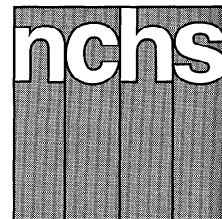


National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey



From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Health Statistics

18 years of age and older



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics



This booklet contains facts for you about the
National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

The National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) are studies conducted to learn about the health and nutrition of people in this country. The surveys include interviews and physical exams. NHANES is a program of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)—a Federal agency that gathers health data for the United States.

We will select a sample of people in towns and cities across the country to be part of the survey. We will interview them at home. Our questions will be about the family, diet, and health.

People who agree to be in our survey will visit a mobile exam center. There we will give them medical and dental exams and other lab tests. We examine about 5,000 persons each year in 15 different loca-



Our agency is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Public Health Service.

NHANES programs began in the early 1960's. The current NHANES survey began in 1999. It will now be an ongoing program and will go to locations in all parts of the United States.

Our NHANES surveys are unique. They combine an interview with health tests, which we do in mobile units. These special exam centers travel the country with a highly trained medical team. Our team conducts an exam that focuses on special health topics. They use the most up-to-date methods and equipment.

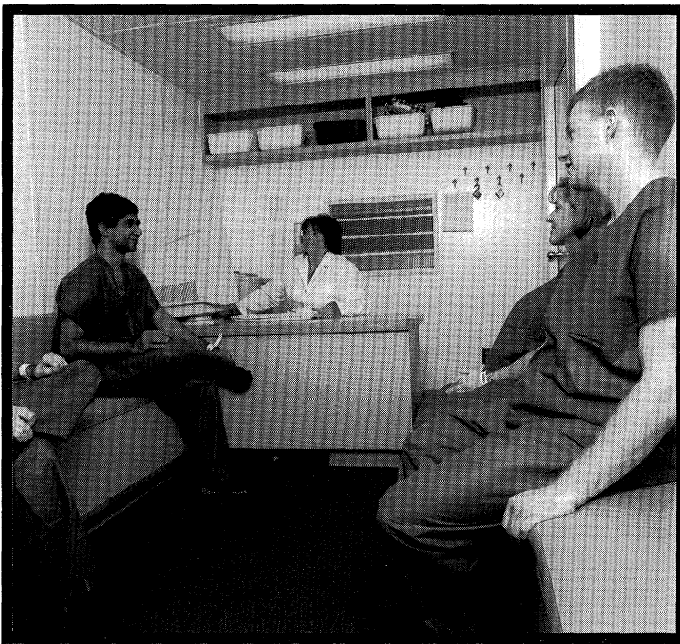
More than 130,000 persons have been part of past NHANES programs.

We will use the data collected in this survey to estimate the number of people with certain health problems—for example, diabetes and high blood pressure. The survey will look at diet and other habits that affect health, such as smoking and exercise. NHANES data will describe the health and nutrition of people of all ages. All data from the survey will be used in health research. It will also help design health programs and services and expand health knowledge about the United States.

If you take part in the survey, our team will give you findings from some tests as you get your exam. If you wish, we will send you other test results later. In the past, we have had the chance to call or revisit people who took part in this survey. We may contact you in the future to ask you to be part of other research projects.

The Household Interview

You have been chosen to take part in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. At your home, our interviewer will ask some questions. They will be about your work and family. Other questions will be about illnesses and diseases you may have had. Some questions are about the kinds of health care you get and other



health topics. Also, we will ask for your Social Security and Medicare numbers to do research on health and health care coverage.

You may choose not to answer any question. No penalties or loss of benefits will come from refusing to answer. The interview will take about an hour of your time.

We use the data collected in this survey to study many health issues. Please check the Questions and Answers at the end of this booklet. They tell you about the legal authority for this survey and give answers to some questions that people often ask.

Your Health Examination

Our interviewer will ask you to make an appointment for the exam at the mobile exam center. Our medical team will collect health data by examining you, doing lab testing, and asking questions about your health. No



internal exam is included. We may ask you to prepare for the exam by fasting for a short time. The exam may take from 2-1/2 to 4 hours. The time depends on your age, since some procedures are done only for certain ages. You may learn more about your health if you choose to get a written report of exam findings. NHANES does not cover the cost of any health care you may decide to seek after the exam. The survey exam is not a substitute for regular health care.

You will also help us learn more about the health and nutritional status of people in this country. Many researchers and planners in universities, the government, and other groups use data from the survey.

We respect your privacy. We keep all data safe and secure. Public laws protect your privacy and prevent disclosure of any information you give. Before we provide your survey data or samples to anyone for use in future research, we remove your name and address, and any other information that would directly identify you. We combine your answers and test results with those from thousands of other people. We report survey findings in percentages and totals to protect the privacy of those who took part in the survey.

Adult exams may include (except as noted):

Health Measurements

- * Physician's exam
- * Blood pressure
- * Body fat
- * Bone density
- * Oral health exam by a dentist
saliva test—ages 40 and older
- * Vision test—ages 12 and older
- * Hearing test—ages 20–69
- * Fitness test
- * Height, weight, and other
body measures
- * TB skin test
- Cognitive test—ages 60 and older
- ** Hair sample for mercury test—women ages
16–49
- Balance—ages 40–69
- * Leg circulation and sensation—ages 40 and
older
- ** Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) exposure
—selected persons 20–59

- * Sexually transmitted disease (STD)
Herpes type 2—ages 14–49
Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)—
ages 18–49
VOCs—selected persons ages 20–59
Exposure to environmental chemicals—
selected persons ages 12–19

Private Health Interviews

Health status
Mental health—ages 8–39
Drug and alcohol use
Nutrition
Reproductive health—only females
Sexual experience—ages 14–59
Tobacco use

- * Results reported to you
- ** Results reported only if positive
(or abnormal)

Lab Tests on Urine:

- Bone status tests
- Kidney function tests
- * Sexually transmitted disease (STD)
Chlamydia and gonorrhea—ages 14–39
Exposure to pesticides—selected persons ages
6–59
- ** Pregnancy testing—females 18–55

Lab Tests on Blood:

- * Anemia
- * Cholesterol
- * Glucose measures
- Markers of immunization status—for ages 6–49
- ** Infectious diseases
- * Kidney function tests
- * Lead
- ** Cadmium
- ** Mercury—women ages 16–49
- * Liver function tests
- * Nutrition status
- * Hormone tests

Answers to Some Questions You May Have

Q Do I have to take part in the survey?

A You may participate in the survey or not. That is your choice. No penalties or loss of benefits will come from refusing to take part. During the interviews you may choose not to answer any question.

Q Why is it so important for me to be part of the survey? Why not ask my neighbor?

A We selected your household and you in a carefully designed sample of people living in the United States. We cannot choose someone in your place because no one has the same health characteristics as you. Having you as part of our survey will help make our information complete. We will add the information you give us to that from all others who join in this study. That information will help us better understand our nation's health.

Q What do I gain by taking part in the survey?

- A**
- The chance to help learn more about the health of the nation
 - Free health test results, perhaps some of major value to you
 - A cash payment in appreciation for your help

Q How do I know my answers and exam results will be kept confidential?

A We respect your privacy. Public laws keep all information you give confidential. We will hold all data we collect in the strictest confidence. We gather and protect all information in keeping with the requirements of Federal Law: the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 242k) authorizes collection and Section 308(d) of that law (42 USC 242m) and the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552A)

prohibit us from giving out information that identifies you or your family without your consent. This means that we cannot give out any fact about you, even if a court of law asks for it. We will keep all survey data safe and secure. When we allow researchers to use survey data, we protect your privacy. We assign code numbers in place of names or other facts that could identify you.

Q How will I receive the results of my exam?

A We will give you some results, such as your blood pressure, as you are being examined. If the exam reveals something urgent about your health, we will notify you at once. If some urgent problem is found through your lab tests, we will immediately send that information in a letter to your home address. We will mail the routine findings report to you about 12–16 weeks after the exam. We give results only to the person examined. Some results, such as STD tests, are given in special ways explained below. We will not give you results from some tests because they will be used only for research.

Q Are the tests I may be asked to take safe?

A We chose the tests and measurements we do because they are safe. As in any other exam like this, some procedures may give slight discomfort. Examples are collecting a blood sample or doing the dental exam. For the blood sample, you will have a small amount of blood withdrawn (from a vein in your arm) with a needle.

We will ask questions about conditions that might make a certain test or procedure wrong for you.

We will give bone density tests that involve low-dosage x-rays. Radiation in this procedure is less than you might get in a cross-country airplane flight or from natural daily background radiation. Pregnant women will not have bone density, body composition tests, or fitness testing. We do pregnancy testing before these tests on adult females 55 and under. Our

physician gives positive pregnancy test results at the exam center only to women who have not reported they are pregnant.

Q How would survey data be used by other agencies and researchers?

A What you tell us, your exam findings, and samples you give are a rich resource for health science. Many Federal agencies, universities, and other public and private groups use NHANES data. They use it to help find new cures and treatments for diseases and disabilities. The aim is to enhance the health of all people. Results of this survey may be reported in scientific journals, at major meetings, or through other news media. None of these reports will ever name or use data that can point to any person who took part in the survey.

Several of the National Institutes of Health help us in this survey. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is our partner in planning how to get data on the foods you eat. We share with them the task of studying people's diets in the United States. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is another of our many partners. Your survey data help study harmful effects of exposure to environmental hazards. In all these studies, your identity is strictly protected.

Q Will any of my survey data be linked to other facts about me?

A Combining NHANES results with other facts about you can be useful. Some health research can be done only if we link survey results with data from other sources. For instance, we may obtain data about changes in your health from records at the Health Care Financing Administration or the Department of Veterans Affairs. This is why we ask for your Social Security Number and Medicare information. Strict security measures will be taken to insure that none of these procedures results in release of any information you provide us.

Also, we may need to contact you in the future. To do this we would ask public or private agencies, such as the Post Office, to provide changes in your address.

Q Why are you testing for chlamydia and gonorrhea?

A Chlamydia and gonorrhea are two sexually transmitted diseases that have a major impact on health. In recent years, they have been a growing problem in young people in the United States. We will test survey participants who are under 40 years old to find out how many people have chlamydia and gonorrhea. People with these diseases need treatment to prevent disease spread and to prevent their own serious health problems in the future.

Q Why are you testing for herpes?

A Herpes type 2 is another sexually transmitted disease that has been affecting people in the United States. We will test survey participants who are under 50 years old to find out how many people have herpes type 2. Most people infected with this virus have no symptoms at all. Herpes has no cure, but medications are available to relieve symptoms. You cannot have this blood test repeated by your own doctor or local clinic because it is not available commercially. If you test positive but have never had sores or blisters, the risk of you spreading the virus is unknown.

Q Why are you testing for the AIDS virus?

A We are testing to find out how many people in the United States have the AIDS virus (HIV). We will test people in the survey who are 18–49 years old, and do the test on either a blood or urine sample. Although few people in the survey will test positive for HIV, a person who has a positive test should know what it means and what to do about it.

Q How will I get my STD and HIV results?

A You can get your chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, and HIV test results a few weeks after the exam. Before leaving the exam center, you will receive a toll-free phone number, a password, and the dates to call for your results. When you call in and tell us your password, we will give you your test results. If you do not call during the time given, we will send you a letter to remind you to call for this important information. When you call, we will ask for the password given to you at the exam center. If your test results show that you have a current health problem, we will talk with you about those results and tell you how to seek treatment. We will keep all STD and HIV test results completely private, just like all other test results. If you do not want to be tested, you can tell the technician before your blood is drawn during the exam.

Q In the health interview at the exam center, it says I will be asked questions about drug use and sexual experience. What does that mean?

A At the mobile exam center, all persons who are 12–59 years old will be asked some personal questions in complete privacy. You will be alone in a room. The questions will be on a computer screen. You can respond simply by touching an answer on the screen. All responses are completely confidential. These questions are asked because some behaviors relate to people's health. Persons are asked if they have had sexual intercourse. If you have had sexual intercourse, additional questions about the experience(s) are asked. Also, you will be asked some questions about use of illegal drugs.

Q Why are you testing for tuberculosis (TB)?

A TB has become a major public health problem in this country. Testing in NHANES will help us find out how many persons in the United States are infected with TB. The tests we use give

the most specific reading on whether a person has been infected. The tuberculin test measures tuberculosis infection. The other test looks for infection with harmless germs related to TB. The second test makes the tuberculin test results easier to understand. These tests have U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for this survey but are not approved for commercial use.

To see if you have ever been exposed to TB, we inject a drop of each skin test material just under the top layer of the skin on each arm. We will do this while you are at the exam center. You may have some small discomfort from these tests. Pain, itching, and redness at the test site may occur. There is a very low risk of severe allergic reactions in highly sensitive persons. Less than one percent (1%) of persons tested have had noticeable swelling or have developed a blister at the injection site. If it occurs, the area usually heals without medicine within a few days.

We will give you a report on the TB test when we contact you a few days after the visit to the exam center. If you have a positive tuberculin skin test, we will refer you to a health care provider for evaluation. If further evaluation shows you are infected with tuberculosis, you may be given therapy. This treatment will make it much less likely that you will develop active TB in the future. NHANES does not cover the cost of any treatment. Even if testing does not benefit you directly, the results will help to develop the program for TB prevention and control in the United States.

The test results are confidential to the extent permitted by law and are protected by the same laws that protect all NHANES data. FDA may review your records related to the TB skin test.

Q What are volatile organic compounds and why are you measuring exposure to them?

A Volatile organic compounds are chemicals and pollutants in the air we breathe. These are defined in the Clean Air Act of 1990. We are exposed to these chemicals in our surroundings every day. They come from such things as cigarette smoke, gasoline, building and other household materials, dry cleaning products, and room deodorizers. Very little information is available about how much exposure people have to these chemicals. This part of the survey will provide important information about the general public's exposure and whether we need to further control certain air pollutants.

We will ask a small sample of people to take part in this study (about 1 in 15). You may be asked to wear a small badge to measure the amount of your exposure to some chemicals. This badge will be returned when the TB test is read and another small sample of

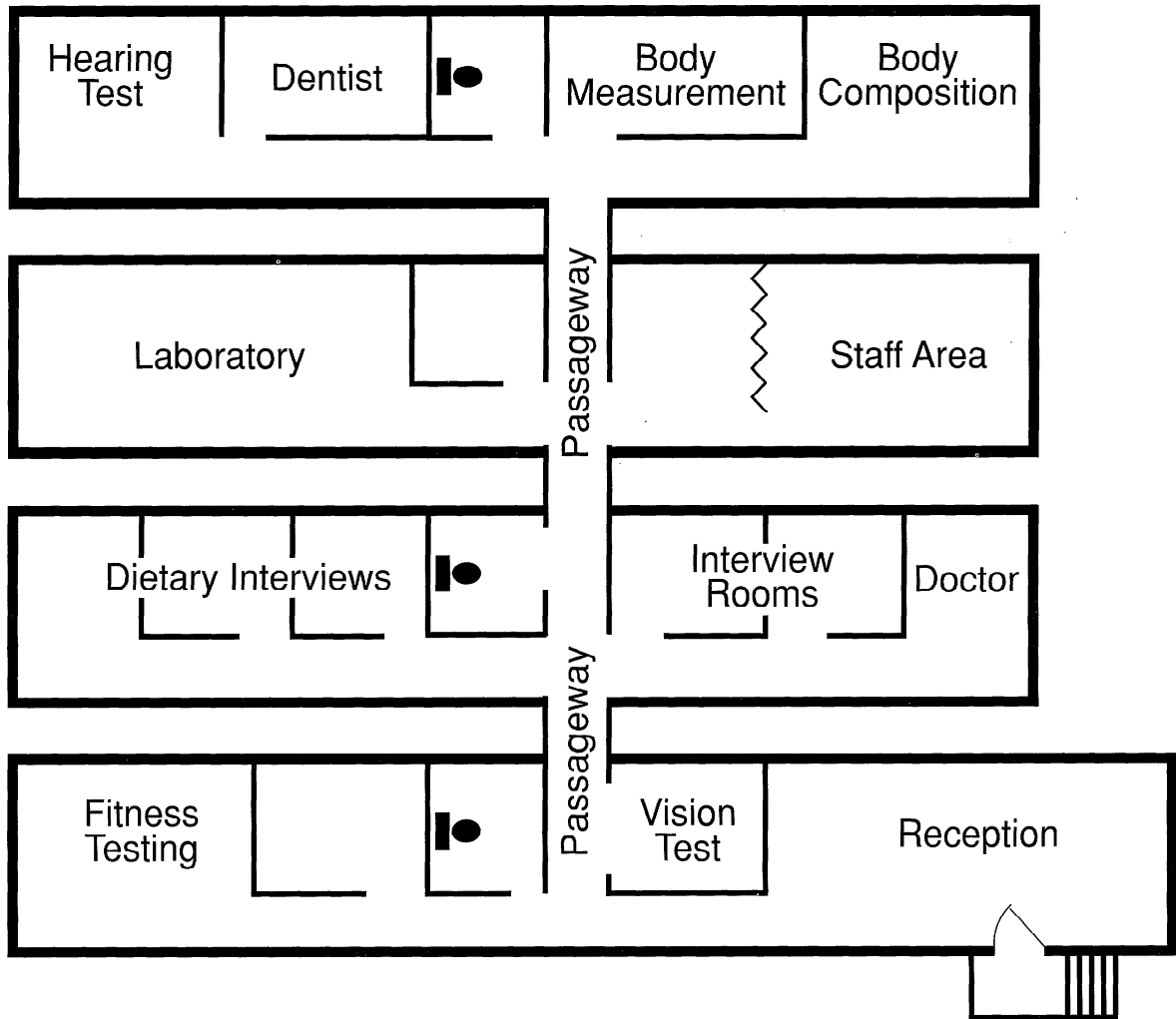
blood will be taken. We will also ask you to bring a sample of water from your home to measure some of these chemicals that can be found in water.

Q What if I have more questions?

A Our survey representative can discuss other questions or concerns or give you other printed matter that can help. She or he can give you a phone number in your area that you can call for more information. Also, you can make a free call to Dr. Kathryn Porter at the U.S. Public Health Service office to discuss any aspect of the survey. She can be reached at 1-800-452-6115, Monday-Friday, 9 AM-6 PM EST. You can also get answers to your questions by mail (Room 900, 6525 Belcrest Rd., Hyattsville, MD 20782) or by E-mail (kzs4@cdc.gov). If you have questions about your rights as a survey participant, call Dr. Lester R. Curtin at 1-800-223-8118.

We ask you to sign the attached form to show that you know the nature and purpose of taking part in the survey. Please be sure you understand the facts we have given you and that all your questions are answered.

Mobile Examination Center (MEC) Diagram



National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)

The attached brochure gives the facts about NHANES. The survey is one in a series conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). These surveys tell us about the health and nutrition of people in this country. They combine an interview with a physical exam. The exams are done in mobile units. Each year of the survey, we will examine about 5,000 people in 15 different towns and cities across the country.

In the mobile exam center, our medical team will collect health data by examining you, doing lab testing, and asking questions about your health. As in any other exam like this, some procedures may give slight discomfort. Examples are collecting a blood sample or doing the dental exam. The exam may take from 2-1/2 to 4 hours. The time depends on your age, since some procedures are done only for certain ages.

The survey exam is not a substitute for regular health care. However, if we discover urgent health conditions, we will refer you for immediate treatment. You will receive a report on many exam results if you choose. NHANES does not cover the cost of any health care you may decide to seek after the exam. You may be contacted in the future for further research.

We will use information collected in the survey only for research and statistical reports. All health data and samples that we collect in NHANES will be kept strictly private. Unless you agree, our staff is not allowed to discuss that you are part of this survey under penalty of Federal law: Section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 242m) and the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552A). However, we will refer clear signs of physical abuse of a child to the State agency that looks into child abuse and neglect.

You may participate in the survey or not. That is your choice. No penalties or loss of benefits will come from refusing to take part. If you choose to take part, you may refuse any part of the exam and are free to drop out anytime. Also, during the interviews you may choose not to answer any question.

To discuss any aspect of the survey, you can make a free call to Dr. Kathryn Porter at the U.S. Public Health Service office at 1-800-452-6115, Monday-Friday, 9 AM-6 PM EST. If you have questions about your rights as a survey participant, call Dr. Lester R. Curtin at 1-800-223-8118.

For the Survey Participant who is 18 Years Old or Older (and emancipated minors):

I have read the information above and in the attached brochure, which explains the nature and purpose of NHANES. I freely choose to take part in the survey. I understand that data about me will be released only as described.

Signature of participant Date

I do not want a written report of my exam results.

Signature of staff member Date Witness (if required) Date

Print name
of participant _____
First Middle Last

SP ID

Public reporting burden of this collection of information is estimated to average 6.6 hours per response for total participation, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to CDC/ATSDR Reports Clearance Officer; 1800 Clifton Road, MS D-24, Atlanta, GA 30333, ATTN: PRA (0920-0237).

For more information about the National Center for Health Statistics and the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey contact:

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