status ²	9.2 (8.4-10.0)	9.4 (8.6-10.3)	8.4 (7.7-9.3)	8.3 (7.5-9.0)	8.8 (8.4-9.2)
Six or more workdays missed due to illness, injury, or disability in the past 12 months ³	12.1 (11.2-13.0)	11.0 (9.8-12.3)	12.3 (11.2-13.5)	12.3 (11.2-13.6)	11.9 (11.3-12.5)
Asthma episode in the past 12 months	3.6 (3.1-4.1)	3.4 (2.9-4.0)	3.7 (3.1-4.3)	3.4 (2.9-3.9)	3.5 (3.2-3.8)
Diagnosed hypertension in the past 12 months ⁴	26.1 (24.9-27.2)	26.3 (24.9-27.7)	27.4 (26.2-28.7)	26.7 (25.5-27.9)	26.6 (25.9-27.2)
Regularly experienced chronic pain ⁵	22.6 (21.6-23.7)	21.2 (19.8-22.7)	20.6 (19.5-21.7)	22.1 (21.0-23.3)	21.7 (21.1-22.4)
Regularly had feelings of worry, nervousness, or anxiety ⁶	10.4 (9.6-11.3)	11.2 (10.2-12.2)	11.4 (10.5-12.3)	12.4 (11.4-13.5)	11.3 (10.8-11.8)
Regularly had feelings of depression ⁷	4.5 (4.0-5.1)	3.9 (3.3-4.6)	4.3 (3.7-4.8)	5.2 (4.6-5.9)	4.5 (4.2-4.8)
Health care service use					
Doctor visit in the past 12 months	84.7 (83.6-85.8)	83.7 (82.3-85.1)	83.3 (82.2-84.3)	81.5 (80.3-82.7)	83.4 (82.8-84.0)
Hospital emergency department visit in the past 12 months	20.8 (19.6-21.9)	19.2 (17.8-20.6)	18.4 (17.3-19.6)	17.0 (15.9-18.1)	18.8 (18.2-19.4)
Counseled by a mental health professional in the past 12 months	9.7 (8.9-10.5)	10.2 (9.1-11.3)	10.2 (9.4-11.1)	10.2 (9.3-11.1)	10.1 (9.6-10.6)
Dental exam or cleaning in the past 12 months	64.0 (62.8-65.3)	63.9 (62.3-65.6)	62.4 (60.9-63.9)	61.5 (60.0-62.9)	63.0 (62.3-63.8)
Receipt of influenza vaccination in the past 12 months ⁸	49.4 (48.1-50.7)	49.2 (47.4-50.9)	47.2 (45.7-48.6)	46.4 (45.0-47.9)	48.1 (47.3-48.8)

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Selected key health indicator ¹	Quarter 1, 2020 (Jan–Mar)	Quarter 2, 2020 (Apr–Jun)	Quarter 3, 2020 (Jul–Sep)	Quarter 4, 2020 (Oct–Dec)	2020 (Jan–Dec)
Health care access					
Did not get needed medical care due to cost in the past 12 months	7.5 (6.8-8.2)	6.2 (5.3-7.1)	6.3 (5.6-7.1)	6.8 (6.0-7.6)	6.7 (6.3-7.1)
Did not get needed mental health care due to cost in the past 12 months	4.7 (4.1-5.3)	4.1 (3.3-5.0)	4.0 (3.4-4.6)	4.6 (4.0-5.3)	4.3 (4.0-4.6)
Did not take medication as prescribed to save money in the past 12 months ⁹	10.0 (9.2-10.8)	8.5 (7.1-10.0)	7.4 (6.5-8.4)	7.4 (6.5-8.3)	8.3 (7.8-8.8)
Health behaviors					
Current cigarette smoking ¹⁰	13.8 (12.9-14.8)	12.2 (10.8-13.6)	12.1 (11.1-13.1)	11.9 (11.0-12.9)	12.4 (11.9-13.0)
Current electronic cigarette use ¹¹	3.7 (3.1-4.3)	3.6 (2.9-4.3)	3.5 (3.0-4.1)	3.9 (3.3-4.6)	3.7 (3.4-4.0)

¹The questions used to define each indicator are listed in the Appendix and detailed information about indicators based on multiple questions may be found in the [Technical Notes](#).

²Disability is defined by the reported level of difficulty (no difficulty, some difficulty, a lot of difficulty, or cannot do at all) in six functioning domains: seeing (even if wearing glasses), hearing (even if wearing hearing aids), mobility (walking or climbing stairs), communication (understanding or being understood by others), cognition (remembering or concentrating), and self-care (such as washing all over or dressing). Adults who responded "a lot of difficulty" or "cannot do at all" to at least one question were considered to have a disability.

³Six or more workdays missed due to illness, injury, or disability in the past 12 months is defined as a report of six or more workdays missed due to illness, injury, or disability by adults who a) worked for pay in the week prior to the interview, b) had a job or business in the week prior to the interview, but were temporarily absent, c) had seasonal or contract work, d) worked at a job or business but not for pay, or e) were not currently working but had some period of employment in the past 12 months.

⁴Diagnosed hypertension is defined as report of hypertension or high blood pressure in the past 12 months or any medication use prescribed by a doctor for high blood pressure among adults.

⁵Regularly experienced chronic pain is defined as report of having pain on most days or every day during the past 3 months.

⁶Regularly had feelings of worry, nervousness, or anxiety is defined as report of a) feeling worried, nervous, or anxious daily and describing the level of those feelings as "somewhere in between a little and a lot" or "a lot" or b) feeling worried, nervous, or anxious weekly and describing the level of those feelings as "a lot."

⁷Regularly had feelings of depression is defined as report of a) feeling depressed daily and describing the level of depression as "somewhere in between a little and a lot" or "a lot" or b) feeling depressed weekly and describing the level of depression as "a lot."

⁸Receipt of a flu vaccination is defined by report of having received a vaccination in the past 12 months as opposed to during a flu season. Prevalence of influenza vaccination during the past 12 months is different from season-specific coverage (see <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview>).

⁹Did not take medication as prescribed to save money in the past 12 months is defined as report of skipped medication doses to save money, taking less medication to save money, or delayed filling of a prescription to save money.

¹⁰Current cigarette smoking is defined as report of smoking at least 100 cigarettes in a lifetime and now smoking every day or some days.

¹¹Current electronic cigarette use is defined as report of use of an electronic cigarette or other electronic vaping product (even just once in a lifetime) and current use every day or some days.

NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, NHIS data collection switched to a telephone-only mode beginning March 19, 2020. Personal visits resumed in all areas in September 2020, but cases were still attempted by telephone first. These changes resulted in [lower response rates and differences in respondent characteristics](#) for April–December 2020. Differences observed in estimates between April–December 2020 and earlier time periods may still be impacted by these changes. Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey, 2020.