

AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes for October 1987 Provisional Data From the National Health Interview Survey

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Introduction

The National Center for Health Statistics has introduced a special set of supplemental questions on the adult population's knowledge and attitudes about acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) in the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). This report presents provisional findings for October, the third month of data collection with the AIDS questionnaire. Data for August and September 1987 have been published in *Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics* Nos. 146 and 148. This report updates the earlier reports and for the first time describes educational differences in AIDS knowledge and attitudes.

The *Advance Data* reports describing the NHIS AIDS data have been restricted to simple descriptive statistics in order to permit their timely release. Thus, these reports do not attempt to explain or interpret differences among population subgroups in AIDS knowledge or to examine relationships among various measures of knowledge, attitudes, and perceived risk. The AIDS data base will permit more complex analyses than those presented in this series of *Advance Data* reports, and such analyses currently are being undertaken by various groups in the Public Health Service.

The AIDS questionnaire was designed to provide baseline estimates of public knowledge and attitudes about AIDS transmission and prevention of AIDS virus infection and to measure changes in knowledge and attitudes over time. The data also were needed as input for the planning and development of AIDS educational campaigns and for evaluation of major educational efforts.

The AIDS questionnaire was developed by the National Center for Health Statistics and interagency working groups established by the Information, Education and Risk

Factor Reduction Subcommittee of the Public Health Service Executive Task Force on AIDS. The working groups included representatives from the Centers for Disease Control; the National Institutes of Health; the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration; and the Health Resources and Services Administration.

The questionnaire includes items on self-assessment of knowledge about AIDS; sources of information about AIDS; knowledge about AIDS and AIDS-related risk factors, modes of transmission, and blood tests for the AIDS virus; plans to take such a test; recent experience with blood donation; self-assessment of chances of getting AIDS; personal knowledge of people with AIDS or the AIDS virus; and finally, willingness of respondents to take part in a proposed national seroprevalence study.

This report presents provisional data for October 1987 for all AIDS questionnaire items. Table 1 displays percent distributions of persons 18 years of age and over by response categories according to age, sex, race, and education. In most cases, the actual question asked of the respondent is reproduced verbatim in table 1, along with the response categories. In a few cases, questions or response categories have been rephrased or combined. Refusals and other nonresponses are excluded from the denominator in the calculation of estimates, but responses of "don't know" are included.

Selected findings

Changes in knowledge

The most notable changes in knowledge between September and October 1987 were in the proportions of adults

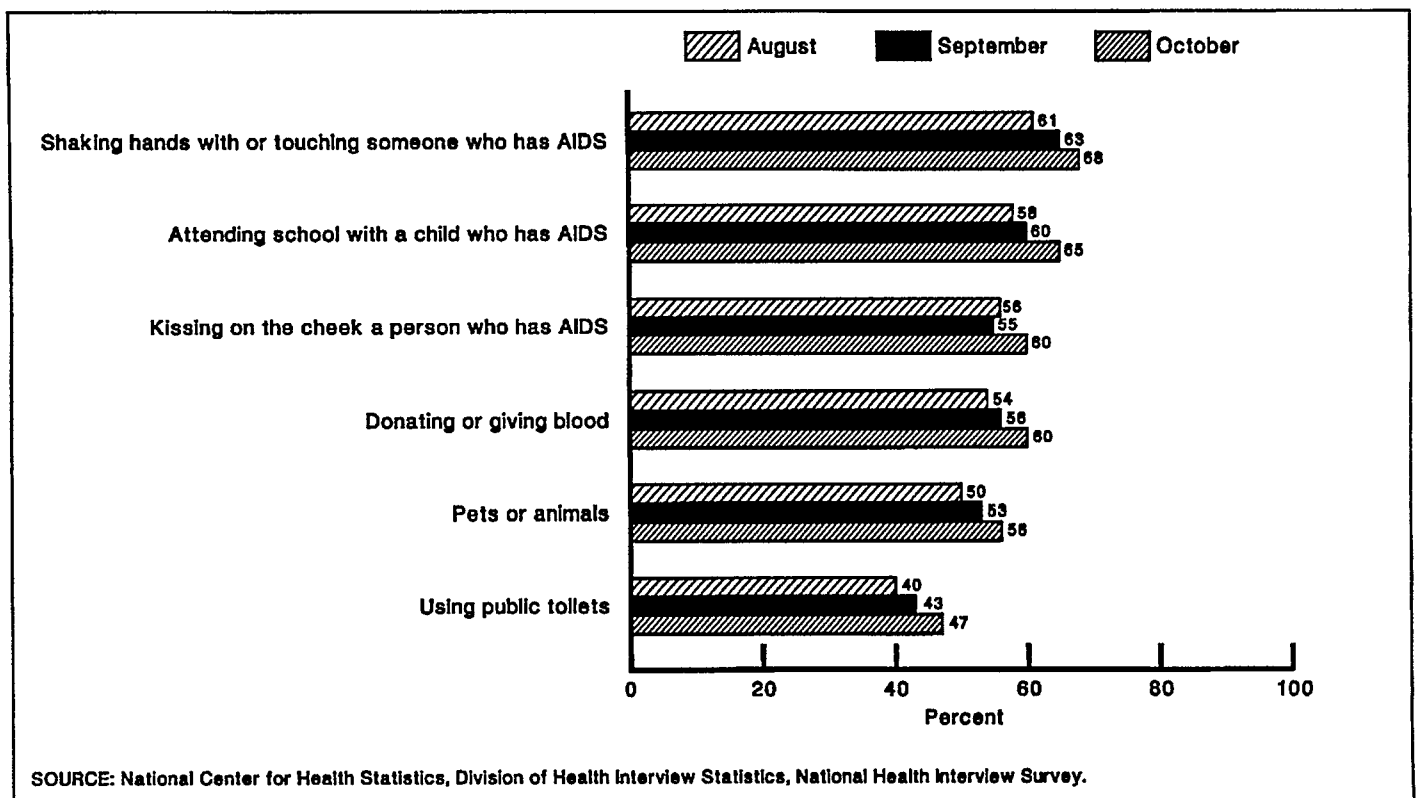


Figure 1. Provisional estimates of percent of adults who think it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus infection from various conjectured modes of transmission: United States, August-October, 1987

who thought that it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus through various modes of casual contact. As shown in figure 1, these changes represent the continuation of a trend that began with the August AIDS data. While all of these differences between September and October are statistically significant, some of the differences in proportions between August and September are not.

In October, 68 percent of Americans 18 years of age and over realized that it is very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS by shaking hands with someone who has AIDS, compared to 63 percent in September and 61 percent in August. The proportion of adults thinking it very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS by attending school with a child who has AIDS increased from 58 percent in August to 60 percent in September and 65 percent in October.

There were also increases in the proportions of adults thinking it very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus by kissing on the cheek a person with AIDS (60 percent in October compared to 56 percent in August and 55 percent in September), donating or giving blood (54 percent in August, 56 percent in September, and 60 percent in October), and using public toilets (40, 43, and 47 percent, respectively). Smaller but statistically significant changes were observed for a number of the other forms of casual contact as well.

Following a number of statistically significant changes in the level of knowledge about other aspects of AIDS and the AIDS virus between the months of August and September 1987, there were few changes between September and

October. In October, more than 90 percent of all adults 18 years of age and over thought that it is definitely or probably true that AIDS leads to death, that there is no cure for AIDS at present, and that the AIDS virus can be transmitted via sexual intercourse, shared needles, and from a pregnant woman to her baby. Almost as many adults, 89 percent, realized that AIDS cripples the body's natural protection against disease. Approximately three-fourths of all adults thought that it is definitely or probably true that AIDS is caused by a virus and that a person can be infected with the virus without having the disease AIDS. The proportion of adults who thought it definitely false that an AIDS vaccine is available to the public increased slightly from 69 percent in September to 71 percent in October.

Differences by education

There are striking differences in AIDS knowledge according to level of education. Data from the National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes show that adults who have completed 12 or more years of school know more about virtually all aspects of AIDS than do individuals with less than 12 years of school completed. For many items, there also is a statistically significant difference in knowledge between persons with 12 years of school completed and those who have completed more than 12 years of school. The following highlights describe some of the differences by education as observed in the October data from the NHIS AIDS survey. All differences cited in the subsequent text are statistically significant.

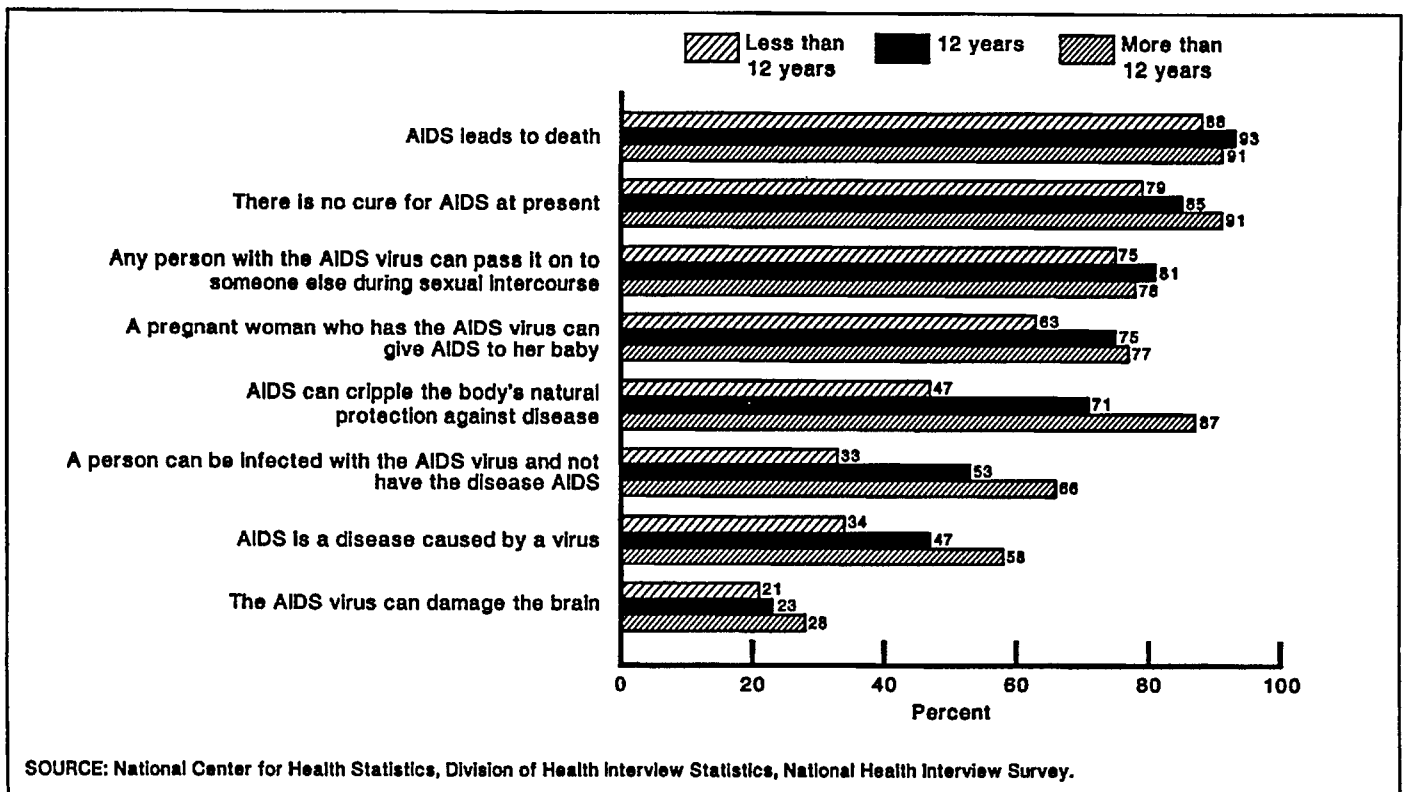


Figure 2. Provisional estimates of percent of persons 18 years of age and over who think selected statements about AIDS are definitely true, by education: United States, October 1987

Awareness of AIDS—While virtually everyone, regardless of education, has heard of AIDS, the more highly educated adults reported having last heard about the disease more recently than those with less education. Sixty-eight percent of adults with less than 12 years of school completed last saw, heard, or read about AIDS in the 3 days preceding the NHIS interview, compared to 75 percent of those with 12 years and 79 percent of those with more than 12 years of school completed.

Self-perceived knowledge—Nine percent of adults with less than 12 years of education felt that they know a lot about AIDS, compared to 16 and 33 percent, respectively, of persons with 12 and more than 12 years of education. The proportion of individuals who stated that they know “some” about AIDS increases with education as well, from 26 percent for those with less than 12 years of school completed to 48 percent for those with more than 12 years. More than one-fourth (26 percent) of adults with less than 12 years of education said that they know nothing about AIDS, compared to 7 percent of those with 12 years and 2 percent of those with more than 12 years of education.

General knowledge—Figure 2 shows the percents of adults answering “definitely true” to selected knowledge questions. In most cases, these proportions increase directly with education.

The largest differences by education are on statements that describe the cause of AIDS and the ways in which the disease affects the immune system. Thirty-four percent of adults with less than 12 years of school completed thought that it is definitely true that AIDS is caused by a virus,

compared to 47 percent of those with 12 years and 58 percent of those with more than 12 years of school completed. Likewise, the proportion of adults who thought that it is definitely true that AIDS can cripple the body's natural protection against disease varies from 47 percent (less than 12 years of school) to 87 percent (more than 12 years of school), and the proportion who thought it definitely true that a person can be infected with the AIDS virus and not have the disease AIDS varies from 33 to 66 percent, respectively. The percent of adults who stated that it is definitely false that “you can tell if people have the AIDS virus just by looking at them” also increases sharply with education, from 56 percent of persons with less than 12 years of education to 69 and 81 percent, respectively, of those with 12 and more than 12 years.

Transmission of the AIDS virus—As shown in figure 3, the probability of thinking that it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus through casual contact with someone who has AIDS increases with education. Even among adults with more than 12 years of education, though, the level of accurate information about the risk of AIDS virus transmission is low. For instance, less than half (47 percent) of adults with more than 12 years of schooling realized that it is very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS from public toilets, and only 16 percent thought that it is very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS from kissing with exchange of saliva a person who has AIDS. Among persons with less education, the comparable proportions are even smaller.

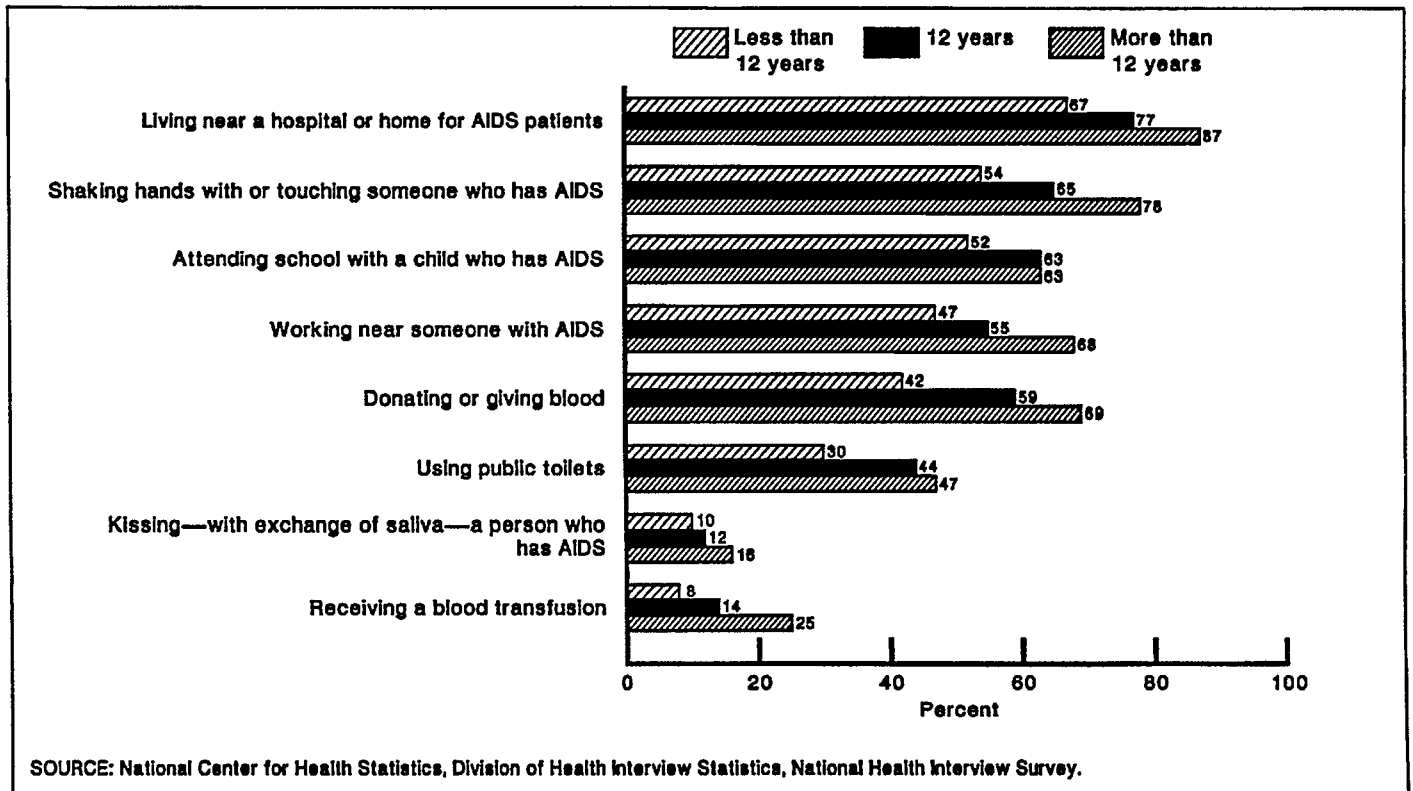


Figure 3. Provisional estimates of percent of persons 18 years of age and over who think it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus infection from various conjectured modes of transmission, by education: United States, October 1987

In preparing figure 3, the categories “very unlikely” and “definitely not possible” were grouped for purposes of consistent presentation. Both responses are not necessarily correct for all items shown in figure 3. For some items, many AIDS researchers would argue that the only correct answer is “definitely not possible.” As is evident in table 1, the proportions of adults who thought it definitely not possible to transmit AIDS via casual contact also increase with education.

Blood test for the AIDS virus—Fifty percent of all adults with less than 12 years of school completed have heard of a blood test for the AIDS virus. For persons with more education, the proportion is higher: 72 percent for individuals with 12 years of school completed and 77 percent for those with more than 12 years. The proportion of adults who realized that a positive blood test means that a person can spread the AIDS virus through sexual intercourse is 44 percent for persons with less than 12 years of education and 63 and 67 percent, respectively, for those with 12 and more than 12 years.

Regardless of education, few people have had an AIDS blood test: 4 percent of those with less than 12 years of school completed, 6 percent of those with 12 years, and 7 percent of those with more than 12 years of school completed. The proportion of adults who have thought about having the AIDS blood test increases with education, from 8 percent to 14 percent.

Risk of getting AIDS—Adults who have completed less than 12 years of school are less likely than their more well-educated peers to acknowledge the possibility that they or someone they know might get the AIDS virus. The

proportion of adults who stated that there is no chance that someone they know will get the AIDS virus decreases from 36 percent of individuals with less than 12 years of education to 26 percent of those with more than 12 years, and the proportion stating that there is no chance of getting the AIDS virus themselves decreases from 70 percent (less than 12 years) to 62 percent (more than 12 years).

AIDS prevention—Adults who have completed 12 years of school were more likely than either those with more or less education to state that the following methods are very effective in preventing transmission of the AIDS virus: using a condom (considered very effective by 34 percent of persons with 12 years of school completed), being celibate (93 percent), and maintaining a monogamous relationship with a person who does not have the AIDS virus (86 percent). For adults with less than 12 years of school completed, the respective proportions considering these methods very effective are 24, 84, and 77 percent; for those with more than 12 years of education, the proportions are 29, 89, and 84 percent.

AIDS discussion and education—The likelihood of having discussed AIDS with friends, relatives, or children increases with education. Less than half (49 percent) of all individuals with less than 12 years of school reported having discussed AIDS with a friend or relative, compared to two-thirds (66 percent) of those with 12 years of school and nearly three-fourths (72 percent) of those with more than 12 years of school. Similarly, the proportion of adults who have discussed AIDS with their children 10-17 years old increases from 50 percent of those with less than 12 years of education to 66 percent of those with more than 12 years.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, October 1987

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education			
	Total	18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
Percent distribution ¹											
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1. Have you ever heard of AIDS? When was the last time you saw, heard, or read something about AIDS?											
0-3 days ago	75	68	76	79	79	71	76	71	68	75	79
4-7 days ago	14	18	15	11	12	16	15	13	15	14	14
8-14 days ago	3	5	4	2	2	4	3	3	2	4	3
15-31 days ago	3	6	2	2	3	3	3	5	4	3	3
More than 31 days ago	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	4	2	1	1
Never heard of AIDS	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	-
Don't know	2	1	1	5	2	2	2	3	7	2	1
2. Compared to most people, how much would you say you know about AIDS?											
A lot	21	22	27	14	22	21	22	13	9	16	33
Some	42	49	46	33	41	44	43	37	26	45	48
Little	27	25	23	34	27	27	26	33	39	31	17
Nothing	9	4	4	20	10	9	8	16	26	7	2
Don't know	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
3a. AIDS is a disease caused by a virus.											
Definitely true	48	58	55	34	53	44	49	46	34	47	58
Probably true	26	26	27	24	25	27	26	22	21	27	27
Probably false	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3
Definitely false	4	4	4	6	3	5	4	6	6	5	3
Don't know	18	9	12	32	16	20	17	22	36	17	10
3b. AIDS can cripple the body's natural protection against disease.											
Definitely true	72	78	78	61	73	71	75	57	47	71	87
Probably true	17	13	15	21	17	17	16	23	26	18	10
Probably false	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
Definitely false	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
Don't know	9	7	4	16	8	10	8	17	24	8	2
3c. AIDS is especially common in older people.											
Definitely true	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Probably true	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	3	1	1
Probably false	20	24	17	19	22	17	20	15	17	19	21
Definitely false	70	67	76	66	67	73	71	67	59	72	74
Don't know	9	7	6	13	10	8	7	15	21	7	4
3d. The AIDS virus can damage the brain.											
Definitely true	24	24	27	21	25	24	23	31	21	23	28
Probably true	31	31	29	34	32	31	31	31	32	32	30
Probably false	9	12	11	4	9	9	10	6	4	8	12
Definitely false	6	7	7	3	5	6	6	3	3	6	8
Don't know	30	26	26	37	29	31	30	29	40	31	23
3e. AIDS usually leads to heart disease.											
Definitely true	7	7	6	8	7	7	6	12	8	7	6
Probably true	21	20	21	22	19	22	20	26	23	21	20
Probably false	18	22	21	11	20	16	19	9	9	16	24
Definitely false	14	15	18	10	15	13	14	11	7	14	18
Don't know	40	36	35	50	39	42	40	43	53	43	31
3f. AIDS leads to death.											
Definitely true	91	91	93	90	89	93	91	90	88	93	91
Probably true	7	8	7	7	9	6	7	9	8	6	8
Probably false	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0
Definitely false	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	1	0	0
Don't know	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	1	0
4a. Where do you get most of your information about AIDS? ²											
Television	82	82	81	84	81	83	82	86	88	83	78
Newspapers	61	53	64	64	66	56	63	51	49	61	68
Magazines	29	30	32	26	26	32	31	22	18	28	37
Radio	10	8	11	9	11	8	10	9	10	8	11
Relatives and friends	8	12	9	5	8	8	8	9	8	9	8
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets	7	7	8	4	7	7	6	9	4	6	9
Doctor/HMO/clinic	5	5	6	4	5	5	5	6	4	4	7
Other	15	17	20	9	13	18	15	18	9	11	24
Don't know	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
4b. Of the sources you just told me, from which one do you get the most information?											
Television	56	59	51	58	55	56	55	66	71	59	45
Newspapers	21	16	21	25	24	19	22	14	15	23	23
Magazines	9	10	11	7	9	10	9	7	4	8	14
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2
Doctor/HMO/clinic	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2
Other	10	11	12	6	9	11	10	9	6	8	14
Don't know	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, October 1987—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education			
	Total	18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
5a. If you wanted more specific information about AIDS, where would you get it? ²	Percent distribution ¹										
Doctor/HMO/clinic	57	58	56	57	54	59	58	51	55	60	55
Public health department	18	17	21	17	19	17	18	20	11	19	21
Library	11	14	13	6	11	11	11	9	5	11	14
AIDS hot line	8	10	10	5	7	10	8	11	7	7	10
Other	28	32	31	20	29	27	27	31	16	24	37
Don't know	12	9	9	18	12	11	12	12	21	13	6
5b. Which one source would you most likely use?											
Doctor/HMO/clinic	46	42	46	50	44	48	47	41	50	48	42
Public health department	13	13	15	12	15	12	13	15	9	15	14
Library	8	11	8	5	7	8	7	8	5	8	9
AIDS hot line	6	7	7	4	5	7	6	8	5	5	7
Other	15	18	15	11	16	13	14	16	11	11	21
Don't know	12	9	9	18	13	12	12	12	21	13	6
6a. A person can be infected with the AIDS virus and not have the disease AIDS.											
Definitely true	54	56	62	44	52	56	56	41	33	53	66
Probably true	26	25	24	30	29	23	26	26	29	28	23
Probably false	3	4	3	2	4	3	3	6	4	3	3
Definitely false	4	6	3	2	4	4	3	7	5	4	3
Don't know	13	8	8	22	12	15	12	22	30	13	5
6b. You can tell if people have the AIDS virus just by looking at them.											
Definitely true	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	1
Probably true	4	5	3	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	3
Probably false	15	16	14	16	17	14	16	16	17	17	13
Definitely false	71	73	77	63	69	73	72	63	56	69	81
Don't know	9	4	5	16	9	9	8	14	20	8	3
6c. Any person with the AIDS virus can pass it on to someone else during sexual intercourse.											
Definitely true	79	81	80	75	75	82	78	83	75	81	78
Probably true	16	15	15	16	18	14	16	12	17	14	16
Probably false	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	2
Definitely false	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Don't know	4	3	3	7	5	4	4	5	7	4	2
6d. A pregnant woman who has the AIDS virus can give AIDS to her baby.											
Definitely true	73	77	75	69	69	77	74	70	63	75	77
Probably true	19	19	19	20	22	17	19	22	24	18	18
Probably false	0	—	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Definitely false	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	7	5	5	10	8	5	7	8	12	6	4
6e. There is a vaccine available to the public that protects a person from getting the AIDS virus.											
Definitely true	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	1	1	2
Probably true	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	7	6	2	2
Probably false	10	12	7	10	11	8	10	8	8	11	8
Definitely false	71	73	78	61	71	70	73	61	51	70	82
Don't know	15	10	11	25	13	18	14	22	33	15	7
6f. There is no cure for AIDS at present.											
Definitely true	86	85	88	84	84	87	87	81	79	85	91
Probably true	8	8	6	9	9	6	7	10	10	8	6
Probably false	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Definitely false	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	1
Don't know	4	3	2	6	4	4	3	6	9	3	1
7. How likely do you think it is that a person will get the AIDS virus from—											
7a. Receiving a blood transfusion?											
Very likely	34	34	31	37	31	36	32	45	45	35	27
Somewhat likely	31	31	31	32	29	34	31	32	29	35	29
Somewhat unlikely	13	16	16	8	16	11	14	8	7	12	17
Very unlikely	16	15	18	14	19	13	17	6	6	13	24
Definitely not possible	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Don't know	4	3	2	8	4	4	4	7	9	4	1
7b. Donating or giving blood?											
Very likely	8	8	6	10	8	8	7	16	14	8	5
Somewhat likely	14	15	13	14	13	15	12	25	19	15	10
Somewhat unlikely	12	12	13	12	12	13	13	11	11	12	14
Very unlikely	35	39	36	30	38	32	37	22	24	34	40
Definitely not possible	25	22	28	24	25	25	26	16	18	25	29
Don't know	6	4	3	11	5	7	5	10	14	5	2

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Percent distribution ¹											
7c. Living near a hospital or home for AIDS patients?											
Very likely	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1
Somewhat likely	4	6	3	3	5	4	3	8	5	4	3
Somewhat unlikely	9	8	11	9	10	9	9	14	10	11	8
Very unlikely	36	40	35	35	38	35	37	32	33	36	39
Definitely not possible	42	40	46	41	40	44	44	31	34	41	48
Don't know	6	4	5	10	6	7	5	12	16	6	2
7d. Working near someone with AIDS?											
Very likely	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	7	4	4	3
Somewhat likely	14	16	13	15	13	15	13	22	16	16	12
Somewhat unlikely	15	15	17	15	16	15	16	13	14	17	15
Very unlikely	33	35	33	31	33	32	34	26	27	29	39
Definitely not possible	26	26	28	24	26	26	27	20	21	26	29
Don't know	8	4	7	13	8	8	8	12	19	8	3
7e. Eating in a restaurant where the cook has AIDS?											
Very likely	9	10	9	10	9	10	8	17	11	12	6
Somewhat likely	24	23	24	25	25	22	23	26	27	24	21
Somewhat unlikely	16	18	14	16	16	16	16	12	12	16	18
Very unlikely	26	25	29	22	26	25	27	19	19	22	33
Definitely not possible	14	16	14	11	12	15	14	12	12	14	14
Don't know	12	8	10	16	11	12	12	13	19	13	7
7f. Kissing—with exchange of saliva—a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely	30	27	30	32	28	31	29	36	32	32	26
Somewhat likely	38	38	39	36	39	37	38	40	36	38	39
Somewhat unlikely	10	13	9	10	10	11	11	3	7	10	14
Very unlikely	10	11	12	7	12	9	11	7	8	9	13
Definitely not possible	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Don't know	9	6	8	12	9	9	8	10	15	8	6
7g. Shaking hands with or touching someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	1
Somewhat likely	8	8	8	8	7	8	7	12	9	9	6
Somewhat unlikely	16	14	15	16	17	14	15	20	18	17	13
Very unlikely	39	39	40	37	41	37	41	32	29	38	46
Definitely not possible	29	33	30	25	27	31	29	23	25	28	32
Don't know	7	2	5	11	6	7	6	10	16	6	2
7h. Sharing plates, forks, or glasses with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely	13	13	12	14	12	14	12	19	16	14	10
Somewhat likely	31	30	33	31	32	31	31	33	32	33	29
Somewhat unlikely	15	16	14	14	14	16	16	10	11	14	18
Very unlikely	21	21	23	18	24	18	22	15	15	18	27
Definitely not possible	11	13	10	9	10	11	11	9	9	11	11
Don't know	10	6	8	14	8	11	9	13	17	10	6
7i. Using public toilets?											
Very likely	8	8	7	8	6	9	7	13	11	9	9
Somewhat likely	20	19	19	22	20	20	19	25	28	22	16
Somewhat unlikely	14	15	15	13	14	14	15	13	10	14	16
Very unlikely	29	30	33	24	32	26	31	19	16	28	29
Definitely not possible	18	20	18	17	18	18	19	12	13	16	17
Don't know	11	8	8	17	10	12	10	16	21	11	12
7j. Sharing needles for drug use with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely	93	94	95	89	92	93	93	90	86	93	92
Somewhat likely	4	3	4	6	5	4	4	6	8	4	4
Somewhat unlikely	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very unlikely	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
Definitely not possible	0	0	—	0	—	0	0	—	0	0	—
Don't know	2	1	1	4	2	2	2	3	5	2	3
7k. Kissing on the cheek a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	7	4	3	3
Somewhat likely	11	11	10	11	12	10	10	17	15	13	12
Somewhat unlikely	18	18	18	18	19	17	17	22	17	19	18
Very unlikely	35	33	37	33	37	33	37	23	24	33	31
Definitely not possible	25	30	27	21	23	28	26	22	23	24	28
Don't know	8	5	5	13	7	8	7	9	17	8	7
7l. Being coughed or sneezed on by someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely	9	9	9	10	9	10	9	14	13	10	13
Somewhat likely	29	24	29	32	28	29	28	35	35	30	25
Somewhat unlikely	17	19	18	14	17	17	18	13	11	17	19
Very unlikely	23	25	26	18	25	21	24	14	14	20	16
Definitely not possible	12	16	11	8	11	12	12	11	7	12	14
Don't know	11	7	8	17	10	11	10	14	19	11	12

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, October 1987—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education			
	Total	18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
Percent distribution ¹											
7m. Attending school with a child who has AIDS?											
Very likely	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Somewhat likely	9	10	9	10	10	9	9	10	10	11	11
Somewhat unlikely	14	14	16	13	15	14	14	19	16	14	17
Very unlikely	37	39	38	33	41	33	38	33	29	35	30
Definitely not possible	28	31	28	25	25	31	29	23	23	28	32
Don't know	9	4	7	17	8	10	9	13	20	10	7
7n. Mosquitoes or other insects?											
Very likely	8	9	8	8	8	8	7	15	11	10	10
Somewhat likely	26	27	25	25	26	25	26	25	32	25	31
Somewhat unlikely	10	13	10	7	11	9	10	7	6	11	11
Very unlikely	21	21	22	19	22	20	22	16	13	19	15
Definitely not possible	14	14	16	13	14	15	15	12	8	14	14
Don't know	21	16	19	28	19	23	21	25	29	21	20
7o. Pets or animals?											
Very likely	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	8	5	2	2
Somewhat likely	10	11	9	8	9	10	8	16	12	11	11
Somewhat unlikely	8	11	8	8	9	8	8	8	8	8	13
Very unlikely	30	32	32	26	33	27	31	22	22	29	24
Definitely not possible	27	27	27	25	25	28	27	20	19	26	26
Don't know	23	17	22	30	21	25	23	26	34	23	24
7p. Having sex with a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely	93	94	94	91	91	95	93	92	91	95	90
Somewhat likely	5	5	5	6	7	4	5	6	5	4	6
Somewhat unlikely	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	—	—	—	—
Very unlikely	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Definitely not possible	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	—	1	0	—
Don't know	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	3	1	3
8. Have you ever heard of a blood test for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes	73	81	81	58	74	72	75	58	50	72	77
No	24	18	18	36	23	25	22	40	45	24	18
Don't know	3	2	2	6	3	3	3	1	4	4	4
9. Does this test tell whether a person has the disease AIDS?											
Yes	39	45	41	32	38	41	40	37	31	43	43
No	23	25	29	16	27	20	25	11	8	18	25
Don't know	10	10	10	10	9	11	10	10	11	11	9
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8)	27	19	19	42	26	28	25	42	50	28	23
10. If a person has a positive blood test for infection with the AIDS virus, does this mean that they can give someone else the AIDS virus through sexual intercourse?											
Yes	64	72	71	48	65	62	66	51	44	63	67
No	3	4	4	2	4	3	4	2	2	3	5
Don't know	6	5	5	8	5	6	6	6	4	6	6
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8)	27	19	19	42	26	28	25	42	50	28	23
11. Have you ever had your blood tested for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes	6	8	6	3	7	4	5	9	4	6	7
Yes, in blood donation/transfusion	3	3	3	1	3	2	3	1	1	1	5
No	63	67	69	52	63	63	65	48	43	63	64
Don't know	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8)	27	19	19	42	26	28	25	42	50	28	23
12a. Have you ever thought about having this blood test?											
Already had test	8	12	10	4	10	7	8	10	5	7	12
Yes	11	16	13	4	10	11	10	15	8	10	14
No	53	53	58	49	53	54	56	33	38	54	51
Don't know	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8)	27	20	20	42	26	29	25	42	50	28	23
12b. Do you plan to be tested in the next 12 months?											
Already had test	8	12	10	4	11	7	8	10	5	7	12
Yes	4	6	5	1	3	4	3	9	3	4	4
No	5	7	6	2	5	5	5	4	2	4	7
Don't know	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Never heard of test or thought about having test (no/don't know to q. 8 or q. 12a)	81	73	77	92	79	82	82	76	88	83	74

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, October 1987—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education			
	Total	18-29	30-49	50 years	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than	12 years	More than
		years	years	and over					12 years	12 years	
Percent distribution ¹											
13. Where would you go to have a blood test for the AIDS virus infection? ³											
Nowhere/wouldn't take test	0	—	—	1	—	0	0	—	—	—	—
AIDS clinic	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	4	3
Other clinic	25	28	25	19	24	26	24	37	22	30	29
Doctor/HMO	46	46	47	44	41	50	47	36	46	43	43
Red Cross/blood bank	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	—	2	3	—
Other	16	15	16	19	20	13	15	21	18	13	19
Don't know	7	6	6	11	9	5	8	3	9	8	6
14. Where would you go to find out where to have this blood test? ^{2,4}											
AIDS hot line	2	—	5	—	—	8	3	—	—	—	—
AIDS clinic	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other clinic	16	43	—	—	20	8	18	—	—	31	—
Doctor/HMO	37	36	31	56	22	70	32	100	43	39	21
Friends	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Public health department	12	10	18	—	12	12	12	25	7	19	—
Other	12	14	16	—	11	15	13	—	12	11	24
Nowhere/wouldn't take test	5	7	5	—	8	—	6	—	12	—	099
Don't know	18	—	24	44	27	—	20	—	32	—	55
15. Have you donated blood since 1985?											
Yes	12	18	15	5	16	9	13	9	4	12	14
No	87	82	84	95	84	91	87	91	96	88	86
Don't know	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	—
16. Have you ever personally known anyone who had the blood test for the AIDS virus infection?											
Yes	14	18	19	6	13	15	15	9	7	10	17
No	85	81	81	93	86	84	84	89	91	89	83
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
17. What are the chances of someone you know getting the AIDS virus?											
High	9	13	11	5	9	9	9	10	7	8	9
Medium	15	21	18	8	17	14	15	15	10	16	18
Low	38	40	41	33	41	35	40	24	24	38	35
None	27	21	22	37	23	29	25	32	36	28	26
Refused	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	—	—	0	0
Don't know	11	5	9	18	10	12	10	19	22	10	11
18. What are your chances of getting the AIDS virus?											
High	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	—
Medium	3	5	3	1	4	2	3	3	2	3	4
Low	30	37	34	19	32	28	31	25	18	30	30
None	62	54	58	73	60	64	62	65	70	63	62
Refused	0	0	—	—	0	—	0	—	—	—	0
Don't know	4	3	3	6	4	4	3	7	9	4	4
19. Here are methods some people use to prevent getting the AIDS virus through sexual activity. How effective is—											
19a. Using a diaphragm?											
Very effective	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	5	2	2	3
Somewhat effective	13	14	11	13	12	13	12	16	14	12	10
Not at all effective	58	61	65	47	57	59	61	41	40	57	59
Don't know how effective	21	18	17	28	21	21	21	26	30	23	19
Don't know method	6	5	4	10	8	5	5	12	14	6	9
19b. Using a condom?											
Very effective	33	41	34	26	35	31	33	33	24	34	29
Somewhat effective	51	49	54	50	51	51	52	46	46	50	53
Not at all effective	5	4	5	5	4	6	5	6	6	6	7
Don't know how effective	9	5	6	15	8	10	8	11	18	9	8
Don't know method	2	1	1	5	2	2	2	4	7	1	3
19c. Using a spermicidal jelly, foam, or cream?											
Very effective	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	2	2
Somewhat effective	14	15	14	13	14	14	14	16	11	14	14
Not at all effective	56	61	62	46	53	59	58	46	43	56	57
Don't know how effective	22	17	18	30	23	20	21	27	31	22	18
Don't know method	7	5	4	10	8	5	6	8	14	6	9
19d. Being celibate, that is, not having sex at all?											
Very effective	92	94	94	88	91	93	93	90	84	93	89
Somewhat effective	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3
Not at all effective	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Don't know how effective	3	2	1	5	3	2	2	3	6	2	6
Don't know method	1	0	1	3	2	1	1	2	5	1	2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, October 1987—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education				
	Total	18-29	30-49	50 years	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than	12 years	More than	
		years	years	and over					12 years		12 years	
Percent distribution ¹												
19e. Two people who do not have the AIDS virus having a completely monogamous relationship, that is, having sex only with each other?												
Very effective	86	88	89	82	87	86	88	79	77	86	84	
Somewhat effective	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	13	9	9	8	
Not at all effective	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Don't know how effective	3	2	1	6	3	3	3	4	7	3	5	
Don't know method	2	0	1	3	2	2	1	3	6	1	3	
20. Have you ever discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?												
Yes	67	75	75	51	63	70	67	65	49	66	72	
No	33	24	25	48	37	29	32	35	50	34	27	
Don't know	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	
21. When was the last time you discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?												
0-3 days ago	16	17	18	13	13	19	15	22	13	16	13	
4-7 days ago	18	19	21	14	19	17	19	14	14	18	19	
8-14 days ago	8	9	10	5	7	9	8	7	6	8	10	
15-31 days ago	13	16	14	8	13	13	13	11	7	13	13	
More than 31 days ago	8	10	8	5	6	9	8	7	4	7	11	
Never discussed (no/don't know to q. 20)	35	26	26	51	38	31	34	36	53	35	31	
Don't know	3	2	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	
24. Have you ever discussed AIDS with [any of your children age 10-17]? ²												
Yes	63	31	65	57	50	74	64	60	50	62	66	
No	37	69	35	43	50	26	36	40	50	38	34	
Don't know	0	-	0	-	1	-	0	-	-	-	-	
25. Have your children had any instruction at school about AIDS? ³												
Yes	45	23	46	47	42	48	46	44	43	41	50	
No	22	41	21	26	20	23	22	19	20	23	18	
Don't know	33	36	33	27	38	28	32	37	38	36	31	
26. Have you ever personally known anyone with the AIDS virus?												
Yes	7	7	10	5	8	7	8	6	4	4	7	
No	91	92	89	94	91	92	91	92	94	95	91	
Don't know	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	
27. Have you ever personally known anyone with AIDS?												
Yes	8	7	10	5	8	7	8	6	4	5	6	
No	91	92	88	94	91	92	91	92	94	95	93	
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	
28. The U.S. Public Health Service has said that AIDS is one of the major health problems in the country but exactly how many people it affects is not known. The Surgeon General has proposed that a study be conducted and blood samples be taken to help find out how widespread the problem is. If you were selected in this national sample of people to have their blood tested with assurances of privacy of test results, would you have the test?												
Yes	70	72	75	63	72	68	71	69	62	70	70	
No	21	19	18	24	19	22	20	21	25	20	22	
Other	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	
Don't know	7	7	5	10	6	8	7	9	11	7	6	
29. Would you want to know the results of the blood test? ⁴												
Yes	97	98	97	97	97	98	97	97	97	98	96	
No	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Don't know	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	2	

¹Excludes persons for whom no response was recorded or who refused to respond. For question 2 through 27, total also excludes persons who never heard of AIDS.

²Multiple responses may sum to more than 100 percent.

³Based on persons answering yes to question 12a.

⁴Based on persons answering don't know to question 13.

⁵Based on persons answering yes to question 22, Do you have any children aged 10-17? Question 23 was, How many do you have?

⁶Based on persons answering yes to question 28.

NOTE: Total, age, sex, and education include persons of other and unknown race not shown separately under race. Education refers to years of school completed.

Technical notes

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a continuous, cross-sectional household interview survey. Each week, a probability sample of the civilian noninstitu-

tionalized population is interviewed by personnel of the U.S. Bureau of the Census to obtain information on the health and other characteristics of each member of the household. Supplemental information is collected for all or a sample of household members. The AIDS knowledge and attitudes questions were asked of a single randomly chosen adult 18 years of age or over in each household. The estimates in this report are based on completed interviews with 3,350 persons, or about 86 percent of eligible respondents.

Table I. Sample size for the National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes and estimated adult population 18 years of age and over, by selected characteristics: United States, October 1987

Characteristic	Sample size	Estimated population in thousands
All adults	3,350	174,528
Age		
18-29 years	877	47,725
30-49 years	1,235	66,109
50 years and over	1,238	60,695
Sex		
Male	1,385	82,703
Female	1,965	91,825
Race		
White	2,754	151,003
Black	495	19,107
Education		
Less than 12 years	750	41,503
12 years	1,292	66,475
More than 12 years	1,276	62,363

Table I contains the estimated population size of each of the demographic subgroups included in table 1 to allow readers to derive provisional estimates of the number of people in the United States with a given characteristic, for example, the number of men who have heard of AIDS. The population figures in table I are based on first-quarter 1987 data from the NHIS; they are not official population estimates. Table II shows approximate standard errors of estimates presented in table 1. Both the estimates in table 1 and the standard errors in table II are provisional. They may differ slightly from estimates made using the final data file because they were calculated using a simplified weighting procedure that does not adjust for all the factors used in weighting the final data file. The final data file covering the entire 5-month period of data collection, August through December 1987, will be available in 1988.

Table II. Standard errors, expressed in percentage points, of estimated percents from the National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes, by selected characteristics: United States, October 1987

Estimated percent	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
5 or 95	0.5	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	1.2	1.0	0.7	0.7
10 or 90	0.6	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.7	1.4	1.0	1.0
15 or 85	0.7	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0	0.8	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2
20 or 80	0.8	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.1	0.9	2.2	1.8	1.4	1.4
25 or 75	0.9	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.0	2.4	2.0	1.5	1.5
30 or 70	1.0	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.1	2.5	2.1	1.6	1.6
35 or 65	1.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.1	2.6	2.2	1.6	1.6
40 or 60	1.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.2	1.7	1.7
45 or 55	1.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.1	2.8	2.3	1.7	1.7
50	1.0	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.2	2.8	2.3	1.7	1.7

Symbols

- Quantity zero
- 0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.5

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