

Health E-Stat 116: Use of Sleep Aids Among Adults Age 18 and Older: United States, 2024

by Laryssa Mykyta, Ph.D., Nazik Elgaddal, M.S., and Antonia Warren, M.S.

In 2024, 15.4% of adults had trouble falling asleep most days or every day in the past 30 days (1). Inadequate sleep is associated with limitations in functioning and adverse mental and physical health outcomes (2,3). In addition to behavioral therapy and lifestyle changes, sleep medications are sometimes used for sleep difficulties, including prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications and supplements (4). Marijuana and cannabidiol (CBD) products are also used as sleep aids, but less is known about them. This report describes the use of different sleep aids among adults age 18 and older by age and sex.

In 2024, 12.9% of adults age 18 and older used sleep aids most days or every day in the past 30 days to help them fall or stay asleep (Figure, Table). Overall, 5.2% of adults used prescription medications, 5.7% used OTC medications or supplements, and 3.7% used marijuana or CBD products as sleep aids.

Women were more likely than men to use any sleep aids (14.8% compared with 10.8%), prescription medications (6.4% compared with 3.9%), or OTC medications or supplements (7.0% compared with 4.3%) most days or every day in the past 30 days to help them fall or stay asleep (Table). No significant difference was seen between the percentage of men and women who used marijuana or CBD products as sleep aids.

The percentage of adults using any sleep aids most days or every day in the past 30 days increased with age, from 10.5% of adults ages 18–34 to 15.8% of adults 65 and older (Table). Use of prescription medications to help fall or stay asleep increased with age (from 2.2% for adults ages 18–34 to 8.8% for adults 65 and older) as did the use of OTC medications or supplements (from 3.9% for adults ages 18–34 to 7.6% for adults 65 and older). However, the percentage of adults using marijuana or CBD products as sleep aids declined with age (from 5.5% of adults ages 18–34 to 1.7% of adults 65 and older).

Data source and methods

Data from the 2024 National Health Interview Survey, a survey of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population, were used to present estimates of sleep aid use among adults.



Adults were asked, “During the past 30 days, how often did you [take/use] any of the following to help fall or stay asleep: 1) medications prescribed by a doctor; 2) over-the-counter medications or supplements; 3) marijuana or CBD products?” Questions about prescriptions and OTC medications do not include marijuana or CBD products. Respondents could report taking more than one sleep aid. Adults were considered to have used sleep aids to help them fall or stay asleep if they responded “most days” or “every day” to one or more of the questions. The analytic sample includes adults age 18 and older with valid, nonmissing responses to all three questions about the use of sleep aids ($n = 31,509$). Differences between percentages were evaluated using two-sided significance tests at the 0.05 level. Linear trends by age group were evaluated using orthogonal polynomials in logistic regression. Estimates were evaluated using National Center for Health Statistics data presentation standards for proportions (5).

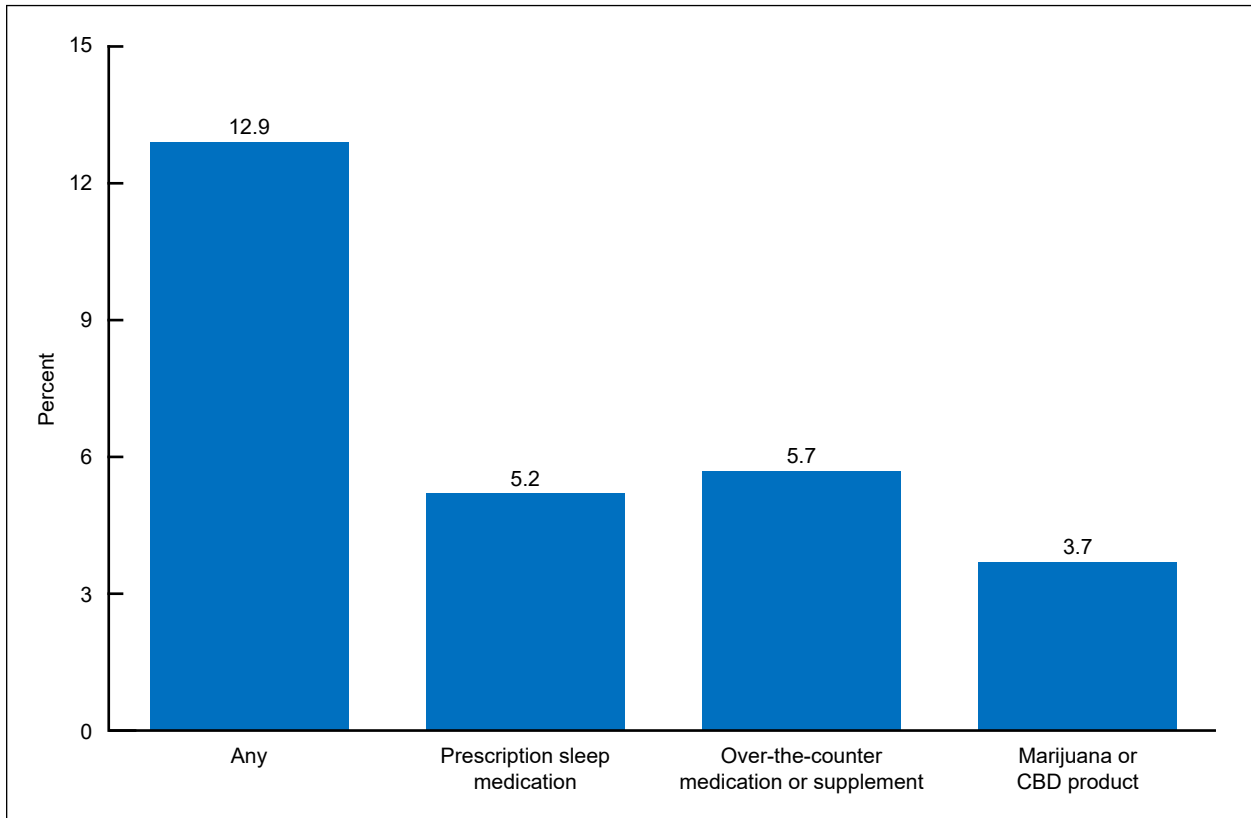
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Suggested citation

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Figure. Percentage of adults age 18 and older who used any sleep aid most days or every day in the past 30 days to help them fall or stay asleep, by type of sleep aid: United States, 2024



NOTES: Use of sleep aids is based on responses of "most days" or "every day" to three questions about sleep aids and supplements, "During the past 30 days, how often did you [take/use] any of the following to help fall or stay asleep: 1) medications prescribed by a doctor; 2) over-the-counter (OTC) medications or supplements; 3) marijuana or cannabidiol (CBD) products?" Questions about prescriptions and OTC medications do not include marijuana or CBD products. Respondents could report taking more than one sleep aid.
SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey, 2024.

Table. Percentage of adults age 18 and older who used any sleep aid most days or every day in the past 30 days to help them fall or stay asleep, by type of sleep aid, sex, and age group: United States, 2024

Selected characteristic	Any	Prescription medication	Over-the-counter medication or supplement	Marijuana or CBD product
		Percent (95% confidence interval)		
Total	12.9 (12.4–13.4)	5.2 (4.9–5.5)	5.7 (5.4–6.0)	3.7 (3.5–4.0)
Sex				
Men	¹ 10.8 (10.2–11.5)	¹ 3.9 (3.5–4.3)	¹ 4.3 (3.9–4.7)	4.0 (3.6–4.4)
Women	14.8 (14.2–15.5)	6.4 (6.0–6.8)	7.0 (6.6–7.5)	3.5 (3.2–3.9)
Age group				
18–34	² 10.5 (9.7–11.4)	² 2.2 (1.8–2.6)	² 3.9 (3.4–4.6)	³ 5.5 (4.9–6.2)
35–49	12.4 (11.6–13.4)	4.1 (3.6–4.7)	5.6 (5.0–6.2)	4.4 (3.8–5.0)
50–64	13.4 (12.6–14.4)	6.4 (5.8–7.1)	6.1 (5.5–6.8)	2.9 (2.5–3.4)
65 and older	15.8 (14.9–16.6)	8.8 (8.1–9.5)	7.6 (7.0–8.2)	1.7 (1.4–2.0)

¹Significantly different from women ($p < 0.05$).

²Significant increasing linear trend by age ($p < 0.05$).

³Significant decreasing linear trend by age ($p < 0.05$).

NOTES: Use of sleep aids is based on responses of “most days” or “every day” to three questions about sleep aids and supplements, “During the past 30 days, how often did you [take/use] any of the following to help fall or stay asleep: 1) medications prescribed by a doctor; 2) over-the-counter (OTC) medications or supplements; 3) marijuana or cannabidiol (CBD) products?” Questions about prescriptions and OTC medications do not include marijuana or CBD products. Respondents could report taking more than one sleep aid.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey, 2024.