

National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey

ABOUT NAMCS

The National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS) produces statistics that are representative of people in the United States who visit office-based physicians. The survey provides information on office visits by physician practice characteristics, patient characteristics, and visit characteristics.

GENERAL/FAMILY PRACTICE

In 2015–2016, there were an estimated **198 million visits per year** to nonfederally employed, office-based providers specializing in general and family practice in the United States.

CONTACT US

Ambulatory and Hospital Care Statistics Branch:

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https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/ahcd/namcs_participant.htm

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PROVIDER-ASSESSED MAJOR REASON FOR VISIT

NEW PROBLEM ¹	36.8%
CHRONIC PROBLEM, ROUTINE	30.8%
PREVENTIVE CARE	21.2%
CHRONIC PROBLEM, FLARE-UP	6.4%
PRESURGERY	1.2%
POSTSURGERY	0.6%

¹Onset less than 3 months.
NOTE: Major reason for visit is the broad category of the problem or symptom which, in the physician's judgment, was most responsible for the patient making this visit.

TOP 5 SERVICES, ORDERED OR PROVIDED

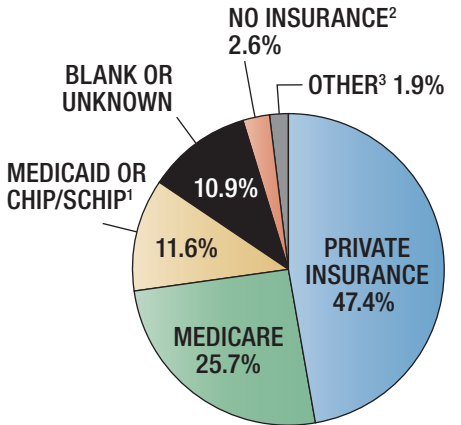
- LIPID PROFILE
- COMPLETE BLOOD COUNT (CBC)
- DIET OR NUTRITION COUNSELING
- COMPREHENSIVE METABOLIC PANEL (CMP)
- SKIN EXAMINATION

PATIENTS' TOP 5 PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR VISIT

- PROGRESS VISIT
- GENERAL MEDICAL EXAMINATION
- MEDICATION
- HYPERTENSION
- DIABETES MELLITUS

NOTE: Principal reason for visit is based on the patient's primary expressed reason for the visit, which is abstracted from the medical record and later coded into categories using an internal NCHS system.

PRIMARY EXPECTED SOURCE OF PAYMENT



¹CHIP is Children's Health Insurance Program; SCHIP is State CHIP.
²Having only self-pay, no charge, or charity as source of payment.
³Includes workers' compensation and other sources of payment.
NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

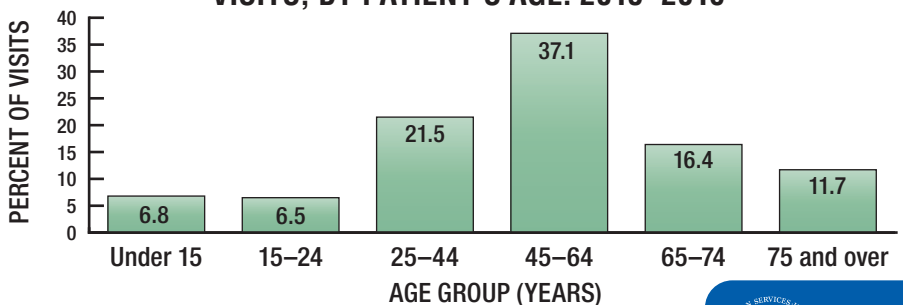
MEDICATIONS WERE PRESCRIBED OR CONTINUED AT 84.7% OF OFFICE VISITS.

TOP 5 ACTIVE INGREDIENTS



- ASPIRIN
- ALBUTEROL
- LISINAPRIL
- ATORVASTATIN
- OMEPRAZOLE

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL AND FAMILY PRACTICE OFFICE VISITS, BY PATIENT'S AGE: 2015–2016



National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey

NAMCS data are widely used in research studies appearing in nationally recognized medical journals. Here are a few recent publications using NAMCS data:

Goodson JD, Shahbazi S, Rao K, Song Z. **Differences in the complexity of office visits by physician specialty: NAMCS 2013–2016.** *J Gen Intern Med* 35(6):1715–20. 2020.

Depew RE, Gonzales G. **Differences in US antibiotic prescription use by facility and patient characteristics: evidence from the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey.** *Fam Pract* 37(2):180–6. 2020.

O'Neill TR, Peabody MR, Stelter KL, Puffer JC, Brady JE. **Validating the test plan specifications for the American Board of Family Medicine's certification examination.** *J Am Board Fam Med* 32(6):876–82. 2019.

Rao A, Shi Z, Ray KN, Mehrotra A, Ganguli I. **National trends in primary care visit use and practice capabilities, 2008–2015.** *Ann Fam Med* 17(6):538–44. 2019.

Pilla SJ, Segal JB, Maruthur NM. **Primary care provides the majority of outpatient care for patients with diabetes in the US: NAMCS 2009–2015.** *J Gen Intern Med* 34(7):1089–91. 2019.

Wen H, Borders TF, Cummings JR. **Trends in buprenorphine prescribing by physician specialty.** *Health Aff (Millwood)* 38(1):24–8. 2019.

Rhee TG. **Co-prescribing of benzodiazepines and opioids in older adults: Rates, correlates, and national trends.** *J Gerontol A J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci* 74(12):1910–5. 2019.

Rhee TG, Choi YC, Ouellet GM, Ross JS. **National prescribing trends for high-risk anticholinergic medications in older adults.** *J Am Geriatr Soc* 66(7):1382–7. 2018.

Peabody MR, O'Neill TR, Stelter KL, Puffer JC. **Frequency and criticality of diagnoses in family medicine practices: From the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS).** *J Am Board Fam Med* 31(1):126–38. 2018.

Mafi JN, Wee CC, Davis RB, Landon BE. **Association of primary care practice location and ownership with the provision of low-value care in the United States.** *JAMA Intern Med* 177(6):838–45. 2017.

A complete list of publications using NAMCS data, which includes articles and reports, can be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/ahcd/ahcd_products.htm.

