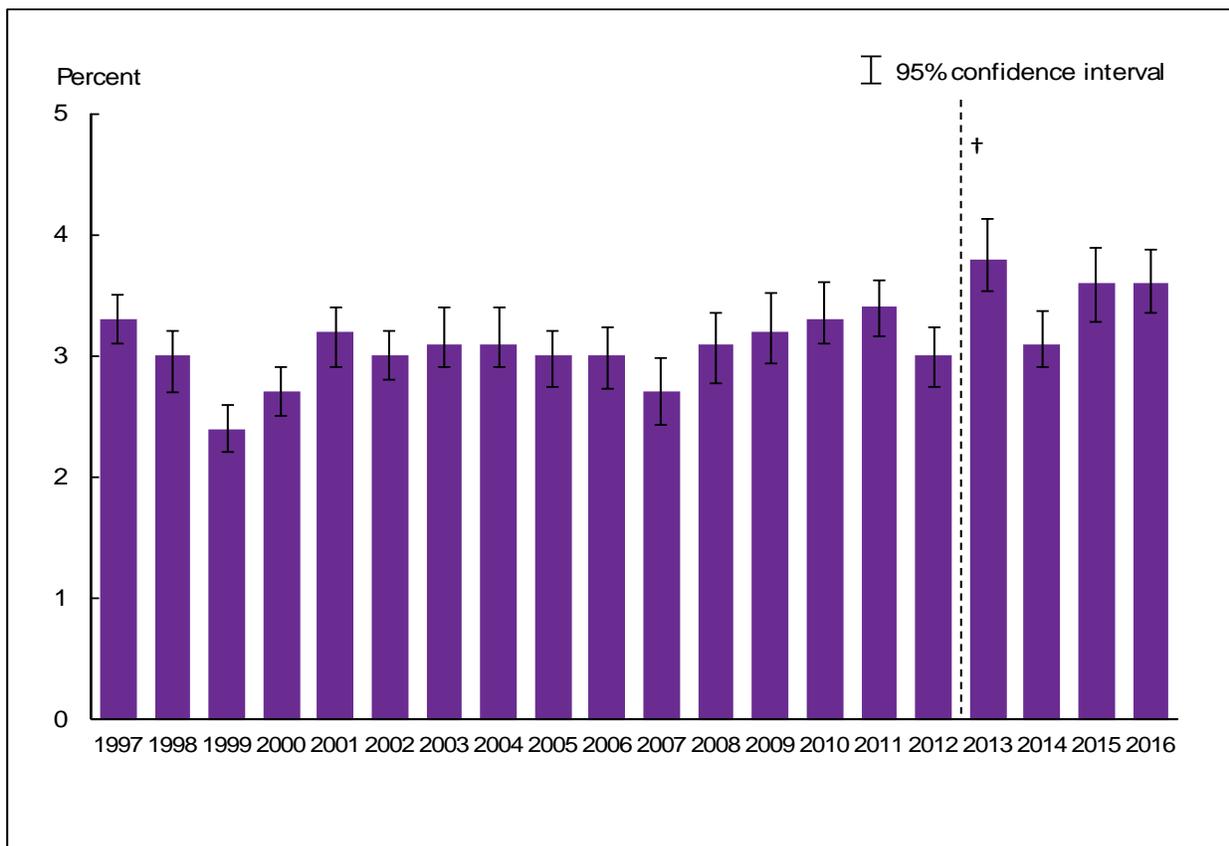


## Serious psychological distress

**Figure 13.1. Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days: United States, 1997–2016**



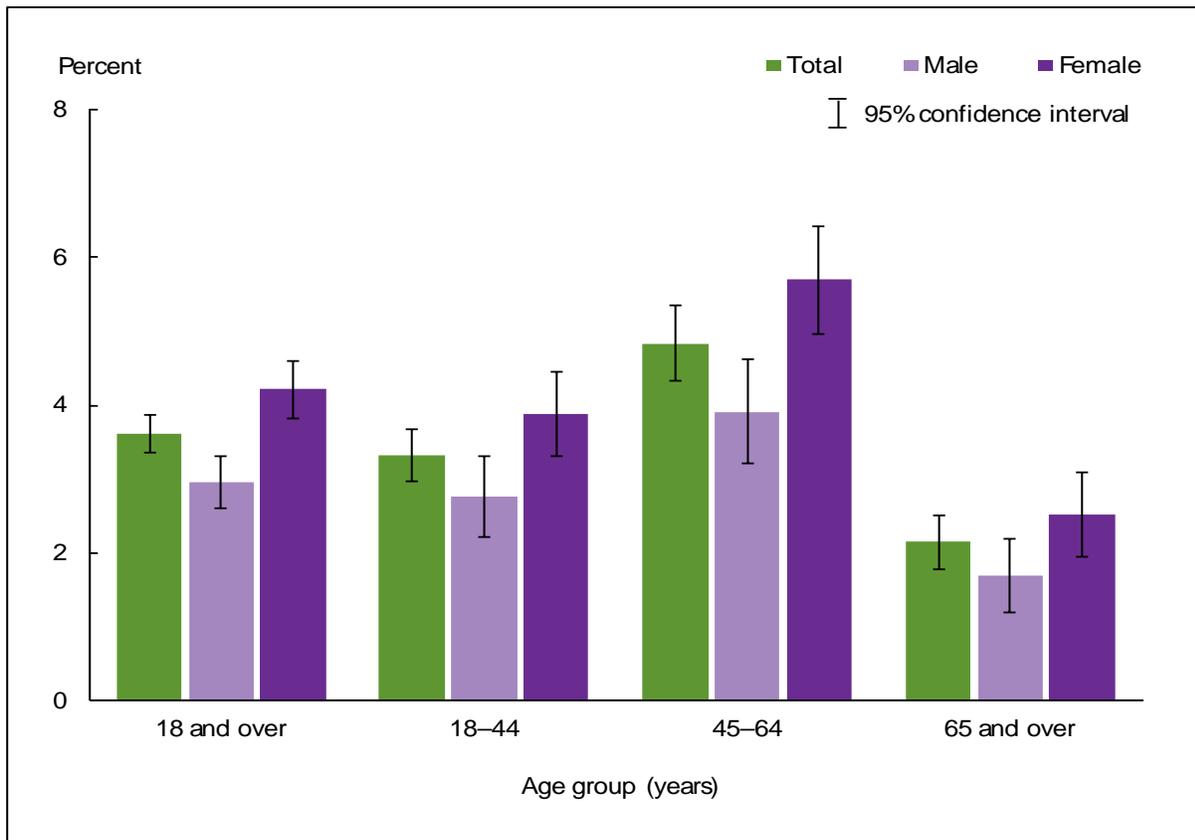
† In 2013, the six psychological distress questions were moved to the Adult Selected Items section of the Sample Adult questionnaire (dashed line). Differences observed in estimates based on 2012 and earlier National Health Interview Surveys (NHIS) and 2013 and later NHIS may be partially or fully attributable to this change in placement of the six psychological distress questions in the NHIS questionnaire. Due to the higher-than-usual amount of missing data in the Adult Selected Items section, adults with missing data for any of the six psychological distress questions are excluded from the calculation of the serious psychological distress indicator for 2013 and later.

NOTES: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. Six psychological distress questions are included in the Sample Adult Core component of NHIS. These questions ask how often a respondent experienced certain symptoms of psychological distress during the past 30 days. The response codes (0–4) of the six items for each person are summed to yield a scale with a 0–24 range. A value of 13 or more for this scale is used here to define serious psychological distress (12). The analyses exclude those with unknown serious psychological distress status (about 4% of respondents in 2013 and later). See [Technical Notes](#) for more details.

DATA SOURCE: NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 1997–2016, Sample Adult Core component.

- For 2016, 3.6% (95% confidence interval = 3.35%–3.88%) of adults aged 18 and over had experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days. This estimate was the same as the 2015 estimate of 3.6%.
- The percentage of adults who had experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days increased, from 2.7% in 2007 to 3.4% in 2011, then decreased to 3.0% in 2012.
- From 2014 through 2016, the percentage of adults who had experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days increased from 3.1% to 3.6%.

**Figure 13.2. Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days, by age group and sex: United States, 2016**

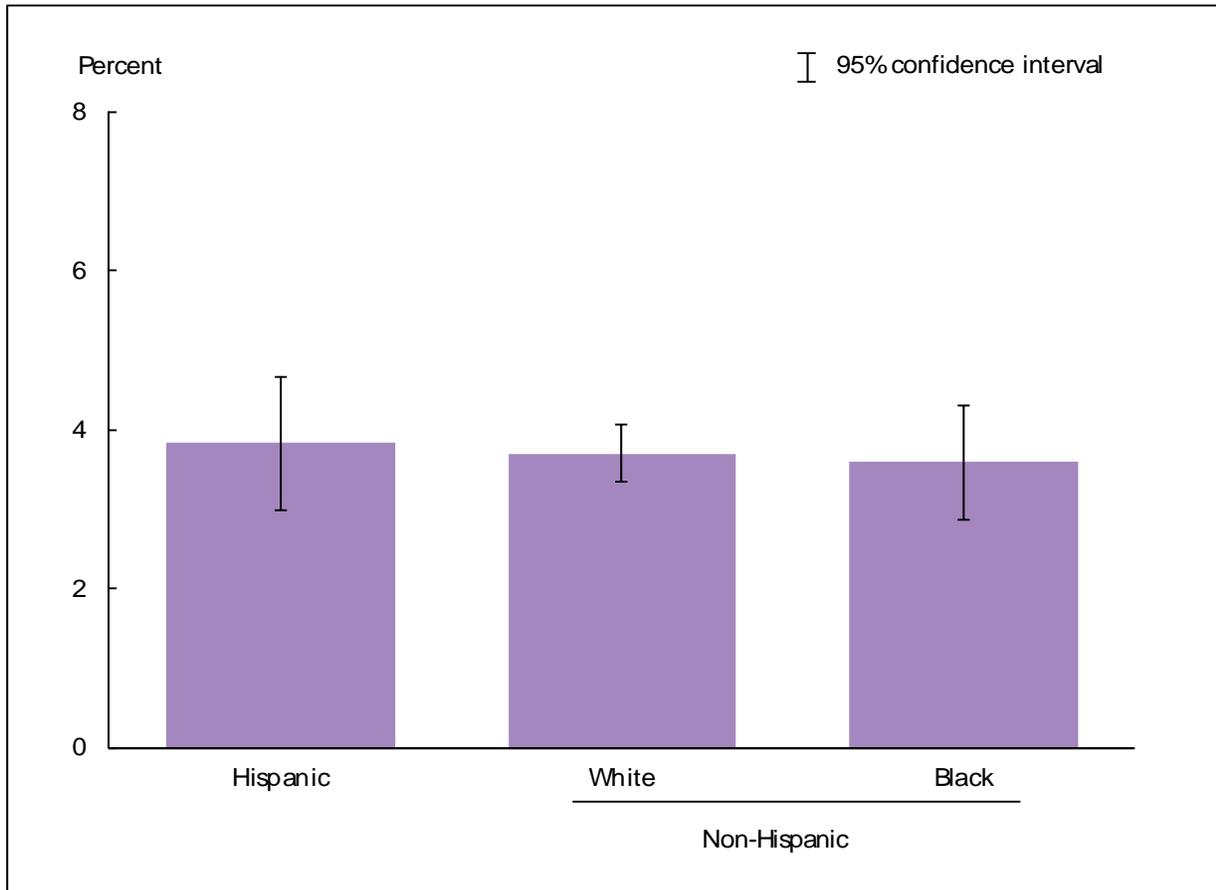


NOTES: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. Six psychological distress questions are included in the Sample Adult Core component of the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). These questions ask how often a respondent experienced certain symptoms of psychological distress during the past 30 days. The response codes (0–4) of the six items for each person are summed to yield a scale with a 0–24 range. A value of 13 or more for this scale is used here to define serious psychological distress (12). In 2013, the six psychological distress questions were moved to the Adult Selected Items section of the Sample Adult questionnaire. Differences observed in estimates based on 2012 and earlier NHIS and 2013 and later NHIS may be partially or fully attributable to this change in placement of the six psychological distress questions in the NHIS questionnaire. The analyses exclude the 3.5% of persons with unknown serious psychological distress status. See [Technical Notes](#) for more details.

DATA SOURCE: NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2016, Sample Adult Core component.

- For both sexes combined, the percentage of persons by age group who had experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days was 3.3% for adults aged 18–44, 4.8% for adults aged 45–64, and 2.2% for adults aged 65 and over.
- For adults aged 18 and over, and age groups 18–44, 45–64 and 65 and over, women were more likely than men to have experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days.

**Figure 13.3. Age-sex-adjusted percentage of adults aged 18 and over who experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days, by race and ethnicity: United States, 2016**



NOTES: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. Six psychological distress questions are included in the Sample Adult Core component of the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). These questions ask how often a respondent experienced certain symptoms of psychological distress during the past 30 days. The response codes (0–4) of the six items for each person are summed to yield a scale with a 0–24 range. A value of 13 or more for this scale is used here to define serious psychological distress (12). In 2013, the six psychological distress questions were moved to the Adult Selected Items section of the Sample Adult questionnaire. Differences observed in estimates based on 2012 and earlier NHIS and 2013 and later NHIS may be partially or fully attributable to this change in placement of the six psychological distress questions in the NHIS questionnaire. Estimates are Age-sex-adjusted using the projected 2000 U.S. population as the standard population and three age groups: 18–44, 45–64, and 65 and over. The analyses exclude the 3.5% of persons with unknown serious psychological distress status. See [Technical Notes](#) for more details.

DATA SOURCE: NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2016, Sample Adult Core component.

- The age-sex-adjusted prevalence of serious psychological distress was 3.8% for Hispanic persons, 3.7% for non-Hispanic white persons, and 3.6% for non-Hispanic black persons.
- No significant differences were observed in the prevalence of serious psychological distress among different race and ethnicity groups.

## Data tables for Figures 13.1–13.3:

**Data table for Figure 13.1. Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days: United States, 1997–2016**

Year	Crude <sup>1</sup> percent (95% confidence interval)	Age-adjusted <sup>2</sup> percent (95% confidence interval)
1997	3.3 (3.1–3.5)	3.3 (3.1–3.6)
1998	3.0 (2.7–3.2)	3.0 (2.8–3.2)
1999	2.4 (2.2–2.6)	2.4 (2.2–2.6)
2000	2.7 (2.5–2.9)	2.7 (2.5–2.9)
2001	3.2 (2.9–3.4)	3.2 (2.9–3.4)
2002	3.0 (2.8–3.2)	3.0 (2.8–3.2)
2003	3.1 (2.9–3.4)	3.1 (2.9–3.4)
2004	3.1 (2.9–3.4)	3.0 (2.8–3.3)
2005	3.0 (2.74–3.20)	2.9 (2.72–3.17)
2006	3.0 (2.73–3.23)	2.9 (2.68–3.17)
2007	2.7 (2.43–2.98)	2.7 (2.39–2.93)
2008	3.1 (2.78–3.36)	3.0 (2.74–3.32)
2009	3.2 (2.93–3.52)	3.2 (2.90–3.49)
2010	3.3 (3.10–3.60)	3.3 (3.02–3.51)
2011	3.4 (3.16–3.62)	3.3 (3.08–3.54)
2012	3.0 (2.74–3.24)	2.9 (2.69–3.19)
2013 <sup>3</sup>	3.8 (3.54–4.13)	3.8 (3.47–4.06)
2014	3.1 (2.91–3.37)	3.1 (2.88–3.32)
2015	3.6 (3.28–3.89)	3.6 (3.29–3.91)
2016	3.6 (3.35–3.88)	3.6 (3.31–3.85)

<sup>1</sup>Crude estimates are presented.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates are age-adjusted using the projected 2000 U.S. population as the standard population and three age groups: 18–44, 45–64, and 65 and over.

<sup>3</sup>In 2013, the six psychological distress questions were moved to the Adult Selected Items section of the Sample Adult questionnaire. Differences observed in estimates based on 2012 and earlier National Health Interview Surveys (NHIS) and 2013 and later NHIS may be partially or fully attributable to this change in placement of the six psychological distress questions in the NHIS questionnaire. Due to the higher-than-usual amount of missing data in the Adult Selected Items section, adults with missing data for any of the six psychological distress questions are excluded from the calculation of the serious psychological distress indicator for 2013 and later.

NOTES: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. Beginning with 2012 data, NHIS transitioned to weights derived from the 2010 census. For 2003–2011 data, weights were derived from the 2000 census. In this Early Release, estimates for 2000–2002 were recalculated using weights derived from the 2000 census. For 1997–1999 data, weights were derived from the 1990 census. See [Technical Notes](#) for more details.

DATA SOURCE: NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 1997–2016, Sample Adult Core component.

**Data table for Figure 13.2. Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days, by age group and sex: United States, 2016**

Age (years) and sex	Percent	95% confidence interval
18–44, total	3.3	2.98–3.68
18–44, male	2.8	2.21–3.31
18–44, female	3.9	3.31–4.46
45–64, total	4.8	4.32–5.35
45–64, male	3.9	3.21–4.62
45–64, female	5.7	4.96–6.43
65 and over, total	2.2	1.78–2.52
65 and over, male	1.7	1.19–2.20
65 and over, female	2.5	1.96–3.09
18 and over (crude <sup>1</sup> ), total	3.6	3.35–3.88
18 and over (crude <sup>1</sup> ), male	3.0	2.61–3.32
18 and over (crude <sup>1</sup> ), female	4.2	3.82–4.61
18 and over (age-adjusted <sup>2</sup> ), total	3.6	3.31–3.85
18 and over (age-adjusted <sup>2</sup> ), male	2.9	2.57–3.28
18 and over (age-adjusted <sup>2</sup> ), female	4.2	3.79–4.60

<sup>1</sup>Crude estimates are presented.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates are age-adjusted using the projected 2000 U.S. population as the standard population and three age groups: 18–44, 45–64, and 65 and over.

NOTES: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. In 2013, the six psychological distress questions were moved to the Adult Selected Items section of the Sample Adult questionnaire. Differences observed in estimates based on 2012 and earlier National Health Interview Surveys (NHIS) and 2013 and later NHIS may be partially or fully attributable to this change in placement of the six psychological distress questions in the NHIS questionnaire.

DATA SOURCE: NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2016, Sample Adult Core component.

**Data table for Figure 13.3. Age-sex-adjusted percentage of adults aged 18 and over who experienced serious psychological distress during the past 30 days, by race and ethnicity: United States, 2016**

Race and ethnicity	Percent <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval
Hispanic or Latino	3.8	2.99–4.67
Not Hispanic or Latino, single race, white	3.7	3.34–4.07
Not Hispanic or Latino, single race, black	3.6	2.88–4.31

<sup>1</sup>Estimates are age-sex-adjusted using the projected 2000 U.S. population as the standard population and using five age groups: 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–64, and 65 and over.

NOTES: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. In 2013, the six psychological distress questions were moved to the Adult Selected Items section of the Sample Adult questionnaire. Differences observed in estimates based on 2012 and earlier National Health Interview Surveys (NHIS) and 2013 and later NHIS may be partially or fully attributable to this change in placement of the six psychological distress questions in the NHIS questionnaire.

DATA SOURCE: NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2016, Sample Adult Core component.