



HEALTH INDICATORS WAREHOUSE USER'S GUIDE

Version 2

The Health Indicators Warehouse

The Health Indicators Warehouse (HIW) is the data hub of a collaborative effort among government and non-government partners to establish a network of suppliers and demanders of community health data, indicators, and interventions. Its purpose is to help Americans understand health and health care system performance in their communities, thereby sparking and facilitating action to improve performance and value.

The site is open to the public and no login is required.

Health Indicators

Health indicators are measurable characteristics of an individual, population, or environment that can be used to describe the health of that individual or population.

Different Ways to Use the HIW Site

There are two main types of users of the HIW site: 1) Those that want to use the site features to find indicators, then view the indicator data online, or perhaps download them for use elsewhere; and 2) software developers that want to connect directly to the data without going through the interactive interface.

User Type 1: Finds Indicators, then Views or Downloads the Data

The bulk of this User Guide is directed at the first type of user described above.

User Type 2: Links to Data via Web Services

Software developers should review the documentation on the FOR DEVELOPERS tab of the interface where an overview of the HIW web services, release notes, examples, service methods, and service types is provided.

Developers may also find it useful to use the interface as described in this User Guide to locate a desired indicator.

Quick Overview on Finding, Viewing, and Downloading Data

The HIW site allows you to find indicators that are of interest to you, view data on the indicators, and download the data for later use.

1. There are two main ways to find indicators on the HIW site: by using the Search Box, or by selecting from the categories on the selection pane on the INDICATORS tab.
2. The results of either method are displayed on the INDICATORS tab.
3. When you select a specific indicator, information about the indicator, the data values for the indicator, and file formats for downloading the data are available to be displayed.

Getting Started

To access the HIW site, enter the following URL into your browser: <http://healthindicators.gov>

The site performs best when used with the browsers listed below. The site may operate in other browsers, but data may not display properly and technical support staff may not be able to assist you.

- Internet Explorer 8 or higher
- Safari (latest version)
- Firefox (latest version)
- Opera (latest version)
- Chrome (latest version)

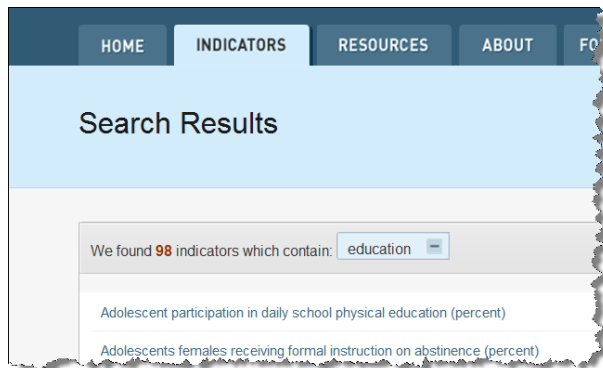
Finding Indicators

Method 1: Using the Search Box to Find Indicators



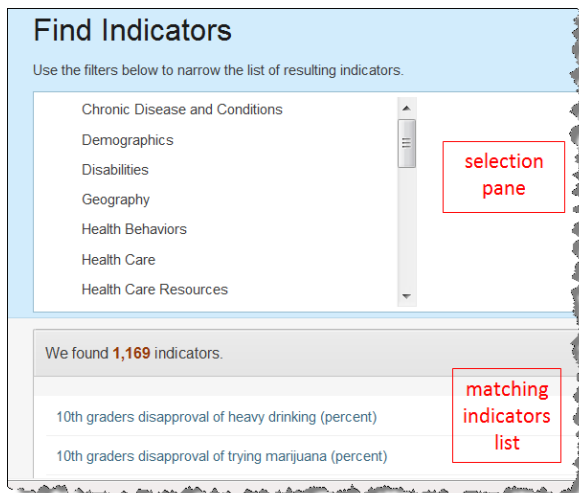
The Search Box appears on every page of the site and is a simple way to find indicators.

1. Begin typing a search term of your choice. A dropdown list displays system keywords that match your typing. However, even if there is no matching keyword, a search can successfully find an indicator by other words.
2. Select one of the keywords offered, or search on your own custom term. (The search function looks for matches among keywords and the description text for each indicator.) The search begins automatically, after which the site displays a list of matching indicators on the Search Results screen on the INDICATORS tab.



Method 2a: Using the Selection Pane to Find Indicators

1. Select the INDICATORS tab. The Find Indicators screen appears with the selection pane and the list of matching indicators below it.



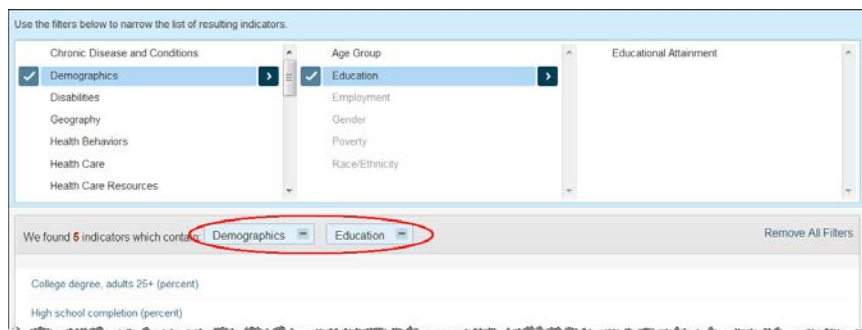
The selection pane provides a way to find indicators by choosing categories and subcategories of information to filter the data.

The matching indicators list changes based on the categories you check and uncheck in the selection pane above it. Before you choose any filters from the selection pane, the list contains over 1,000 indicators. Your goal is reduce the number of items on the list.

2. Hover over a category name on the selection pane. The item is highlighted in blue with a plus sign (+) to its left and a right arrow (>) to its right. To see that item's subcategories, select the right arrow. The subcategories appear in the next column to the right.
3. If the category appears useful, select its plus sign. The plus sign changes to a checkmark (✓), its subcategories (if any) appear in the second column, and the number of items on the matching indicators list is reduced.
4. Continue to reduce the number of items on the matching indicators list by selecting

from the subcategories in the second column of the selection pane, or by selecting a new item from the left column. As you make selections, other categories become invalid and are grayed out.

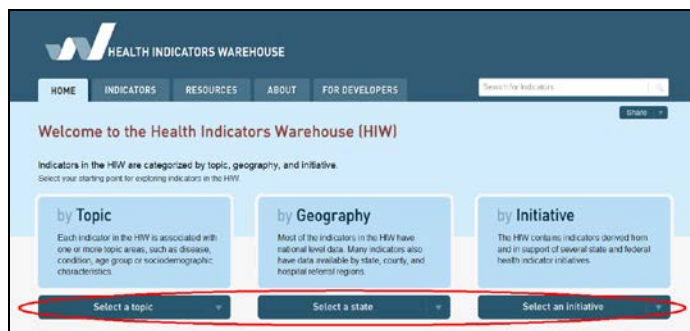
The categories you select appear as blue markers across the header of the matching indicators list.



5. To unselect a category, select the minus sign on a marker, or select the Remove All Filters link on the far right side of the matching indicators list.

Method 2b: Use Home Page “Buckets” to Find Indicators

The three groups (by Topic, Geography, and Initiative) on the HOME tab are an alternate way to get to the selection pane described in detail above. These three starting points simply group the categories into subsets which may help you with certain searches.



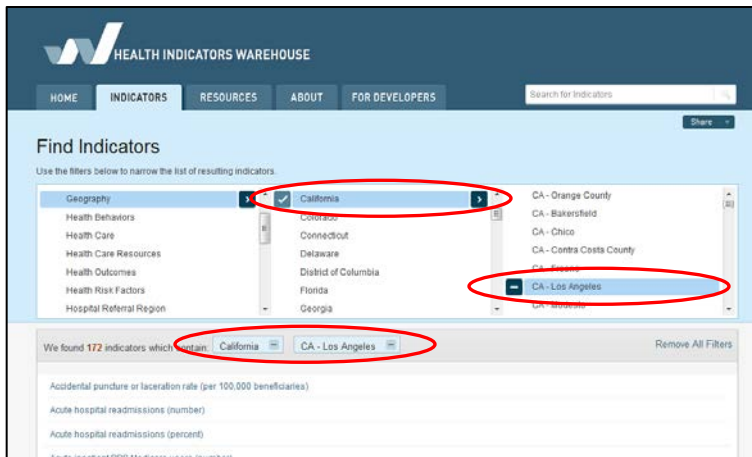
1. All three dark blue dropdown menus work the same way. Simply make a selection from the Select a topic/state/initiative dropdown menu.
2. The site displays the selection pane populated with your selection and its subcategories, and the resulting matching indicators list.

By Topic

Each indicator in the HIW has been associated with one or more topic areas, such as disease, condition, age group, or socioeconomic characteristics. By selecting the dropdown menu for Topic, you are presented the same list of choices of topical categories as when using the Indicators selection pane. Once you make a choice of topic, the screen reverts to the INDICATORS tab, and the instructions provided in Method 2a may be followed.

By Geography

Most of the indicators in the HIW have national level data; many indicators have data available by state, county, or Hospital Referral Region (HRR). All states in the system contain as subcategories both counties and HRRs. For example, one of 10 HRRs for Ohio appears on the selection pane as “OH – Canton.” To get a list of which indicators are available for a given state, county, or HRR, select at state in the dropdown menu under “by Geography,” and a new set of panels will open, producing a filtered list of indicators for a given state. To filter that list further, you may select a specific county or HRR in the pane on the right. (Refer to the Glossary on the RESOURCES tab for more information about HRRs.)



By Initiative

The items that appear on the Select an Initiative dropdown menu are the state and federal programs that provide the data for the HIW. Each initiative is made up of Data Sources (for example, the AGing Integrated Database or the Air Quality System), and each data source is made up of Data Suppliers (such as the Administration on Aging or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency).

Viewing Indictors

Once you have used the selection pane to generate a manageable number of matching indicators, you're ready to examine the indicators. The matching indicators list contains indicator titles with a small round blue icon beside each.

1. Click a blue icon to see information that helps you decide if the indicator includes the information you seek, especially the geographic levels (whether the indicator data are county, state, or national data), data years, and dimensions (the specific characteristics that were measured for that indicator, such as age, sex, or number of visits).
2. Click an indicator title to see the Indicator Profile.

The Indicator Profile

When you select an indicator title from the matching indicators list, its Indicator Profile appears. The profile is made up of the information on the Overview, Data, and Download subtabs on the INDICATORS tab.

Overview

The Overview page presents summary information related to the indicator. The information varies by indicator but typically includes Numerator, Population, Methodology, and References on the left side of the screen; and Related Keywords, Indicator Information, and Categories on the right side of the screen.

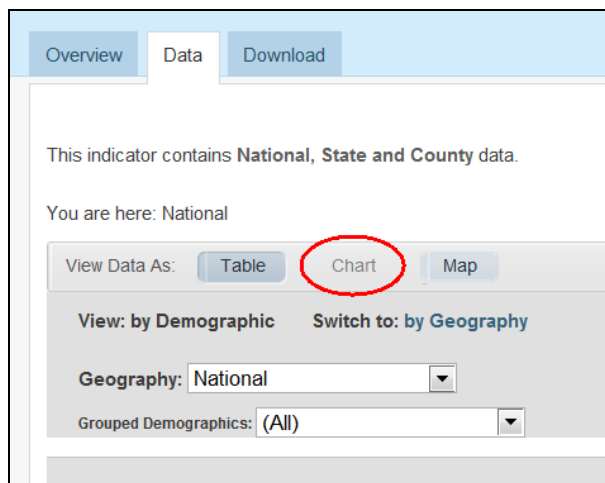
The lines of text in the light blue header are the long description and short description of the indicator. (Also known as the metadata for the indicator, the system looks in these descriptions, and at keywords, for a match when you enter a search term in the site Search Box.)

The list of Related Keywords helps you see other ways to search the data. Hover over a keyword to see how many indicator matches it returns.

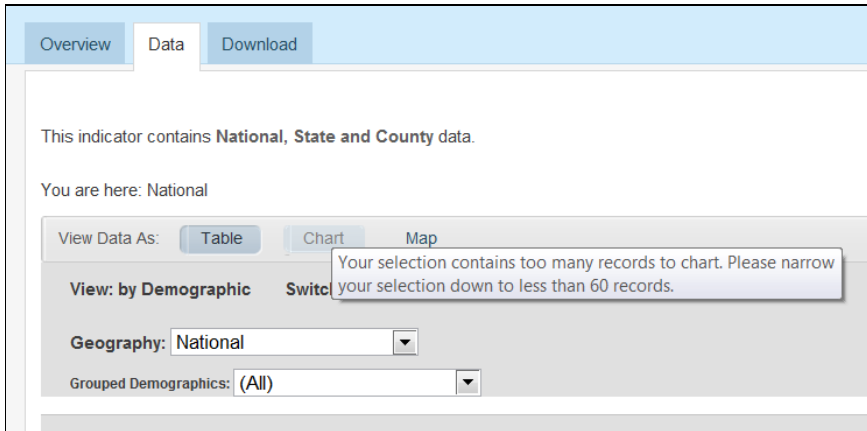
Viewing Indicator Data

To see the actual data values for the indicator, select the Data tab. The data is displayed in table format by default. You can change the display format by selecting the Chart or Map buttons. (The HIW is not intended to be an analytic site, so only very basic data visualization is offered.)

If a display format is not available for the indicator, or is not appropriate for the data selected in the dropdown lists, that button is deactivated.

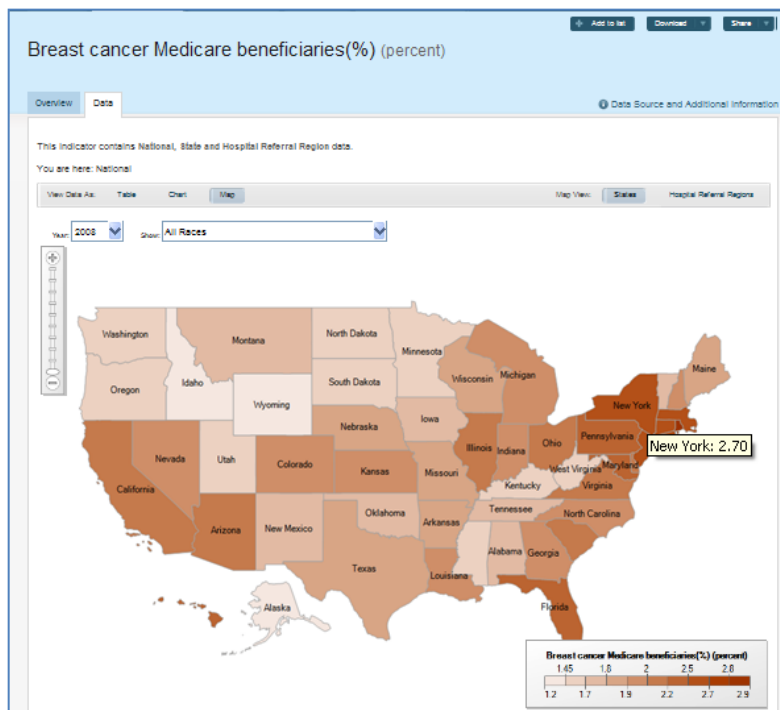


If you hover over the deactivated button, a tool tip explains why the format is invalid.

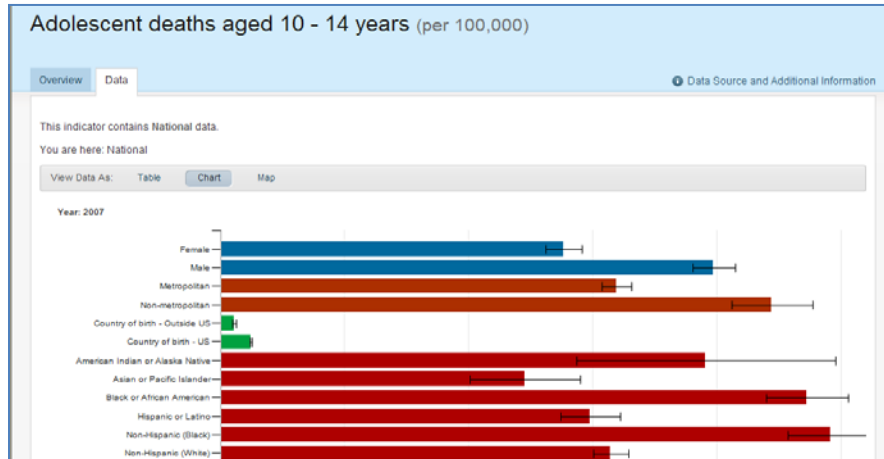


By making different selections from the dropdown lists, you may be able to generate the desired format.

- **Table:** This display format includes all years of the indicator data. The subheadings that organize the data table match the Dimensions displayed on the round blue icon popup.
- **Map:** When you reach an indicator Data page for a selection that has geographical data, the Map button will be activated. If the data are available geographically, the map is displayed at jurisdictional levels (i.e., by state, county, or HRR) and indicates by shading the regions that have associated data. Hover your mouse over the map to display data values.



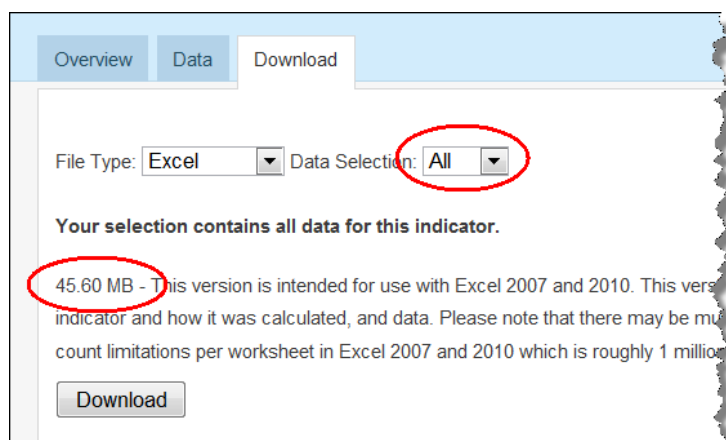
- Chart: This display format shows your choice of one year or a defined set of years. The Data tab display format can be changed to a bar chart by selecting the Chart button, if the data support. If applicable, the Chart option displays confidence intervals around the indicator estimate(s).



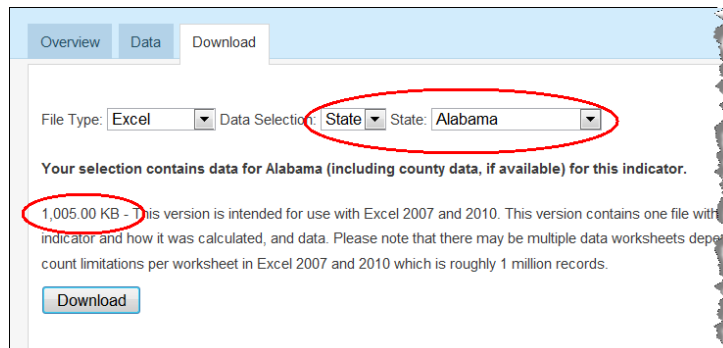
Download Indicator Data

You may download the data you viewed on the Data page for use with your own applications at a later time. Select the Download tab to choose the data and the file format for your download.

1. Select a File Type. Downloaded files can be opened in any program that can open an Excel (.xlsx) file or a comma separated value (.csv) file. Common programs include Microsoft Excel[®] and Google Docs[®].
2. Select whether to download All the data or just the data for a particular state.



Note that as you make different selections from the dropdown lists, the description of the download file is revised to match.



3. Click the Download button. The File Download dialog box appears.
4. Choose to either Open or Save the compressed (.zip) data archive that contains the data you selected.

Resources

The Resources tab offers five subtabs: Initiatives, Data Sources, Glossary, FAQ, and Additional Resources. The material included in each of these sections provides more information about the data, where it comes from, what terms mean, and additional information useful in understanding the indicator estimates.

Sharing via Social Media

You can share an indicator you have found by choosing an option from the Share dropdown menu that appears below the Search Box on every page of the site. The Share feature allows you to email or post a link to the indicator data using any of the options listed. An account for these services is required and can be configured outside of the HIW site.

RSS Feed

One of the items on the gray footer area of every screen is a Subscribe to the RSS Feed link. This reads the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) RSS feed, which, when available, is also the source of the What's New content on the HIW home page.

Disclaimers

Indicators and selections used for demonstrations in this guide are for demonstration usage only.

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The HIW includes sharing to Digg[®], Facebook[®], and Twitter[®]. An account for these services is required and can be configured outside of the HIW site. The HIW is not responsible for the content or functionality of any external sites.