



National Health Interview Survey

About NCHS

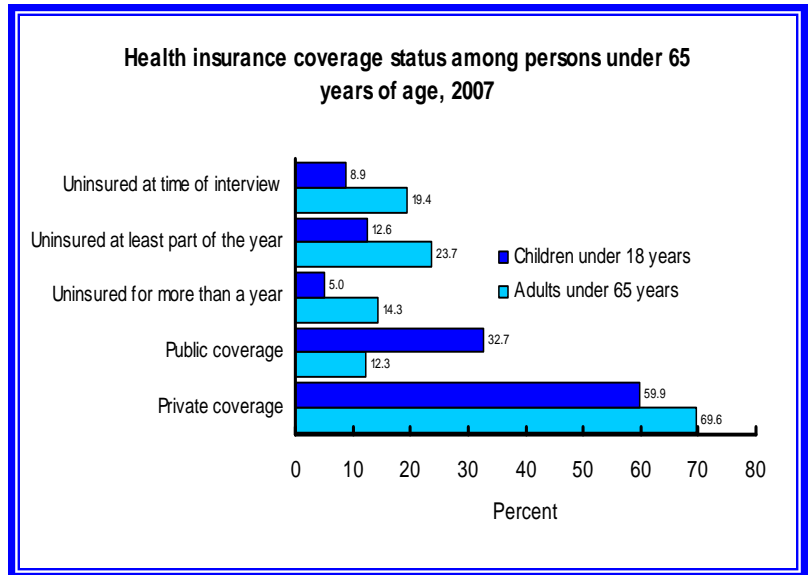
The CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is the nation's principal health statistics agency, providing data to identify and address health issues. NCHS compiles statistical information to help guide public health and health policy decisions.

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.

National Health Interview Survey

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) provides information annually on the health status of the U.S. civilian non-institutionalized population through confidential interviews conducted in households. The NHIS is the nation's largest household health survey, providing data for analyses of health trends, determining barriers to care, and comparing health status, health related behaviors, and risk factors across racial and ethnic populations.

Examples of NHIS Data



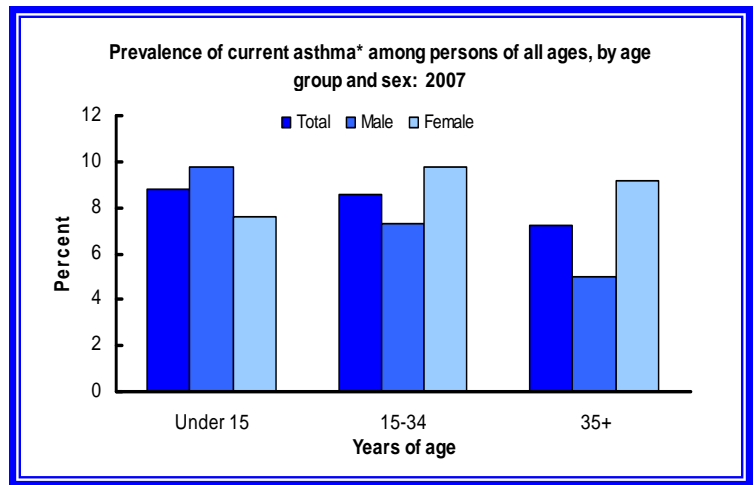
Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2007.

- In 2007, the percentage of **uninsured persons at the time of interview** was 19.4 percent for persons aged 18-64 years and 8.9 percent for children under age 18.
- In 2007, 43.1 million persons (14.5 percent) of all ages were **uninsured at the time of the interview**, 53.9 million (18.2 percent) had been **uninsured for at least part of the year** prior to the interview, and 30.6 million (10.3 percent) had been **uninsured for more than a year** at the time of the interview.
- In 2007, almost 56 percent of currently unemployed adults and more than 22 percent of employed adults aged 18-64 years had been **uninsured for at least part of the past year**, and about 32 percent of currently unemployed adults and almost 14 percent of employed adults had been **uninsured for more than a year**.

Health topics addressed:

- Health Status
- Insurance Coverage and Access to Care
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine
- Use of Health Services
- Immunizations
- Health Behaviors
- Injuries
- Vision and Oral Health
- Cancer screening
- Heart Disease
- Ability to Perform Daily Activities
- Health Conditions such as:
Asthma/Diabetes/Mental Health

- For both sexes combined, the prevalence of current asthma was lower among persons 35 years of age and older than among those under 15 years of age and 15-34 years of age.
- For children under age 15, the prevalence of current asthma was higher among boys than girls. However, for age groups 15-34 years of age and 35 years of age and older, the prevalence of current asthma was higher among females than among males.



*Current asthma = an asthma episode in the past year
 Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2007.

Other findings for 2007 include:

- The percent of persons of all ages with a **usual place to go for medical care** was highest for non-Hispanic whites at 88.6 percent and lowest for Hispanics at 77.6 percent.
- The percent of **current smokers** among adults 18 years and older, was highest for non-Hispanic whites at 22.1 percent and lowest for Hispanics at 12.7 percent.
- The prevalence of **diagnosed diabetes** (based on self-report of physician diagnosis) was higher among non-Hispanic blacks and Hispanics than among non-Hispanic whites.

Wireless Substitution Data

In May and December of each year, the NHIS releases selected estimates of telephone coverage based on in-person interviews including whether anyone in the household has a wireless telephone. The inability to reach households with **only wireless telephones** (or with no telephone service) has potential implications for results from health surveys and other research conducted using random-digit-dial telephone surveys. Coverage bias may exist if there are differences between persons with and without landline telephone for the substantive variables of interest.

- Preliminary results indicate that one out of every six American homes (15.8 percent) had only **wireless phones** and more than one in three adults aged 25-29 (34.5 percent) lived in households with only wireless telephones.
- Compared with adults living in **landline households**, **wireless only** adults were more likely to have experienced financial barriers to obtaining needed health care and they were less likely to have a usual place to go for medical care.

Challenges and Future Opportunities

To improve the usefulness and accessibility of NHIS data by continuous improvements in data quality, relevance and reporting. Major projects include enhanced Web access for both current and historic NHIS data.