In 2009, there were an estimated 136 million visits to emergency departments (EDs) of nonfederal short-stay and general hospitals in the United States. The annual visit rate was 45.1 ED visits per 100 persons. More than one-third of the visits were made by persons under 25 years of age.

Percent distribution of ED visits by patient age: 2009

The visit rate was higher for Black or African American persons compared with White persons. There was no difference by sex.

Annual rate of ED visits by patient sex and race: 2009

Expected sources of payment:
- Private insurance (39%)
- Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (29%)
- Medicare (16%)
- No insurance (16%)
- Other (3%)
- Unknown (7%)

NOTE: More than one source may be reported per visit.
Medications were provided or prescribed at 78 percent of ED visits for a total of 268 million drugs.

**Common drug categories:**
- Analgesics (94.5 million)
- Antiemetic or antivertigo agents (30.9 million)
- Minerals and electrolytes (13.7 million)
- Antihistamines (11.7 million)
- Anxiolytics, sedatives, and hypnotics (11.6 million)
- Miscellaneous respiratory agents (10.2 million)
- Bronchodilators (10.0 million)
- Cephalosporins (8.9 million)
- Penicillins (8.7 million)
- Adrenal cortical steroids (8.5 million)

**Leading principal hospital discharge diagnosis groups:**
- Nonischemic heart disease (1.1 million)
- Chest pain (927,000)
- Pneumonia (732,000)
- Ischemic heart disease (513,000)
- Cerebrovascular disease (477,000)

For more information, contact the Ambulatory and Hospital Care Statistics Branch at 301-458-4600 or visit our Web site at <www.cdc.gov/nhamcs>.

**IMPORTANCE OF NHAMCS EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT DATA**

NHAMCS data are widely used in research studies published in nationally recognized health and medical journals, including *JAMA*, *Archives of Internal Medicine*, and *American Journal of Emergency Medicine*. Here are a few examples of recent publications.


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