



National Center for  
Health Statistics

...Monitoring  
the Nation's  
Health

## NCHS Data Access and Resources

### About NCHS

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is the nation's principal health statistics agency, providing data to identify and address health issues. NCHS compiles statistical information to help guide health and health policy decisions. Collaborating with other public and private health partners, NCHS employs a variety of data collection mechanisms to obtain accurate information from multiple sources. This process provides a broad perspective to help us understand the population's health, influences on health, and health outcomes.

### Accessing NCHS Data

NCHS releases data from its surveys and systems in a variety of ways to accommodate users with varying needs and interests, including policymakers, researchers, medical and public health professionals, teachers, students, business leaders, and the general public.

### Reports and Publications

Each year, NCHS produces hundreds of reports and other publications in a variety of formats.

- **Data Briefs** summarize the latest data on current health issues in eight pages of easily understandable text and graphics. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs.htm>.
- **National Health Statistics Reports** provide annual data summaries, analyses of health topics, or new information on methods or measurement issues. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nhsr.htm>.
- **National Vital Statistics Reports** provide data on vital events – births, deaths, marriages, and divorces – using tables and charts, along with discussion of analyses. Examples include preliminary and final annual birth and death data, leading causes of death, and pregnancy rates. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nvsr.htm>.
- **Health E-Stats** are brief reports published several times each year on current and timely health topics, such as trends in fertility rates and prevalence of obesity. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/hestats.htm>.
- **QuickStats** highlight survey findings in a chart and brief caption each week in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/quickstats.htm>.
- **Life Tables** are annual reports that track life expectancy in the United States by age, race, and sex. Every 10 years, NCHS also releases a decennial volume of life expectancy data, with one volume for each state. Visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/life\\_tables.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/life_tables.htm).
- **Early Releases of Selected Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)** provide expedited estimates of key health and health-related indicators based on data from the NHIS.
  - *Selected Estimates Based on Data From the National Health Interview Survey* is published quarterly and provides estimates of 15 health measures, ranging from vaccinations to obesity.
  - *Health Insurance Coverage: Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey* is published quarterly and provides estimates of health insurance coverage by selected demographic characteristics.
  - *Wireless Substitution: Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey* is published in May and December of each year and provides estimates on exclusive wireless telephone usage in households. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/releases.htm>.
- **Vital and Health Statistics Series Reports** provide details on survey design and operation, methods of statistical analysis, and statistics derived from data collection systems or a family of related systems. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/series.htm>.

- **Fact Sheets** provide brief summaries of the NCHS surveys and data systems and topics of interest to policymakers and the general public. Visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/fact\\_sheets.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/fact_sheets.htm).
- **Health, United States** is the annual report on the health status of the Nation, submitted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to the President and Congress. Detailed tables and charts display health statistics trends over time on topics including health status and its determinants, health care resources, and health care use. Each year the chartbook contains a special feature on a topic of importance to current discussions in public health, such as emergency care or socioeconomic status. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus.htm>.
- **Healthy People Reviews** measure the Nation's progress toward Healthy People 2010 and 2020 benchmarks for health promotion and disease prevention using data from NCHS data systems, other Federal Government data systems, and other data sources. Visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy\\_people/publications.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy_people/publications.htm).

## Micro-data Files

NCHS provides access to its rich data sets so researchers can conduct their own analyses and add to our knowledge of health issues.

- **Public-Use Documentation and Data Files** available through the FTP file server, provide users with free access to data sets, documentation, and questionnaires from NCHS surveys and data collection systems. Visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/ftp\\_data.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/ftp_data.htm).
- Non-public-use data files are available through a network of **Research Data Centers** that provide secure access to detailed data that cannot be released online due to confidentiality concerns. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/rdc/index.htm>.
- **NCHS' Data Linkage Program** allows researchers to study factors that influence disability, chronic disease, health care use, morbidity, and mortality through linkage of NCHS survey data with data from administrative records and other surveys. Visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/data\\_linkage\\_activities.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/data_linkage_activities.htm).
- **National Death Index (NDI)**, a database of all deaths in the United States (beginning with 1979) derived from state death certificates, is a resource to aid epidemiologists and other health and medical investigators with their mortality ascertainment activities. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/ndi.htm>.

## Online Resources and Tools

The NCHS website provides quick access to key health data as well as tools that allow users to customize and display data in the way that fits their needs. For a complete list of data access tools, visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/data\\_tools.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/data_tools.htm).

- **FastStats A to Z** provides quick access to statistics and associated web links and pre-tabulated tables on topics of public health importance, including diseases, health-related behaviors, injuries, health care, and health insurance. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/>.
- **VitalStats** allows users to access and examine vital statistics and population data interactively. Users can take advantage of prebuilt tables and reports or use the data files to create custom tables. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/vitalstats.htm>.
- **Health Indicators Warehouse** serves as the federal data hub for access to national, state, and community health indicators and data. Users can map, chart, tabulate, and download indicator data and metadata. Visit: <http://healthindicators.gov/>.
- **Health Data Interactive** presents interactive national data tables that can be customized to explore different trends and patterns for Americans by age, gender, race/ethnicity, and geographic location. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hdi.htm>.
- **Data Online Query System (DOQS)** allows users to generate and store analyses and provides dynamically generated tables, charts, and graphs using NCHS public-use data. DOQS launched in 2014 with emergency department data from the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey. CDC will add more datasets in the future. Visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/doqs/index.htm>

For further information about NCHS and its programs, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>