



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

Survey Content for the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey and National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey



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Preface

Interested in analyzing data from the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS) or National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NHAMCS)? This brochure contains a list of all of the publicly available data items arranged by ambulatory care setting and year. It will enable identification of which variables were used in each year and how they have changed (or remained the same) over time.

Both surveys are conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The NAMCS, which began in 1973, was inaugurated to gather, analyze, and disseminate information about the health care provided by office-based physicians. Ambulatory medical care is the predominant method of providing health care services in the United States and occurs in a wide range of settings. The largest proportion of ambulatory care services occurs in physician offices. The NAMCS is complemented by the NHAMCS, which was inaugurated in 1992 to expand the scope of data collection to the medical services provided by hospital outpatient departments (OPD) and emergency departments (ED). Together, NAMCS and NHAMCS data provide an important tool for tracking ambulatory health care utilization in the United States. The NAMCS and NHAMCS are conducted within the Division of Health Care Statistics and components of the National Health Care Survey (NHCS), a family of surveys that measure health care utilization across various types of providers (e.g., nursing homes, hospitals, and ambulatory surgery centers).

This brochure is organized with survey content in mind. The first section of the brochure presents items from the NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD data collection instruments (Patient Record forms). The NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Patient Record forms are nearly identical. Exceptions include the use of different categories for the "Providers Seen" item and the omission of the item, "Time spent with the physician" on the OPD form. It should also be kept in mind that the NAMCS began in 1973, and the NHAMCS began in 1992. Therefore, any data item prior to 1992 was only collected in the NAMCS. The ED component of the NHAMCS comprises the second section of the brochure.

The success of the NAMCS and NHAMCS is due in part to NCHS' extensive efforts to protect respondent confidentiality. For this reason, there are a number of variables each year that are not available on the public-use files, but which have great analytic potential. Researchers may be able to obtain access to many of these variables through the NCHS Research Data Center (RDC). Research proposals are reviewed and approved by NCHS staff and fees apply. A list of such variables can be found on the NAMCS and NHAMCS website listed below under the section "Additional NAMCS and NHAMCS Data Available at the Research Data Center."

Corrections and updates to this document will be made when needed with the most recent version on the NAMCS and NHAMCS website listed below.

Please visit:

www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhcs/htm for more about the NHCS;
www.cdc.gov/nchs/namcs.htm for more about the NAMCS or NHAMCS; and
www.cdc.gov/nchs/r&d/rdc.htm for more about the RDC.

More information on the NAMCS and NHAMCS can also be obtained by calling 301-458-4600.

Survey Content of the NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

	Survey year(s)														Notes	
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
Patient date of visit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	From 1973-81 only the month and year are given. In 1985, the 2-digit day is also provided. Starting in 1999, day of week is given instead of specific date.
Patient ZIP code⁴						X		X		X	X	X	X	X		
Patient date of birth	X	X	X	X					X						Only the month and year are given.	
Patient age					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Patient sex	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Is patient pregnant? If yes, gestation week or last menstrual cycle										X				X		
														X		
Patient race															Prior to 1999, only one race could be selected.	
White	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Black or African American										X	X	X	X	X		
Black Negro/black	X	X														
Asian										X	X	X	X	X		
Asian or Pacific Islander			X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander										X	X	X	X	X		
American Indian/ Eskimo/Aleut						X	X	X	X							
American Indian/ Alaska Native			X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X		
Other	X	X														
Unknown	X	X														
Patient ethnicity																
Hispanic origin			X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Not Hispanic			X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Hispanic or Latino										X	X	X	X	X		
Not Hispanic or Latino										X	X	X	X	X		
Does patient smoke cigarettes?							X	X	X			X	X			
Tobacco use																
Not current													X	X		
Never													X	X		
Former													X	X		
Current													X	X		
Unknown													X	X		

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

	Survey year(s)														Notes	
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
Was authorization required for care										X	X					
Is this a capitated visit										X	X					
Expected source(s) of payment for this visit																
Preferred provider option									X							
Insured, fee-for-service									X							
HMO/other prepaid ⁵						X	X	X								
HMO/prepaid plan ⁵				X												
Prepaid plan/HMO/PPO ⁵					X											
Self-pay				X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Patient paid						X	X									
No charge/charity											X	X	X	X	X	
No charge				X	X	X	X	X	X							
Private/commercial						X	X									
Other government						X	X									
Blue Cross/Blue Shield				X	X				X							
Other commercial insurance																
Other private insurance									X							
Private Insurance										X	X	X	X	X	X	
Medicare				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Medicaid				X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Medicaid/SCHIP ⁷											X	X	X	X	X	
Worker's compensation									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Unknown									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Does patient belong to an HMO⁵?										X	X					
Patient reason for visit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 1973-90, up to two reason collected; in 1991-2006, up to three reasons collected and coded to Reason for Visit Classification.
Reason for this visit																
Accidental injury			X													
Product related illness			X													
Neither of the above			X													
Describe all objects, products, or substances involved in the accident or product related illness			X													

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

	Survey year(s)														Notes	
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
Describe all objects, products, or substances involved in the accident or product related illness			X													
Location of accident or exposure to product			X													
Private residence			X													
Elsewhere			X													
Unknown			X													
Was patient at work, job or business when accident or exposure occurred			X													
Was patient previously treated for this condition			X													
No			X													
Yes																
Hospital emergency room			X													
Private physician's office			X													
Physician elsewhere			X													
Place unknown			X													
Unknown			X													
Seriousness of physicians's diagnosis																
Very serious	X	X														
Serious	X	X														
Slightly serious	X	X														
Not serious	X	X														
Time since onset of complaint/symptom																
Less than 1 day		X														
1-6 days		X														
1-3 weeks		X														
1-3 months		X														
More than 3 months		X														
Not applicable		X														
Are you the patient's primary care physician/provider?																
									X	X	X	X	X	X		
Was patient referred for this visit by another physician?																
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Question was updated to "Was patient referred by another physician or by a health plan for this visit?" in 1997.

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

	Survey year(s)														Notes	
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
Has the patient been seen in your practice before?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 1973-76, "Have you ever seen this patient before?" In 1977, "Have you seen patient before?" In 1997-2000, "Have you or anyone in your practice/department seen patient before?"
If yes, how many past visits in the last 12 months?												X	X	X	X	Ranges are "none," "1-2," "3-5," and "6+."
If yes, for primary diagnosis?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Major reason for this visit																
Acute problem	X		X	X						X	X	X	X	X		
New problem															X	
Acute problem, follow-up	X															
Chronic problem, routine	X		X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X	
Chronic problem, flare-up	X		X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X	
Prenatal care	X															
Postnatal care	X															
Pre-/post-surgery												X	X	X	X	
Post surgery/injury			X													
Pre- or post-surgery/injury follow-up										X	X					
Post surgery/post injury				X												
Postoperative care	X															
Well adult/child exam	X															
Family planning	X															
Counseling/advice	X															
Immunization	X															
Referred by other physician/agency	X															
Administrative purpose	X															
Non-illness care			X	X						X	X					
Preventive care												X	X	X	X	
Other	X															
Episode of care																
Initial visit for problem												X	X	X		
Follow-up visit for problem												X	X	X		
Unknown												X	X	X		
Do other physicians share patient's care for this problem or diagnosis?												X	X	X		

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	Survey year(s)													Notes		
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002		2003-04	2005-06
Is this visit related to any of the following?																
Unintentional injury/poisoning															X	
Intentional injury/poisoning															X	
Adverse effect of medical/surgical care or adverse effect of medicinal drug															X	
None of the above															X	
Unknown															X	
Is this visit injury related?						X	X	X								
Is this visit related to an injury or poisoning?									X	X						
Is this visit related to an injury, or poisoning, or adverse effect of medical treatment?											X	X	X			
If yes, cause of injury								X	X	X	X	X	X			Up to three causes of injury could be entered. Coded to the Supplemental Chapter of the ICD-9-CM.
If yes, cause of injury (verbatim text)									X	X	X	X	X			In 2001-04, "If yes, cause of injury, poisoning, or adverse effect" (verbatim text) was used.
If yes, place of occurrence																
Residence								X	X	X						In 1995-96, "home" was used.
Recreation/sports area								X	X	X						In 1995-96, "sports or athletics area" was used.
Street or highway								X	X	X						
School								X	X	X						
Other public building									X	X						
Industrial places									X	X						
Other								X	X	X						
Unknown								X	X	X						
If yes, is this injury intentional?																
Yes, self-inflicted										X	X					
Yes, assault										X	X					
No, unintentional										X	X					
Unknown										X	X					
If yes, if this injury work related?								X	X	X						

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	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
Physician's diagnosis	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Up to three diagnoses could be entered. Coded to ICD-9-CM.
Is diagnosis probable, questionable, or rule out?									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Does patient now have															In 2005, "Regardless of the diagnoses [written in 5a], does patient now have?" was used.	
Arthrosclerosis									X							
Arthritis									X						X	
Asthma								X							X	
Cancer															X	
In situ															X	In 2006 only.
Local															X	In 2006 only.
Regional															X	In 2006 only.
Distant															X	In 2006 only.
Unknown															X	In 2006 only.
Cerebrovascular disease															X	
CHF ⁸															X	
Chronic renal failure									X						X	
COPD ⁹									X						X	
Depression							X		X						X	
Diabetes								X	X						X	
HIV ¹⁰								X	X							In 1995-96, "HIV/AIDS" was used. ^{10, 11}
Hyperactivity/ADD ¹²									X							
Hypercholesterolemia							X									
Hyperlipidemia															X	
Hypertension							X		X						X	
Ischemic heart disease															X	
Obesity							X	X	X						X	
Osteoporosis								X							X	
Glucose tests this visit																
None					X											
Blood					X											
Urine					X											
Oral					X											
Ambulatory surgical procedures																
Number collected	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Scheduled							X									
Ordered								X								

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Ordered/scheduled												X	X	X		
Performed							X	X				X	X	X		
Local anesthesia							X									
Regional anesthesia							X									
General anesthesia							X									

Diagnostic/ screening services

Exams

Breast exam					X	X			X	X	X				X	In 1989-90, "breast palpation" was used.
General history/exam	X	X	X	X												
General medical exam											X	X	X			
Glaucoma exam										X	X					
Limited history/exam	X	X	X	X												
Mental status exam			X	X			X		X						X	In 2005-06, "depression screening" was used.
Neurologic exam																
Other exam-specify site											X	X	X			
Pelvic exam					X	X			X	X	X				X	
Rectal exam					X	X			X	X	X				X	In 1989-90, "digital rectal exam" was used.
Skin exam										X	X				X	
Stool blood exam						X										

Blood tests

Blood chemistry					X											
Blood lead levels									X	X	X					
CBC (complete blood count)											X	X	X	X	X	
Cholesterol test						X	X		X	X	X	X				
Electrolytes														X	X	
Glucose test					X	X								X	X	In 1989-90, "oral glucose tolerance" was used.
Hematocrit/hemoglobin										X	X	X	X	X		
Hematology					X											
HgbA1C (glycohemoglobin)														X	X	
HIV serology ¹⁰						X	X	X	X	X						
Lipids/cholesterol														X	X	
Other blood test						X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Imaging

Bone mineral density															X	
CAT scan ¹³									X	X	X					

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	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
CAT scan/MRI ^{13,14}									X							
Chest X-ray					X	X	X				X					
Mammogram						X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	In 2001-06, "mammography" was used.
MRI ¹⁴									X		X					
MRI/CT/PET ^{14,15,16}															X	
Other imaging											X	X	X	X		
Other radiology					X											
Other radiology							X									
Ultrasound					X				X	X	X	X			X	
X-ray	X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Diagnostic tests

Blood pressure								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Cervical/urethral culture												X		X		
Chlamydia test															X	
Culture (e.g. throat)-specify											X	X				
EKG17	X	X	X	X	X					X	X					
EKG/ECG ^{17,18}											X	X	X	X		
EKG-exercise ¹⁷							X									
EKG-resting ¹⁷							X									
Endoscopy	X	X	X	X							X					
Hearing test	X						X			X	X					
Other lab test							X									
PSA ¹⁹									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Spirometry							X	X								
Spirometry/pulmonary function test															X	
Stool culture												X		X		
Strep throat test							X			X	X					
TB skin test ²⁰									X							
Throat/rapid strep test												X		X		In 2003-04, "throat culture/rapid strep test" was used.
Urinalysis					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Urine culture											X			X		
Vision test	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X					In 1985, 1989-92 and 1995-2000, "vision acuity" was used.

Counseling/education

Alcohol abuse							X									
Asthma											X	X	X	X		
Breast self-exam						X			X	X						
Cholesterol reduction						X	X	X	X							
Diet/nutrition									X	X	X	X	X	X		

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	Survey year(s)														Notes	
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
Diet							X		X							
Drug abuse							X									
Exercise							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Family planning							X									
Family planning/ contraception							X			X	X					
Family/social				X			X									In 1991-92, "family/social counseling/education" was used.
Growth/development							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
HIV transmission ¹⁰							X		X	X	X					In 1997-98, "HIV/STD transmission" was used. ^{10, 11}
Injury prevention								X	X	X	X				X	
Medical counseling	X	X	X	X												In 1973-74, "medical counseling/advice" was used.
Mental health/stress management												X	X	X		
Mental health									X	X	X					
Other counseling (i.e., not diet)					X							X	X	X		
Other counseling/advice						X		X	X					X	X	
Other mental health counseling															X	
Skin cancer prevention							X			X	X					
Smoking cessation						X	X	X								
Stress management						X				X	X					X
Tobacco use/exposure									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Weight reduction						X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	

Vital signs

Blood pressure														X	X	Actual measurements recorded.
Height															X	Actual measurements recorded.
Temperature														X	X	Actual measurements recorded.
Weight															X	Actual measurements recorded.

Procedures

Biopsy												X			X	
Cystoscopy												X				
Excision of tissue															X	In 2006, "excision" was used.

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	Survey year(s)														Notes	
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
Orthopedic care															X	
Other non-surgical procedures-specify															X	
Other surgical procedures-specify															X	
Proct/sigmoidoscopy						X										
Scope procedure (e.g., endoscopy)-specify												X	X	X	X	
Sigmoidoscopy/colonoscopy												X				
Wound care															X	

Other

Clinical lab test	X	X	X	X												In 1973-74, "lab procedure/test" was used.
Pap test ²¹		X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
Pap test/cervical cytology ²¹															X	2005 only.
Pap test-conventional ²¹															X	2006 only.
Pap test-liquid-based ²¹															X	2006 only.
Pap test-unspecified ²¹															X	2006 only.
HPV DNA test ^{22, 23}															X	2006 only.
Other lab test					X											
Pregnancy test									X	X	X					
Allergy testing						X	X									
Injection	X		X													
Immunization/desensitization	X	X	X													
Prescription drug	X		X													
Nonprescription drug	X		X													
Drugs (prescription/nonprescription)		X														
Office surgery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 1973-74, "office surgical treatment" was used. In 1985 and 1989-90, "ambulatory surgery" was used. Specific procedures were collected in 1991-2006 and coded to ICD-9-CM vol.3.
Physiotherapy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 2005-06, "physical therapy" was used.
Other service-specify												X	X	X	X	In 2005-06, "other test/service" was used.
Radiation therapy					X										X	2006 only.
Corrective lenses					X	X	X		X							
Psychotherapy/therapeutic listening	X	X	X	X							X					
Psycho-pharmacotherapy									X	X						

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	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04	
Psychotherapy				X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Hearing aid						X									
Family planning		X	X	X	X										
Complementary alternative medicine (CAM)															X
Durable medical equipment															X
Home health care															X
Hospice care															X
Physical therapy															X
Speech/occupational therapy															X

Medications²⁴

Were medications ordered/provided				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Was there at least one medication recorded on the form?
Number of medications ²⁵				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Entry status				X	X	X	X									
Medications ²⁶	0	0	0	8	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	8	8	
Drug entry name				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Generic name code				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Prescription status code				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Controlled substance code				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Therapeutic class					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 1985 and 1989-92, 2-digit NDC codes were used; 4-digits were used thereafter. Starting in 2002, each medication could have up to three therapeutic classes.
Ingredient code (up to 5)				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Is this a new medication				X	X	X	X								X	
Is this a continued medication															X	
Is medication for primary diagnosis				X	X	X										
Was medication from formulary list									X	X						
Total number of medications prescribed or provided this visit											X	X	X			

Providers seen (NAMCS)²⁷

LPN ²⁸								X	X	X	X	X	X		
Medical/nursing assistant									X	X	X	X	X		
Medical assistant								X							

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Medical technician/technologist												X	X	X		
Nurse midwife										X	X					
Nurse practitioner									X	X	X					
Nurse practitioner/midwife												X	X	X	X	
Other									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Physician									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Physician assistant									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
RN ²⁹									X	X	X	X	X	X		
RN/LPN ^{29, 28}																X

Providers seen (OPD)²⁷

Resident/Intern							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Physician																X
Staff physician							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Other physician							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Physician assistant							X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Physician assistant/nurse practitioner								X								
Nurse practitioner							X		X	X						
Nurse midwife										X	X					
Nurse practitioner/midwife												X	X	X	X	
Registered nurse							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		RN was used in 1995 and later.
Licensed practical nurse							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		LPN was used in 1995 and later.
RN/LPN ^{29, 28}																X
Medical assistant									X							
Medical/nursing assistant										X	X	X	X	X		
Medical technician/technologist												X	X	X		
Nurse's aide							X	X								
Other								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Duration of this visit³⁰

	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 1997, title was changed to "time spent with physician."
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--

Disposition this visit

No follow-up planned	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Return at specified time	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Return if needed, P.R.N.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Telephone follow-up planned	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Referred to other physician/agency	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	In 1997, title was changed to "referred to other physician."

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

	Survey year(s)														Notes
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04	
Returned to referring physician	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				
Admit to hospital	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Refer to emergency department															X
Other	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X

Imputed variables

Patient date of visit									X	X	X				
Patient birth year						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patient sex						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patient race							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patient ethnicity							X	X	X				X	X	
Referral						X	X	X	X						
Seen patient before						X	X	X	X					X	X
If yes, for primary diagnosis						X	X	X	X						
Past visits														X	X
Disposition						X	X	X	X						
Duration						X	X	X	X					X	X
Providers seen						X			X						
Time spent with physician										X	X	X	X	X	X

Practice characteristics³¹

Physician's specialty	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patient visit weight	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Physician weight															X
Geographical region	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Metropolitan statistical area (MSA) status	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patient code							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Physician code							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Race recode								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Age recode									X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cause of injury recode										X	X	X	X	X	
Physician's diagnosis recode										X	X	X	X	X	X
Other diagnostic services recode										X	X	X	X	X	X
Other procedure recode										X	X	X	X	X	X
Intentionality of injury recode												X	X	X	X
Age in days (patients under 1 year)									X	X	X	X	X	X	X

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

	Survey year(s)														Notes		
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06	
Survey year												X	X	X	X		
Who completed patient record form?														X	X	X	
Setting type																	
Masked sample design variables													X	X			
Masked, clustered design variables															X	X	
Type of physician (M.D. or D.O.)				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Type of practice	X	X	X	X	X												
Type of office setting										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Solo practice										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Employment status of physician										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Who owns office?										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Is lab testing performed at this office?										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Does physician make home visits?												X	X	X	X	X	
Does physician make hospital visits?												X	X	X	X	X	
Does physician do telephone consults?												X	X	X	X	X	
Does physician do e-mail consults?												X	X	X	X	X	
Does this practice use electronic medical records?															X	X	
Does this practice submit claims electronically?															X	X	
What percent of your practice revenue from patient care comes from Medicare?															X	X	
What percent of your practice revenue from patient care comes from Medicaid?															X	X	
What percent of your practice revenue from patient care comes from private insurance?															X	X	
What percent of your practice revenue from patient care comes from other sources?															X	X	
How many managed care contracts does this practice have such as HMOs, PPOs, IPAs ^{5, 6, 32?}															X	X	

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

	Survey year(s)														Notes	
	1973-76	1977-78	1979	1980-81	1985	1989-90	1991-92	1993-94 ²	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001 ³	2002	2003-04		2005-06
What percent of the patient care revenue received by this practice comes from these managed care contracts?														X	X	
Are you currently accepting new patients into your practice?														X	X	
From those new patients, do you accept capitated private insurance?														X	X	
From those new patients, do you accept non-capitated private insurance?														X	X	
From those new patients, do you accept Medicare?														X	X	
From those new patients, do you accept Medicaid?														X	X	
From those new patients, do you accept worker compensation?														X	X	
From those new patients, do you accept self-pay?														X	X	
From those new patients, do you accept no charge?														X	X	
In the past 12 months, has your practice experienced difficulty in referring patients with Medicaid?														X	X	
In the past 12 months, has your practice experienced difficulty in referring patients with Medicare?														X	X	
In the past 12 months, has your practice experienced difficulty in referring patients with private insurance?														X	X	
In the past 12 months, has your practice experienced difficulty in referring patients that are uninsured?														X	X	

¹The Outpatient Department (OPD) component of the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NHAMCS) is combined with the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS) due to the fact that the survey content is almost identical in each year. NHAMCS was initiated in 1992.

²In 1993-94, only six tests or therapies were listed as check boxes, but space to write-in eight tests, therapies, ambulatory procedures, or surgeries were provided. A separate item for counseling or education and medication or injections was provided.

³In 2001, two different versions of the survey instrument were used (long and short Patient Record forms). Only those variables available on the public use file are shown, additional variables may be available using NCHS' Research Data Center (RDC).

⁴Patient's ZIP code is not available on public use file; must access via NCHS' Research Data Center.

⁵HMO is health maintenance organization.

⁶PPO is paid provider organization.

NAMCS and NHAMCS-OPD Survey Content, by Year of Data Collection¹

⁷SCHIP is State Children's Health Insurance Program.

⁸CHF is congestive heart failure.

⁹COPD is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

¹⁰HIV is human immunodeficiency virus.

¹¹AIDS is acquired immune deficiency.

¹²ADD is attention deficit disorder.

¹³CAT is computed axial tomography.

¹⁴MRI is magnetic resonance imaging.

¹⁵CT is computed tomography.

¹⁷EKG is electrocardiogram.

¹⁸ECG is electrocardiogram.

¹⁹PSA is prostate-specific antigen.

²⁰TB is tuberculosis.

²¹PAP is Papanicolaou test.

²²HPV is human papilloma virus.

²³DNA is deoxyribonucleic acid.

²⁴From 1980-91, a separate drug file was created. Each medication on each Patient Record form was equal to a row on this file.

²⁵This represents the number of medications recorded on the Patient Record form by the respondent.

²⁶The number in this cell is equal to the maximum number of medications that could have been reported on the Patient Record form.

²⁷The listed categories of "providers seen" can differ on the OPD survey as compared to the NAMCS.

²⁸LPN is licensed practical nurse.

²⁹RN is registered nurse.

³⁰"Duration of this visit" or "time spent with physician/provider" is not collected on the OPD survey.

³¹Refer to the ED section for the hospital characteristics as it related to the OPD survey.

³²IPA is individual practice association.

Survey Content of the NHAMCS-ED

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)								Notes
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04	2005-06	
Patient date of visit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Patient ZIP code²			X		X	X	X	X	
Patient age	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Patient sex	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Is patient pregnant?				X	X				
Patient race									
	Prior to 1999, only one race could be selected.								
White	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Black	X	X	X	X					
Black/African American					X	X	X	X	
Asian					X	X	X	X	
Asian/Pacific Islander	X	X	X	X					
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander					X	X	X	X	
American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut	X	X	X	X					
American Indian/Alaska Native					X	X	X	X	
Patient ethnicity									
Hispanic	X								
Hispanic origin		X	X	X					
Hispanic or Latino					X	X	X	X	
Not Hispanic	X	X	X	X					
Not Hispanic or Latino					X	X	X	X	
Does patient smoke cigarettes?			X						
Time of visit			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Waiting time to see physician				X	X		X	X	
Not seen by physician				X	X	X	X	X	In 1997-2000, "not seen by physician or unknown" was used.
Length of visit						X	X	X	
Patient residence									
Private residence								X	
Nursing home								X	
Other institution								X	
Other residence								X	
Homeless								X	
Unknown								X	
Does patient reside in a nursing home or other institution						X	X		

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)							Notes
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04	
Mode of arrival								
Ambulance (air/ground)				X	X		X	X
Public service (nonambulance, e.g., police, social services)				X	X		X	X
Walk-in				X	X		X	X
Unknown				X	X		X	X

Expected source(s) of payment for visit

Preferred provider option			X					
Insured, fee-for-service			X					
HMO/other prepaid ³	X	X	X					
Self-pay	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 1992-94, "patient paid" was used.
No charge	X	X	X	X	X			
No charge/charity						X	X	X
Other insurance			X					
Private/commercial	X	X						
Other government	X	X						
Blue Cross/Blue Shield			X					
Other private insurance			X					
Private insurance				X	X	X	X	X
Medicare	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Medicaid	X	X	X	X	X			
Medicaid/SCHIP ⁴						X	X	X
Worker's compensation			X	X	X	X	X	X
Other	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Unknown			X	X	X	X	X	X
Does patient belong to an HMO ³				X	X			

Triage

Temperature						X	X	X	Actual measurements recorded.
Pulse						X	X	X	Actual measurements recorded.
Blood pressure						X	X	X	Actual measurements recorded.
Patient oriented x 3							X	X	
Immediacy with which patient should be seen									
Immediate								X	
1-14 minutes								X	
Less than 15 minutes				X	X	X	X		
15-60 minutes				X	X	X	X	X	
> 1 hour-2 hours				X	X	X	X	X	
> 2 hours-24 hours				X	X	X	X	X	

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)							Notes
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04	
Unknown/no triage				X	X	X	X	
No triage								X
Unknown								X
Presenting level of pain								
None				X	X		X	X
Mild				X	X		X	X
Moderate				X	X		X	X
Severe				X	X		X	X
Unknown				X	X		X	X
Urgency of visit								
Urgent/emergent	X	X	X					
Non-urgent	X	X	X					
Major reason for visit								
Injury, first visit	X							
Injury, follow-up	X							
Illness, first visit	X							
Illness, follow-up	X							
Other reason	X							
Episode of care								
Initial visit for problem						X	X	
Follow-up visit for problem						X	X	
Unknown						X	X	
Patient seen in ED within 72 hours						X	X	X
Discharged from any hospital within 7 days								X
Patient reason for visit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Work-related visit?							X	X
Alcohol-related visit?								
Yes, patient's use						X	X	
Yes, other person's use						X	X	
No						X	X	
Unknown						X	X	

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)								Notes
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04	2005-06	
Alcohol- or drug-related visit?									
Alcohol-related	X	X	X						
Drug-related	X	X	X						
Both	X	X	X						
Neither	X	X	X						
Unknown		X	X						
Does patient now have									
Depression			X						
HIV/AIDS ^{5, 6}			X						
Injury-related visit									
			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Injury/poisoning place of occurrence									
Work		X							
Residence		X	X	X	X				In 1993-96, "home" was used.
Recreation/sports area			X	X	X				In 1995-96, "sports or athletics area" was used.
Street or highway		X	X	X	X				
School/day care		X							
School			X	X	X				
Other public building				X	X				
Industrial places				X	X				
Other		X	X	X	X				
Unknown			X	X	X				
Is injury intentional?									
Beginning in 2001, "Is this injury/poisoning intentional?" was used.									
Yes (self-inflicted)				X	X	X	X	X	
Yes (assault)				X	X	X	X	X	
No, unintentional				X	X	X	X	X	
Unknown				X	X	X	X	X	
Work-related injury									
			X	X	X	X			Beginning in 2001, "Is this injury/poisoning work related?" was used.
Cause of injury (ICD-9-CM codes)									
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Cause of injury (verbatim text)									
				X	X	X	X	X	Beginning in 2001, "cause of injury, poisoning, or adverse effect" was used.
Firearm-related injury									
			X						

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)							Notes
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04	
Violence-related injury								
No			X					
Yes (suicide/suicide attempt)			X					
Yes (interpersonal violence/assult)			X					
If yes, interpersonal violence/assult, person who caused the injury is the patient's								
Spouse			X					
Other intimate partner			X					
Parent			X					
Other family			X					
Caretaker			X					
Friend/acquaintance			X					
Stranger			X					
Unknown			X					
Other			X					
Adverse drug event related visit								
If yes, name of drug (up to 2)						X		
						X		
Physician's diagnosis								
Is diagnosis probable, questionable, or rule out?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
			X	X	X	X	X	X
Diagnostic/screening services								
Medical screening exam						X	X	
Mental status exam	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Blood tests								
CBC (complete blood count)				X	X	X	X	X
BUN/creatinine ⁷								X
BUN (blood urea nitrogen)						X	X	
Creatinine						X	X	
Lipids/Cholesterol							X	
Cholesterol						X		
Glucose						X	X	X
HgbA1C (glycohemoglobin)						X	X	
Cardiac enzymes								X
Electrolytes							X	X
Liver function								X
Arterial blood gases								X
Blood alcohol concentration			X	X	X	X	X	X
HIV serology ⁵	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)							Notes	
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04		2005-06
Other STD test ⁸				X	X				
Other blood test	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	In 2001, "other blood chemistry" was used.

Imaging

CT scan ⁹								X	
CAT scan ¹⁰			X	X	X				
CT scan/MRI ^{9, 11}	X								
MRI/CAT scan ^{11, 10}						X	X		
Chest X ray	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Extremity X ray	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Other X ray			X	X	X	X	X		
MRI ¹¹			X	X	X			X	
Other diagnostic imaging	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Ultrasound			X	X	X	X	X	X	
X ray								X	

Diagnostic tests

Blood pressure	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
EKG ¹²	X	X	X	X	X				
EKG/ECG ^{12, 13}						X	X	X	
Cardiac monitor			X	X	X	X	X	X	
EEG(electroencephalogram)						X	X		
Pulse oximetry			X	X	X	X	X	X	2006 includes pulse oximetry percentage.
Pregnancy test			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Urinalysis	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other	X	X	X	X	X			X	In 2005-06, "other test/service" was used.
Other diagnostic services	X	X	X	X	X				
Blood culture						X	X		
Cervical/urethral culture						X	X		
Stool culture						X	X		
Throat/rapid strep test						X	X		
Urine culture						X	X		
Total number of diagnostic/screening services				X	X	X	X		

Procedures

Thrombolytic therapy						X	X	X	
Endotracheal intubation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Eye/ENT care ¹⁴	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
CPR ¹⁵	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Orthopedic care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
IV fluids ¹⁶	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Lumbar puncture	X	X	X	X	X				
NG tube/gastric lavage ¹⁷	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)							Notes	
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04		2005-06
Bladder catheter	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
OB/GYN care ¹⁸			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Nebulizer therapy								X	
Wound care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other procedures	X	X	X	X	X				
Total number of procedures				X	X	X	X		
Total number of diagnostic services and procedures			X						

Medications

Were medications ordered/provided	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Number of medications ¹⁹	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Medications ²⁰	5	5	6	6	6	6	8	8	
Was medication given in ED								X	
Generic name code	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Prescription status code	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Controlled substance code	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Therapeutic class	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Starting in 2002, each medication could have up to 3 therapeutic classes.
Ingredient code (up to 5)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Providers

Staff physician	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
ED attending physician								X	
Resident/Intern	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other physician	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
On call attending physician/fellow								X	
RN/LPN ^{21, 22}								X	
Registered nurse	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Licensed practical nurse	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Nurse's aide	X	X							
Nurse practitioner	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Physician assistant	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Physician assistant/nurse practitioner		X							
EMT ²³				X	X	X	X	X	
Other technician						X	X		
Medical assistant			X						
Medical/nursing assistant				X	X				
Other		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Specify other		X	X						

Disposition

No follow-up planned	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Return to ED PRN ²⁴	X	X							

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)							Notes	
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04		2005-06
Return to ED, appointment	X	X							
Return to ED, PRN/appointment ²⁴			X	X	X				
Return if needed, PRN/appointment ²⁴						X	X	X	
Return to referring physician	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Refer to other physician/clinic	X	X	X						
Refer to other physician/clinic for follow-up				X	X	X	X		
Return/refer to physician/clinic for follow-up								X	
Refer out from triage without treatment				X	X	X	X		
Refer to alcohol/drug treatment program						X	X		
Return to non-physician treatment/support						X	X		
Refer to social services			X	X	X			X	
Left AMA ²⁵	X					X	X	X	
Left before being seen			X	X	X	X	X	X	In 2006, "left without being seen" was used.
DOA/died in ED ²⁶	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Transfer to other facility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In 2006, "transfer to different hospital" was used.
Reason for transfer								X	
Admit for 23 hour observation						X			
Admit to ED for observation unit							X	X	
Admit to ICU/CCU ^{27, 28}			X	X	X	X	X		
Admit to hospital	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Specify other	X	X	X		X				

Hospital admission

Admitted to critical care unit								X	
Admitted to OR/cath lab ^{29, 30}								X	
Admitted to other bed/unit								X	
Unknown								X	
Admission time								X	
Hospital discharge date								X	
Principal discharge diagnosis								X	
Hospital discharge status								X	

Imputations

Patient visit date				X	X				
Visit time				X	X				
Patient's birth year		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Patient sex		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Patient race		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Patient ethnicity		X	X				X	X	
Immediacy				X	X	X	X	X	

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

	Survey year(s)							Notes	
	1992	1993-94	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2001-02	2003-04		2005-06
Urgency of visit		X	X						
Alcohol/drug related visit		X	X						
Disposition		X	X						
Providers seen		X	X						

Hospital and miscellaneous variables

Patient visit weight	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Emergency department weight								X	Used to make provider level estimates.
Geographical region	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Metropolitan statistical area (MSA) status	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Hospital ownership	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Hospital code	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Patient code		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Race recode		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Age recode				X	X	X	X	X	
Cause of injury recode				X	X	X	X	X	
Physician's diagnosis recode				X	X	X	X	X	
Other diagnostic services recode				X	X				
Other procedure recode				X	X				
Intentionality of injury recode					X	X	X	X	
Age in days (patients less than 1 year)				X	X	X	X	X	
Survey year	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Who completed patient record form					X	X	X	X	
Setting type		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Masked sample design variables	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Masked, clustered design variables							X	X	
Electronic medical record use								X	

¹The Emergency Department (ED) is a component of the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NHAMCS). NHAMCS was initiated in 1992.

²Patient's ZIP code is not available on Public Use File; must access via NCHS' Research Data Center.

³HMO is health maintenance organization.

⁴SCHIP is State Children's Health Insurance Program.

⁵HIV is human immunodeficiency virus.

⁶AIDS is acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

⁷BUN is blood urea nitrogen.

⁸STD is sexually transmitted disease.

⁹CT is computed tomography.

¹⁰CAT is computed axial tomography.

¹¹MRI is magnetic resonance imaging.

¹²EKG is electrocardiogram.

¹³ECG is electrocardiogram.

¹⁴ENT is ears, nose and throat.

¹⁵CPR is cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

¹⁶IV is intravenous.

¹⁷NG is nasogastric.

NHAMCS-ED Survey Content, by year of data collection¹

¹⁸OB/GYN is obstetrics and gynecology.

¹⁹This represents the number of medications recorded on the Patient Record form by the respondent.

²⁰The number in this cell is equal to the maximum number of medications that could have been reported on the Patient Record form.

²¹RN is registered nurse.

²²LPN is licensed practical nurse.

²³EMT is emergency medical technician.

²⁴PRN is "if needed."

²⁵AMA is against medical advice.

²⁶DOA is dead on arrival.

²⁷ICU is intensive care unit.

²⁸CCU is critical care unit.

²⁹OR is operating room.

³⁰CATH is catheterization.

