



Early Release of Selected Estimates from the 2000 and Early 2001 National Health Interview Surveys (9/20/01)

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is pleased to present the 2nd Early Release of timely data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). In this release, NCHS provides estimates of 11 selected health measures based on data from the 2000 NHIS and the first quarter of the 2001 NHIS. Of these 11 measures, four are new: lack of health insurance coverage, pneumococcal vaccination, obesity, and participation in leisure time physical activities. These 11 estimates are being released prior to final data editing and weighting to provide improved access to the most recent information from the NHIS.

Objective: This second Early Release provides estimates of four additional health measures and updates the estimates of seven previously-released health measures using more recent data from the 2000 NHIS and the first quarter of the 2001 NHIS. For each selected health measure, a graph is presented showing the trend over time from 1997 to the first quarter of 2001 for the total population, followed by graphs or tables showing the estimates by sex, age group, and race/ethnicity based on 12 months of data from the 2000 NHIS. Key findings are highlighted with bulleted text. Data tables providing values displayed in the figures are included at the end of the file for each health measure. Because the estimates from the early 2001 NHIS are preliminary and are based on a smaller-than-annual sample, caution should be used when interpreting the data.

The four new measures included are: lack of health insurance coverage, pneumococcal vaccination, obesity, and participation in leisure time physical activities. The seven updated measures are: a usual place to go for medical care, failure to obtain needed medical care, influenza vaccination, current smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, HIV testing, and respondent-assessed health status. Several of these are among the Healthy People 2010 Leading Health Indicators, while others are targeted as key areas for the elimination of racial disparities in health.

Data source: This Early Release of selected estimates from the NHIS is based on 12-month data from 2000 and data collected between January and March of 2001. The data are derived from three components of the NHIS: the Family Core questionnaire, which collects information on all family members (data from a sample of 100,358 persons in 2000 and 22,034 persons in the first quarter of 2001); the Sample Adult Core that collects information from one randomly selected adult (18 years or older) in each family in the NHIS (data from a sample of 32,375 adults in 2000 and 7,235 adults in the first quarter of 2001); and the Sample Child Core that collects information about one randomly selected child in each family included in the NHIS (data from a sample of 13,377 children in 2000 and 2,942 children in the first quarter of 2001). Please visit the NHIS web site (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>) for more detailed information on the structure and content of the NHIS questionnaire.

Estimation procedures: Using population totals provided by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, sample weights were calculated to provide national population estimates and to adjust for non-response. NCHS creates weights for each calendar quarter of the NHIS sample. The NHIS data weighting procedure has been described in more detail elsewhere (http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_02/sr2_130.pdf) As the estimates for 2000 and 2001 are being released prior to final data editing and weighting, they should be considered preliminary and may differ from estimates that will be made later using the final data file. The smaller-than-annual sample size also limits the amount of detail that can be shown.

Data from the 1997-1999 NHIS that are shown were derived from the final data files for those years. A public use file for the 1999 NHIS was released in August 2001, and release of a public use file for the 2000 NHIS is forthcoming. Please check the NHIS web site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm> for announcements and more detailed information.

Point and variance estimates were calculated using the SUDAAN software package to incorporate the complex sample design of the NHIS. The Taylor series linearization method was chosen for variance estimation. All estimates shown meet the NCHS standard of less than 30% relative standard error. Point estimates in some figures are shown with 95% confidence intervals. Differences between percentages or rates were evaluated using two-sided tests at the .05 level. Terms such as “similar” or “no difference” indicate that the statistics being compared were not significantly different. Lack of comments regarding the difference between any two statistics does not necessarily mean that the difference was tested and found to be not significant. When necessary for the purpose of comparison, direct standardization was used to estimate age-sex-adjusted or age-adjusted percentages using the year 2000 projected U.S. population as the standard population. The age groups used varied depending upon the impact of age on specific measures.

Quarterly data: The design of the NHIS yields a nationally representative sample of the U.S. noninstitutionalized population each week. On occasion, this has enabled the NCHS to reduce the sample during the year for financial or operational reasons without impacting the ability to make national estimates. It has also allowed NCHS to analyze data for less than annual time periods.

In this release, only the first quarter estimates are presented for the year 2001. For the purpose of comparison, when the selected estimates are seasonally varied by quarter, the first quarter or quarterly estimates from the previous years are also provided in the graph showing the trend. As the early 2001 estimates may differ from the final yearly estimates, caution should be used when interpreting the trend resulting from changes occurring in 2001.

Future plans for Early Release of NHIS estimates: Additional Early Releases of NHIS estimates are planned. New measures may be added as work continues and in response to changing data needs. Feedback on the Early Release mechanism and on the estimates is welcome (e-mail: nhislist@cdc.gov). Announcements about the Early Release, new data releases, publications, or errors related to the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) will be sent to members of the HISUSERS Listserv. To join, visit the CDC web site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/subscribe.html>.

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