

Health Characteristics of Adults 55 Years of Age and Over: United States, 2000–2003

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Abstract

Objective—This report highlights the health characteristics of four age groups of older adults—55–64 years, 65–74 years, 75–84 years, and 85 years and over—providing estimates by sex, race and Hispanic origin, poverty status, health insurance status, and marital status.

Methods—The estimates in this report were derived from the 2000–2003 National Health Interview Surveys' Family and Sample Adult questionnaires. Estimates are based on interviews with 39,990 sample adults aged 55 years and over.

Results—Overall, prevalence rates for fair or poor health, chronic health conditions (with the exception of diabetes), sensory impairments, and difficulties with physical and social activities increased with advancing age, doubling or even tripling between the age groups 55–64 and 85 years and over. About one in five adults aged 55–64 years were in fair or poor health, rising to about one-third of adults aged 85 years and over. Men and women were about equally likely to be in fair or poor health across the age groups studied, but women were more likely to have difficulty in physical or social activities. Sociodemographic variations in health were noted across the age groups studied, with the most consistent and striking results found for poverty status and health insurance coverage. Poor and near poor adults and those with public health insurance were, by far, the most disadvantaged groups of older adults in terms of health status, health care utilization, and health behaviors.

Conclusions—Health status, health care utilization, and health-promoting behaviors among adults aged 55 and over vary considerably by age and other sociodemographic characteristics. Identifying these variations can help government and private agencies pinpoint areas of greatest need and greatest opportunity for extending years of healthy life among the Nation's seniors.

Keywords: elderly • older adults • health status • chronic conditions • difficulties with activities • health care utilization • adult immunizations • health behaviors • National Health Interview Survey

Introduction

Older adults represent an ever-increasing proportion of the U.S. population. In 1900, adults aged 65 years and over constituted 4.1% of the U.S. population. By 2000, this percentage had tripled to 12.4%, and the number of adults in this age group grew from 3.1 million to 35 million (1). The near elderly population, comprised of those aged 55–64 years, accounted for 8.6 percent of the U.S. population (24.3 million) in 2000 (2). Together, the near elderly and the elderly represent a significant and growing portion of the U.S. population. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, by 2020 the population aged 55–64 is projected to be 42.7 million, and those 65 years and over is projected to be 54.6 million (2).

There have been substantial improvements in life expectancy during the past century. In 1900–1902, life expectancy at birth in the United States was 49.2 years (3). Life expectancy was 17.9 years for adults reaching age 55 years and for those reaching age 65 years at that time, life expectancy was 11.9 years (3). In 2002, life expectancy at birth was 77.3 years, at age 55 it was 26.1 years, and at age 65 years, it was 18.2 years (3). Such statistics support



expanding the public health focus on promoting quality of life at the older ages. Assessing the distribution of health impairments and health risks of the near elderly as well as the elderly is an important step in furthering efforts to enhance health and well-being of older adults in the United States.

The Federal government, as well as public health researchers, has been expanding activities to monitor and improve the health of older adults. The Department of Health and Human Services' Web site highlights many agencies and organizations that are involved in aging-related activities (4). Among the Federal agencies and offices engaged in such activities are the Administration on Aging (5), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) (6), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (7), the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (8), and the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Aging (9). CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) has an ongoing aging initiative and maintains a data warehouse on Trends in Health and Aging (10). A report on key indicators of well-being for older Americans is published periodically by the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging Statistics (11), and a series entitled "Aging Trends," initiated in 2001 by NCHS, publishes information on aging-related topics (12–16). In *Health, United States, 2005*, the 29th report to the President and the U.S. Congress on the health status of the Nation, a special section was devoted to the health of adults aged 55–64 years (17). The expanding public health focus on older adults is further evidenced by the increasing volume of literature on the health and well-being of the Nation's older population (18–27).

This report, which highlights health characteristics of adults aged 55 years and over in the United States, is the first of a series of periodic summary reports on older adults using data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). NHIS, one of the major data collection systems of NCHS, is an annual survey of a nationally representative sample of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized household

population. This report complements and broadens data from the NHIS presented in the periodic publication "Aging Trends." It presents national prevalence estimates for selected health indicators for adults aged 55–64 years and 65 years and over—with detailed information for adults aged 65–74 years, 75–84 years, and 85 years and over. The report provides a snapshot of the current health status of adults aged 55 years and over and adds to the existing body of literature by providing additional benchmarks for charting progress in improving the health and well-being of older Americans in the 21st Century.

Data from the 2000–2003 National Health Interview Surveys were used to derive estimates for each of these four age groups by sex, race and Hispanic origin, poverty status, health insurance coverage, and marital status (28–31). The health indicators in this report include health status, selected health conditions, difficulties with physical and social activities, use of health services, and key health-related behaviors that are particularly relevant to the older population. This report highlights some of the most prominent age and subgroup differences in these health indicators.

Methods

Data source

The statistics shown in this report are based on data for sample adult respondents to the 2000–2003 National Health Interview Surveys (NHIS) (28–31). Information on health and demographic characteristics was collected in the family and sample adult components of the annual core questionnaires. As noted earlier, NHIS is a survey of a nationally representative sample of the U.S. civilian non-institutionalized household population. Basic health and demographic information is collected in the family component for all members of the family. Adults present at the time of the interview are asked to respond for themselves. Proxy responses are accepted for the family component for adults not present at the time of the interview and those who are physically or mentally incapable of responding for

themselves. Additional information is collected from one randomly selected adult aged 18 years and over (that is, the "sample adult") per family. Information on the sample adult is self-reported except in rare cases when the sample adult is physically or mentally incapable of responding.

Measurement

Tables 1–4 include selected measures of health for adults aged 55 years and over. Many of these measures are shown in the annual reports of data from NHIS, although these reports contain less detail for the older age groups (32,33). The current report describes the health characteristics of older adults in four age groups—55–64 years, 65–74 years, 75–84 years, and 85 years and over—by sex, race and Hispanic ethnicity, poverty status, health insurance status, and marital status. The youngest age group, 55–64 years, can be considered "late middle age or near elderly." Adults in the 55–64 years group, although approaching retirement years, are usually still working; some are still raising families, and some are beginning to experience chronic health problems typical of older adults. The 55–64 years age group serves as a useful benchmark for assessing the patterns in health characteristics observed among adults in the older groups. Estimates in the report are age-specific. Age adjustment to a standard population was not done to maximize comparability with other nonadjusted estimates published in *Older Americans 2004* (11).

The categories of race and Hispanic ethnicity were limited to the four largest groups to provide reliable estimates using 4 years of data. Even with 4 years of data, the standard errors of estimates for non-Hispanic Asian adults are often quite large, and such estimates should be interpreted with caution. (See discussion below.)

The classification of health insurance coverage is complex and differs between adults under age 65 years and those aged 65 years and over. A detailed discussion of health insurance coverage as defined in NHIS is available in the annual Summary Health

Statistics reports (32,33). For this report, categories of coverage were combined and limited to those most informative for the study of older adults. The vast majority of adults aged 65 years and over are eligible for Medicare and, therefore, many adults aged 65 years and over who have private or other public coverage are also covered by Medicare. The health insurance categories shown in Tables 1–4 reflect this overlapping coverage. To simplify the discussion of findings, the category “private (with and without Medicare)” shown in the tables is referred to in the highlights as “private” and the category “Medicare or other public only” shown in the tables is referred to in the highlights as “public.” Similarly, in the highlights describing findings for adults under age 65 years, the category “Medicaid or other public” has been shortened to “public.” Because of their eligibility for Medicare, the number of adults aged 65 years and over in the category “uninsured” is very small, and this category is not shown for age groups 65 years and over.

The health characteristics shown in Tables 1–4—assessed health status, selected chronic conditions and impairments, difficulties with physical and social activities, use of health services, and health-related behaviors—are generally based on respondent self-report. The questions, sometimes paraphrased, appear in the footnotes of each table. The complete questionnaires for each data year covered in this report are available on the NCHS Web site at www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm.

Statistical analysis

From 2000 to 2003, NHIS interviews were completed for 152,301 families and 127,596 sample adults living in households across the United States. For these 4 years combined, the household response rate was 89.1%. The final response rate for the Sample Adult component was 73.6%. Procedures used in calculating response rates are described in detail in Appendix I of the Survey Description of the NHIS data files (28–31), and information on number of respondents in each of the

years covered in this report are in Table I. This report is based on data from 39,990 completed interviews with sample adults aged 55 years and over. Four years of data were combined to increase reliability of estimates.

Estimates and associated standard errors shown in Tables 1–4 were generated using SUDAAN, a software package designed to handle complex sample designs such as that used by NHIS (34). Estimates were weighted, using the Sample Adult Record Weight, to reflect the U.S. civilian non-institutionalized population aged 55 years and over. Estimates with a relative standard error of more than 30% and up to and including 50% are identified with an asterisk (*) preceding the estimate. Readers should exercise caution when interpreting these statistics. Estimates with a relative standard error of more than 50% are indicated with a dagger (†) and are not shown.

Statistical tests performed to assess significance of differences in the estimates were two-tailed with no adjustments for multiple comparisons. The critical value used to compare the estimates at the .05 level was 1.96. Terms such as “greater than” and “less than” indicate a statistically significant difference. Terms such as “similar” or “no difference” indicate that the statistics being compared were not significantly different. Lack of comment regarding the difference between any two statistics does not mean that the difference was tested and found to be not significant.

Results

Health status and conditions (Table 1)

Overall, prevalence of fair or poor health, hypertension, heart disease, hearing impairment, vision impairment, and absence of all natural teeth increased across the age groups studied. The only exception to this general pattern was the prevalence of diabetes, which was lowest among adults aged 85 years and over (11.0%) and among those aged 55–64 years (12.6%) and highest among adults aged 65–74

years (17.0%). Some of the most striking variations in prevalence of these health conditions, by age and socio-demographic characteristics, are highlighted below.

Health status

- About one in four adults aged 55 years and over (23.2%) were in fair or poor health—ranging from 19.6% of adults aged 55–64 years to 33.6% of adults aged 85 years and over.
- Men and women were about equally likely to be in fair or poor health.
- Non-Hispanic black adults and Hispanic adults were more likely than non-Hispanic white adults and non-Hispanic Asian adults to be in fair or poor health, in all but the oldest age group.
- Poor adults were more likely than adults who were not poor to be in fair or poor health (Figure 1), with greatest differences in health status by poverty status observed for adults aged 55–64 years.
- Adults who had public health insurance coverage were more likely than those with private insurance to be in fair or poor health. Adults aged 55–64 years who had public health insurance coverage (67.3%) were more than five times as likely as those who had private health insurance (13.1%) to be in fair or poor health. In contrast, adults aged 65 years and over who had public health insurance coverage (55.4%) were about 2½ times as likely as those who have private health insurance coverage (22.0%) to be in fair or poor health.
- Marital status had a moderate relationship with health status. For example, among adults aged 55–64 years and 65–74 years, formerly married adults were more likely than married adults to be in fair or poor health. Among adults 75 years and over, only those aged 85 years and over who had never married (22.6%) had significantly lower rates of fair or poor health than adults in other marital status groups.

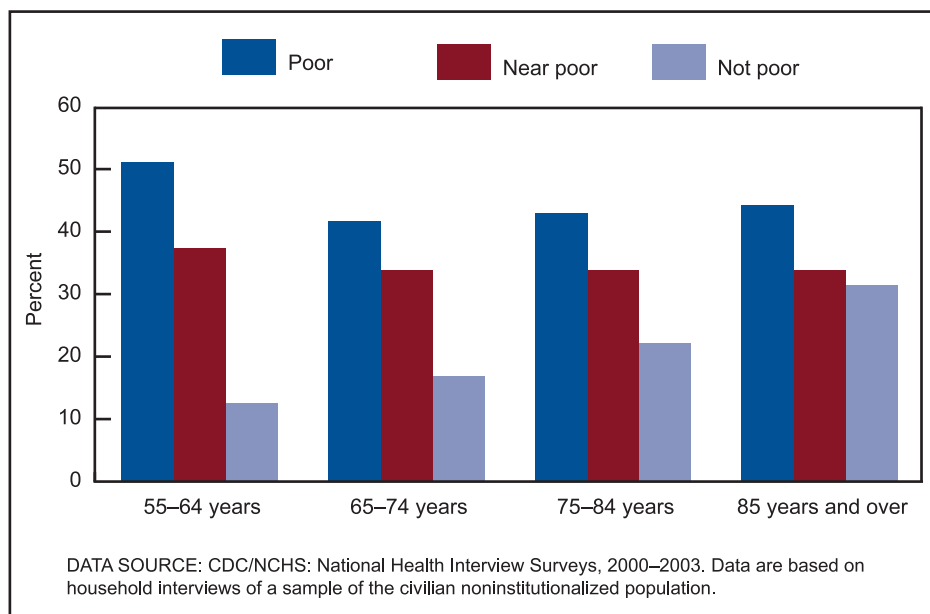


Figure 1. Percentage of adults 55 years and over who were in fair or poor health, by age and poverty status: United States, 2000–2003

Hypertension

- About 4 in 10 adults aged 55 years and over (44.9%) had hypertension, ranging from 38.0% of adults aged 55–64 years to about one-half of adults aged 85 years and over (50.5%).
- Differences between men and women in prevalence of hypertension varied by age. In the youngest age group, men and women were about equally likely to have hypertension. Among adults aged 65 years and over, women were more likely than men to have hypertension.
- Non-Hispanic black adults in each of the older age groups had substantially higher rates of hypertension than non-Hispanic white adults, non-Hispanic Asian adults, or adults of Hispanic origin. However, the differences by race/ethnicity varied by age. For example, among adults aged 55–64 years, 55.9% of non-Hispanic black adults had hypertension compared with 36.0% of non-Hispanic white adults, 36.9% of Hispanic adults, and 31.8% of non-Hispanic Asian adults. Among adults aged 75–84 years, 71.0% of non-Hispanic black adults had hypertension compared with 58.6% of non-Hispanic Asian adults, 51.7% of non-Hispanic white

adults, and 49.3% of Hispanic adults.

- Adults with public health insurance coverage had higher rates of hypertension than adults who had private health insurance coverage, with the greatest differences among adults aged 55–64 years. Among these adults, prevalence of hypertension was nearly 20 percentage points higher among those who had public health insurance coverage (57.8%) than among those with private health insurance (36.0%). Among adults aged 65 years and over, the difference in hypertension prevalence between those having public (63.1%) and private (49.6%) coverage was smaller than for adults in the 55–64 year age group.

Heart disease

- Prevalence of heart disease increased with age. One in four adults aged 55 years and over had heart disease, with rates more than doubling between ages 55–64 years (17.0%) and ages 85 years and over (38.5%).
- Men were more likely than women to have heart disease among adults under age 85 years, with the differences most notable in the age groups 65–74 years (31.7% of men and 22.5% of women) and 75–84

years (42.9% of men and 30.6% of women). At ages 85 years and over, men and women were about equally likely to have heart disease.

- The relationship of race or ethnicity and prevalence of heart disease varied by age. Among adults 55–64 years of age, prevalence of heart disease was similar for non-Hispanic black (17.6%) and non-Hispanic white (17.7%) adults. The lowest prevalence of heart disease was among Hispanics (12.8%) and non-Hispanic Asians (9.4%). Among adults aged 65 years and over, prevalence of heart disease was higher for non-Hispanic white adults (32.4%) than for non-Hispanic black adults (25.8%), non-Hispanic Asian adults (24.6%), or Hispanic adults (21.5%). Among adults 65 years and over, prevalence of heart disease by race/ethnicity showed no consistent pattern when prevalence was examined for the more detailed age categories.
- Heart disease was associated with poverty among adults aged 55–64 years: 27.5% of poor adults in this age group had heart disease compared with 15.9% of those who were not poor. However, among adults aged 65 years and over, no significant differences in prevalence of heart disease were found between adults who were poor (32.7%) and those who were not poor (31.2%).

Diabetes

- Unlike the other conditions studied, prevalence of diabetes did not increase with age: prevalence of diabetes was highest among adults aged 65–74 years (17.0%) and lowest among those 85 years and over (11.0%).
- Prevalence of diabetes was higher for non-Hispanic black adults and Hispanic adults than for non-Hispanic white adults or non-Hispanic Asian adults. Among adults aged 55–64 years, non-Hispanic black adults (21.5%) and Hispanic adults (19.7%) were about twice as likely as non-Hispanic white adults (10.7%) to have diabetes. Among adults aged 65 years and over, rates of diabetes were

about 10 percentage points higher for non-Hispanic black (24.2%) and Hispanic (23.5%) adults than for non-Hispanic white adults (14.4%).

- Poor adults were more likely than adults who were not poor to have diabetes—except among the oldest adults. Among adults aged 55–64 years, poor adults (21.2%) were twice as likely as adults who were not poor (10.4%) to have diabetes. Among adults aged 65–74 years, poor adults (21.6%) and near poor adults (21.3%) were more likely than adults who were not poor (15.3%) to have diabetes.
- Adults who had public health insurance coverage were considerably more likely to have diabetes than those with private coverage and those who were uninsured.

Hearing impairment

- The prevalence of hearing impairment increased with age. Overall, nearly one-third of adults aged 55 years and over (31.5%) had some level of hearing impairment, ranging from 22.3% of adults aged 55–64 years to 58.0% of adults aged 85 years.
- Sex differences in prevalence of hearing impairment varied by age. Among adults 55–64 years, men (29.6%) were nearly twice as likely as women (15.7%) to have hearing impairment. Among adults 75–84 years, more than one-half of men had difficulty hearing (54.9%) compared with just over one-third of women (36.4%). Among adults aged 85 years and over, the gap between men (63.0%) and women (55.4%) in rates of hearing impairment narrowed markedly.
- Among adults aged 65 years and over, 4 in 10 non-Hispanic white adults (41.0%) had hearing impairment compared with about one-fourth of non-Hispanic black adults (24.4%) and Hispanic adults (24.5%) and about one-third of non-Hispanic Asian adults (34.0%).

Vision impairment

- Prevalence of vision impairment nearly tripled between the ages of 55–64 years (11.0%) and ages 85 years and over (30.3%).

- Sex differences in prevalence of vision impairment were modest, with women having slightly higher rates of vision impairment than men the same age. Among adults aged 85 years and over, the differences between men (29.3%) and women (30.8%) were not statistically significant.
- Non-Hispanic black adults were somewhat more likely than non-Hispanic white adults to have vision impairment.
- Rates of vision impairment were highest among poor adults and those who had public health insurance coverage, with the differences by poverty and insurance status most pronounced among adults aged 55–64 years.

Absence of natural teeth

- Prevalence of total tooth loss increased with age. Overall, one in five adults aged 55 years and over (21.6%) had lost all of their natural teeth, with rates of total tooth loss nearly doubling between the age groups 55–64 years (13.7%) and 65–74 years (24.0%) and then increasing to more than 40.0% among adults aged 85 years and over.
- Poor adults and near poor adults were more likely than adults who were not poor to have lost all their natural teeth. Among adults aged 55–64 years, about one in four poor adults (27.0%) and near poor adults (24.6%) had lost all their natural teeth compared with about 1 in 10 adults who were not poor (10.7%). Among adults aged 75–84 years, nearly one-half of poor adults (47.3%) and about 4 in 10 near poor adults (39.1%) had lost all their teeth compared with less than one-fourth of adults who were not poor (22.9%).
- Adults who had public health insurance coverage were two to three times as likely as those with private coverage to have lost all their natural teeth. Among adults aged 55–64 years, one-third of those with public health insurance coverage (33.0%) had lost all their natural teeth compared with about 1 in 10 adults who had private coverage (10.7%). Among adults aged 65 years and

over, those who had public health insurance coverage (46.6%) were nearly twice as likely as those who had private coverage (24.1%) to have lost all their teeth.

Difficulty with physical and social activities (Table 2)

Prevalence of having difficulties with physical and social activities generally increased with age with the greatest increase occurring between the two oldest age groups. Although prevalence estimates and the magnitude of subgroup differences varied by activity, the overall patterns were remarkably similar. Selected highlights are presented but the reader is encouraged to examine Table 2 for specific activities and subgroups of interest.

Prevalence of difficulties by age

- About one in four adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty walking a quarter mile, ranging from 16.5% of adults aged 55–64 years to over one-half of adults aged 85 years and over (Figure 2).
- About one in five adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty walking up 10 steps. Adults aged 85 years and over (46.2%) were nearly four times as likely as adults aged 55–64 years (12.9%) to have difficulty with this activity.
- About one in four adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty standing for 2 hours and prevalence of this difficulty increased with age. One in five adults 55–64 years compared with 6 in 10 adults aged 85 years and over had difficulty standing for 2 hours (Figure 2).
- About 1 in 10 adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty sitting for 2 hours and prevalence of this difficulty ranged from 9.1% of adults aged 65–74 years to 16.1% of adults aged 85 years and over.
- About 3 in 10 adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty stooping or bending. About one in five adults aged 55–64 years compared with about one-half of adults aged 85 years and over had difficulty with this activity (Figure 2).

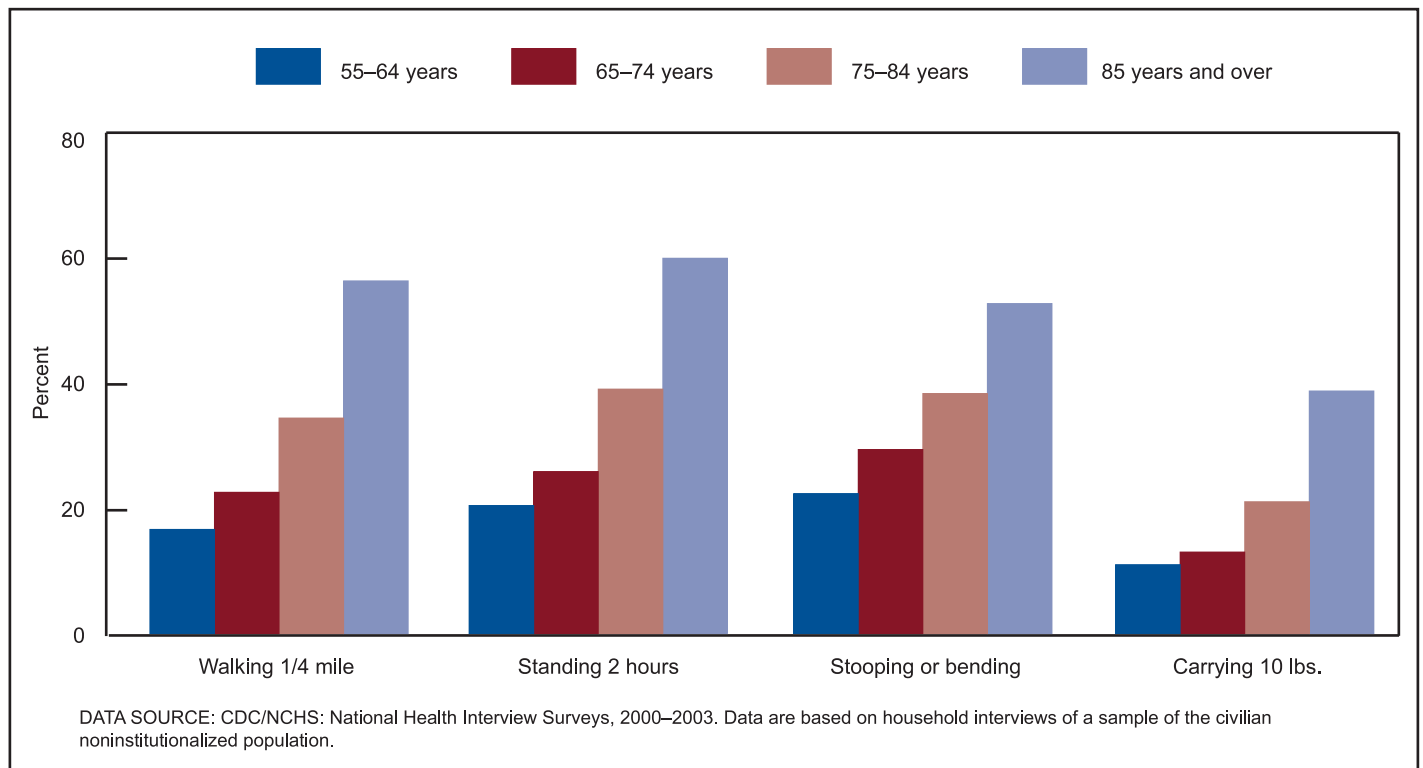


Figure 2. Percentage of older adults who had at least some difficulty walking one-quarter of a mile, standing for 2 hours, stooping or bending, and carrying 10 pounds by age: United States, 2000–2003

- About 1 in 10 adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty reaching (10.9%) or grasping (9.4%) with rates tripling between the ages of 55–64 years and 85 years and over.
- Overall, 15.0% of adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty carrying 10 pounds and rates increased with age. About 11% of adults 55–64 years had difficulty carrying 10 pounds compared with 38.5% of adults aged 85 years and over (Figure 2).
- About one in five adults aged 55 years and over (20.5%) had difficulty pushing or pulling large objects, with rates for those aged 85 years and over (46.6%) triple those of adults aged 55–64 years (15.5%).
- About 1 in 10 adults aged 55 years and over had difficulty shopping (12.4%) or socializing (9.4%). Rates increased gradually between ages 55–64 years and ages 75–84 years and then doubled for the age group 85 years and over. About one-third of adults in the oldest age group had difficulty shopping (35.8%) or socializing (29.2%).

Sociodemographic variations in difficulties

- Across the activities studied, women were more likely than men to have difficulty with physical and social activities, with the largest differences noted in the age groups 65 years and over.
- Non-Hispanic black adults had somewhat higher rates of difficulties than other race/ethnicity groups.
- Poor adults had higher rates of difficulties than adults who were not poor, with differences greatest for adults aged 55–64 years.
- Adults with public health insurance coverage had higher rates of difficulties than adults who had private insurance and those who were uninsured or who were covered by Medicare only.
- Currently married adults generally had the lowest rates and formerly married adults had the highest rates of difficulties with physical or social activities, with rates among never married adults falling in between.

Health care utilization (Table 3)

Regular source of health care

- Overall, 94.8% of adults aged 55 years and over had a regular source of health care. Having a regular source of health care varied by age, ranging from 92.6% of adults aged 55–64 years to 97.0% of adults aged 75 years and over.
- Among adults aged 55–64 years, women (93.8%) were more likely than men (91.2%) to have a regular source of health care. However, in each of the age groups 65 years and over, men and women were about equally likely to have a regular source of care.
- Among adults aged 55–64 years, Hispanic adults (83.5%) were less likely than non-Hispanic white adults (93.7%) and non-Hispanic black adults (92.9%) to have a regular source of health care.
- Among adults aged 55–64 years, those who were uninsured (67.8%) were less likely than those who had public insurance (96.2%) and those with private coverage (95.6%) to

have a regular source of health care.

- Among adults aged 65 years and over, more than 90% of adults had a regular source of health care, regardless of sex, race/ethnicity, poverty, health insurance status, or marital status.

Pneumonia shot

- Four in 10 adults aged 55 years and over (39.2%) had ever had a pneumonia shot. Adults aged 75–84 years (60.9%) and adults aged 85 years and over (58.9%) were almost three times as likely as adults aged 55–64 years (19.2%) to have had a pneumonia shot.
- Among adults under age 75 years, women were slightly more likely than men to have ever had a pneumonia shot; among adults aged 75–84 years, men were slightly more likely than women to have had this immunization. No differences were found between men and women aged 85 years and over.
- Non-Hispanic white adults were more likely than all other race groups to have had a pneumonia shot, regardless of age. Among adults aged 55–64 years, non-Hispanic white adults (20.5%) were more likely than non-Hispanic black adults (16.5%) and about twice as likely as Hispanic adults (10.7%) to have ever had a pneumonia shot. Among adults aged 65 years and over, non-Hispanic white adults (58.7%) were about twice as likely as non-Hispanic black adults (34.5%) and Hispanic adults (30.3%) to have had a pneumonia shot.
- Prevalence of getting a pneumonia shot was associated with poverty status, but the association differed for adults under and over age 65 years. Among adults aged 55–64 years, adults who were not poor (18.7%) were less likely to have had a pneumonia shot than adults who were poor (21.6%) or near poor (23.3%). Among adults aged 65 years and over, adults who were not poor (58.4%), or near poor (53.5%) were more likely than adults who were poor (41.8%) to have had a pneumonia shot.

- The relationship between having a pneumonia vaccination and insurance status varied by age. Adults aged 55–64 years who had public insurance (27.9%) were more likely than adults who had private insurance (18.6%) and those who were uninsured (12.0%) to have had a pneumonia shot. Adults aged 65 years and over who had private insurance were more likely than adults who had public insurance to have had a pneumonia shot.
- Adults who were married were more likely than adults who were formerly married or those who were never married to have received a pneumonia shot.

Flu shot

- Among adults aged 55–64 years, women (40.6%) were more likely than men (36.0%) to have had a flu shot in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 75–84 years, men (71.9%) were more likely than women (67.9%) to have had a flu shot in the past 12 months.
- Non-Hispanic white adults were more likely than non-Hispanic black adults to have had a flu shot in the past 12 months (Table 3 and Figure 3) and the differences increased with age.
- Adults who had private insurance were more likely than those who had public insurance or who were uninsured or had Medicare only to have received a flu shot in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 55–64 years, those who had private insurance (40.2%) and public insurance (41.6%) were twice as likely as uninsured adults (20.8%) to have received a flu shot in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 65 years and over, nearly 7 in 10 adults with private insurance coverage (68.7%) received a flu shot in the past 12 months compared with 5 in 10 adults with public insurance coverage (54.3%) and less than 6 in 10 adults who had Medicare only (57.8%).
- Adults who were currently married were more likely than those who were formerly married or those who were never married to have received

a flu shot in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 65–74 years, 63.8% of adults who are currently married received a flu shot in the past 12 months compared with 56.5% of adults who were never married and 55.0% of adults who were formerly married. Among adults aged 75–84 years and 85 years and over, three-fourths of adults who were currently married received a flu shot in the past 12 months compared with about two-thirds of adults who were formerly married and those who were never married.

Dental visit

- Younger adults were more likely than older adults to have visited a dentist in the past 12 months. About 65% of adults aged 55–64 years (64.9%) visited a dentist in the past 12 months compared with 46% of adults aged 85 years and over.
- Among adults aged 55–64 years and 65–74 years, women were more likely than men to have visited a dentist in the past 12 months.
- Non-Hispanic white adults were more likely than non-Hispanic black adults to have visited a dentist in the past 12 months, with the differences most striking in the two oldest age groups. Among adults aged 55–64 years, about two-thirds of non-Hispanic white adults (67.8%) had visited a dentist in the past 12 months compared with one-half of non-Hispanic black adults (51.7%). Among adults aged 75–84 years, almost 6 in 10 non-Hispanic white adults (58.7%) visited a dentist in the past 12 months compared with about one-third of non-Hispanic black adults (33.8%). In the oldest age group, about one-half of non-Hispanic white adults (49.2%) had visited a dentist in the past 12 months compared with only 2 in 10 non-Hispanic black adults (20.8%).
- Across all age groups, adults who were not poor were about twice as likely as adults who were poor to have visited a dentist in the past 12 months (Table 3 and Figure 4).
- Across all age groups, adults who had private health insurance coverage

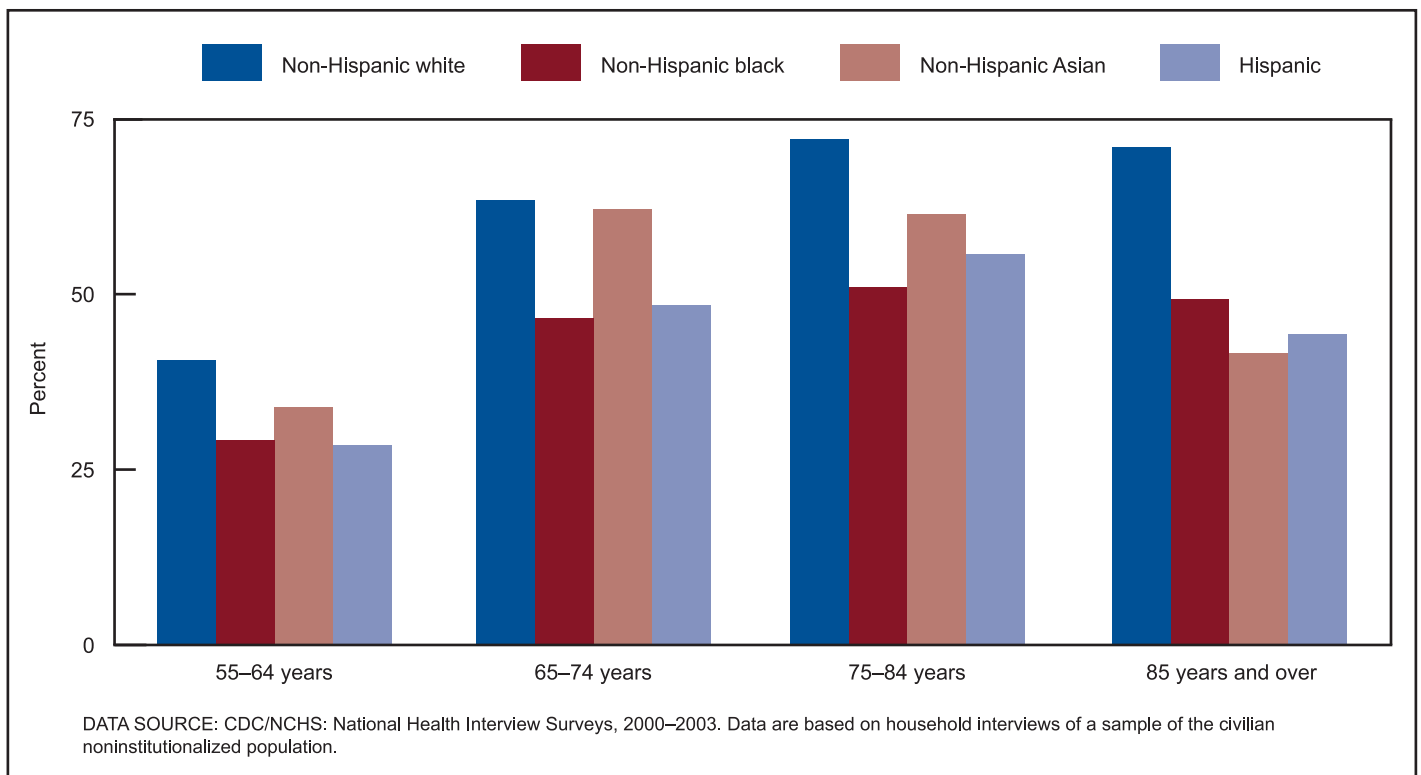


Figure 3. Percentage of adults 55 years and over who received a flu shot in the past 12 months, by age and race: United States, 2000–2003

were the most likely to have visited a dentist in the past 12 months.

- Across the older age groups, adults who were currently married were more likely to have visited a dentist in the past 12 months than adults who were formerly married or those who were never married.

Doctor visit

- Overall, 88.6% of adults aged 55–64 years had visited a doctor in the past 12 months compared with 94.7% of adults aged 75–84 years and 94.9% of adults aged 85 years and over.
- Women were more likely than men to have visited a doctor in the past 12 months.
- Hispanic adults were less likely than non-Hispanic white adults and non-Hispanic black adults to have visited a doctor in the past 12 months.
- Among adults aged 55–64 years, 65–74 years, and 75–84 years, those who were not poor were more likely than those who were poor and near poor to have visited a doctor in the past 12 months.

- Adults aged 55–64 years who had public insurance coverage (95.8%) were somewhat more likely than those who had private insurance (91.1%) and much more likely than those who were uninsured (66.1%) to

have visited a doctor in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 65 years and over, adults who had Medicare only were less likely than adults who had private insurance to have visited a doctor in the past 12 months.

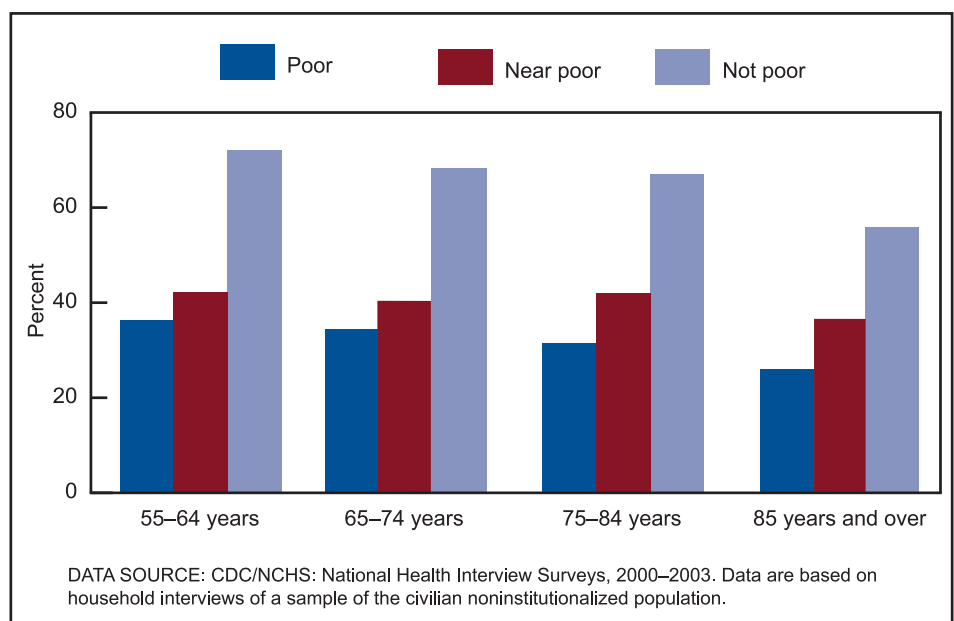


Figure 4. Percentage of adults 55 years and over who had visited a dentist in the past 12 months, by age and poverty status: United States, 2000–2003

- Adults who were currently married were more likely than those who were formerly married and those who were never married to have visited a doctor in the past 12 months.

Emergency room visit

- Overall, 1 in 5 adults aged 55 years and over had visited an emergency room in the past 12 months, ranging from 18.4% of adults aged 55–64 years to 31.8% of adults aged 85 years and over.
- Across all age groups, men and women were about equally likely to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months.
- Non-Hispanic black adults were more likely than non-Hispanic white adults to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 55–64 years, 26.2% of non-Hispanic black adults had visited an emergency room in the past 12 months compared with 17.3% of non-Hispanic white adults. Among adults aged 65 years and over, more than one-fourth of non-Hispanic black adults (27.5%) had visited an emergency room in the past 12 months compared with 1 in 5 non-Hispanic white adults (22.7%).
- Adults who were poor were more likely than adults who were not poor to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 55–64 years, poor adults (30.7%) were nearly twice as likely as adults who were not poor (16.4%) to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 65 years and over, poor adults (29.0%) were somewhat more likely than adults who were not poor (22.1%) to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months.
- Among adults aged 55–64 years, those who had public insurance (39.2%) were more than twice as likely as those who were uninsured (16.8%) and those who had private insurance (16.4%) to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 65 years and older, those who had public insurance were more likely than those who had private insurance and Medicare only to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 65–74 years and 75–84 years, more than one-third of adults with public insurance visited an emergency room in the past 12 months compared with fewer than 1 in 4 adults who had Medicare only or private insurance. Among adults aged 85 years and over, 44.2% of adults with public insurance visited an emergency room in the past 12 months compared with 31.9% of adults with private insurance and 27.8% of adults with Medicare only.
- Formerly married adults were more likely than those who were currently married to have visited an emergency room in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 55–64 years, 22.9% of those who were formerly married visited an emergency room in the past 12 months compared with 16.8% who were currently married. Among adults aged 65 years and over, 26.1% of those who were formerly married visited an emergency room in the past 12 months compared with 21.2% of adults who were currently married.

Home care

- Overall, adults aged 85 years and over (17.0%) were eight times as likely as adults aged 55–64 years (2.1%) to have utilized home care in the past 12 months.
- Among adults aged 75–84 years and 85 years and over, women were more likely than men to have utilized home care in the past 12 months.
- Adults who were poor were more likely than those who were not poor to have utilized home care in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 55–64 years, adults who were poor (5.5%) were five times as likely as those who were not poor (1.4%) to have utilized home care in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 65 years and over, those who were poor (10.8%) were nearly twice as likely as those who were not poor (5.6%) to have utilized home care in the past 12 months.
- Adults who had public insurance were more likely than those with

private insurance to have utilized home care in the past 12 months. Among adults aged 55–64 years, those who had public insurance (9.9%) were more than six times as likely as those with private insurance (1.5%) to have utilized home care in the past 12 months. Among adults 65 years and over, those who had public insurance (17.6%) were three times as likely as adults with private insurance (5.9%) to have utilized home care in the past 12 months. Among adults 85 years and over, those who had public insurance (33.2%) were nearly twice as likely as those with private insurance (16.1%) and Medicare only (15.4%) to have utilized home care in the past 12 months.

Health behaviors (Table 4)

Leisure-time physical activity

- About one-half of adults aged 55 years and over (51.7%) engaged in at least some light, moderate, or vigorous leisure-time physical activity—whether regularly or irregularly—ranging from over one-half of adults aged 55–64 years to about one-fourth of adults aged 85 years and over.
- Differences between men and women in rates of participation in any leisure-time physical activity varied by age. Among adults aged 55–64 years, rates of participation were about the same for men (58.1%) and women (57.1%). Among adults aged 65 years and over, men (52.6%) were more likely than women (43.3%) to participate in leisure-time physical activities.
- Non-Hispanic white adults and non-Hispanic Asian adults were more likely than non-Hispanic black adults or Hispanic adults to engage in at least some leisure-time physical activity. Among adults aged 55–64 years, about 6 in 10 non-Hispanic white adults (60.8%) and non-Hispanic Asian adults (58.0%) engaged in some leisure-time physical activity compared with about 4 in 10 non-Hispanic black adults (43.5%) and Hispanic adults (41.9%). Among adults aged 65 years and over, about

5 in 10 non-Hispanic white adults (49.3%) and 6 in 10 non-Hispanic Asian adults (59.3%) engaged in leisure-time physical activity compared with about 3 in 10 non-Hispanic black adults (31.7%) and Hispanic adults (35.8%).

- Adults who were not poor were more likely than those who were poor to engage in leisure-time physical activity. Among adults 55–64 years, two-thirds of adults who were not poor (66.3%) engaged in some type of leisure-time physical activity compared with about one-third of those who were poor (36.4%). Among adults 65 years and over, 6 in 10 adults who were not poor (58.6%) engaged in some type of leisure-time activity compared with about 3 in 10 of those who were poor (29.7%). Among adults aged 85 years and over, one-third of adults who were not poor (33.7%) engaged in some leisure-time physical activity compared with 21.9% of poor adults.
- Adults who had private health insurance coverage were about twice as likely as those with public coverage to engage in some level of leisure-time physical activity.
- Currently married adults were more likely than formerly married adults or adults who had never been married to engage in leisure-time physical activity. Among adults aged 55–64 years, 6 in 10 currently married adults (60.2%) engaged in leisure-time physical activities compared with 5 in 10 formerly married adults (50.9%) and never married adults (52.9%). Among adults aged 65 years and over, about 5 in 10 currently married adults (52.6%) engaged in some leisure-time physical activity compared with 4 in 10 formerly married adults (40.2%) and never married adults (41.9%).

Regular leisure-time physical activity

- Overall, about 1 in 4 adults aged 55 years and over (24.7%) engaged in regular leisure-time physical activity. The prevalence of engaging in regular leisure-time physical activity was about the same for adults 55–64 years

(28.1%) and 65–74 years (26.9%), but was markedly lower among adults 75–84 years (18.7%) and those aged 85 years and over (8.2%).

- Men were more likely than women to engage in regular leisure-time physical activity, with the greatest differences found in the oldest age groups. Among adults 55–64 years, men (29.9%) were somewhat more likely than women (26.5%) to engage in regular leisure-time physical activity. Among adults aged 75–84 years, men (24.2%) were about one and one-half times as likely as women (15.0%) to engage in regular leisure-time physical activity. Among adults aged 85 years and over, men (11.6%) were almost twice as likely as women (6.5%) to engage in regular leisure-time physical activity.
- Among adults under age 85 years, non-Hispanic white adults and non-Hispanic Asian adults were more likely than non-Hispanic black adults and Hispanic adults to engage in regular leisure-time physical activity (Table 4 and Figure 5).
- Except for adults in the oldest age group, adults who were not poor were at least twice as likely as poor adults in the same age group to engage in regular leisure-time physical activity.
- Adults who had private health insurance were generally more likely than adults without private coverage to engage in regular leisure-time physical activity.
- Prevalence of regular leisure-time physical activity was generally higher among currently married adults than among formerly married adults and those who had never been married for all age groups under 85 years.

Strengthening activities

- Rates of participation in activities designed to strengthen muscles were low among adults in all age groups 55 years and over, ranging from 17.2% of adults aged 55–64 years to 7.2% of adults aged 85 years and over.
- Adults who were not poor were two to three times as likely as poor adults to engage in strengthening activities. Among adults aged 55–64

years, about 1 in 5 adults who were not poor (21.4%) engaged in strengthening activities compared with fewer than 1 in 10 poor adults (7.9%). Among adults aged 65 years and over, 16.5% of adults who were not poor did strengthening exercises compared with 6.8% of poor adults. Among adults aged 85 years and over, 12.1% of adults who were not poor did strengthening activities compared with 4.0% of poor adults.

Healthy weight

- Overall, about one-third of adults aged 55 years and over (35.3%) were a healthy weight, ranging from 3 in 10 adults aged 55–64 years (30.6%) to more than 5 in 10 adults aged 85 years and over (56.0%).
- Women were more likely than men to be a healthy weight except among adults aged 85 years and over for whom no sex differences were found.
- Non-Hispanic Asian adults were the most likely and non-Hispanic black and Hispanic adults were the least likely to be a healthy weight across the age groups studied. More than 60 percent of non-Hispanic Asian adults in each age group had a body weight for height that was in the healthy range.

Cigarette smoking: never smoked

- Overall, nearly one-half of adults aged 55 years and over (48.1%) had never smoked cigarettes. Estimates for never having smoked cigarettes ranged from 44.2% among adults aged 55–64 years to 66.6% of adults aged 85 years and over.
- Women were more likely than men to have never smoked cigarettes in each of the age groups studied. Among adults aged 55–64 years, over one-half of women (53.4%) had never smoked compared with about one-third of men (34.2%). Among adults aged 75–84 years, about two-thirds of women (66.8%) had never smoked compared with about one-third of men (34.9%). Among adults aged 85 years and over, about three-fourths of women (76.6%) had never smoked cigarettes compared with about one-half of men (47.4%).

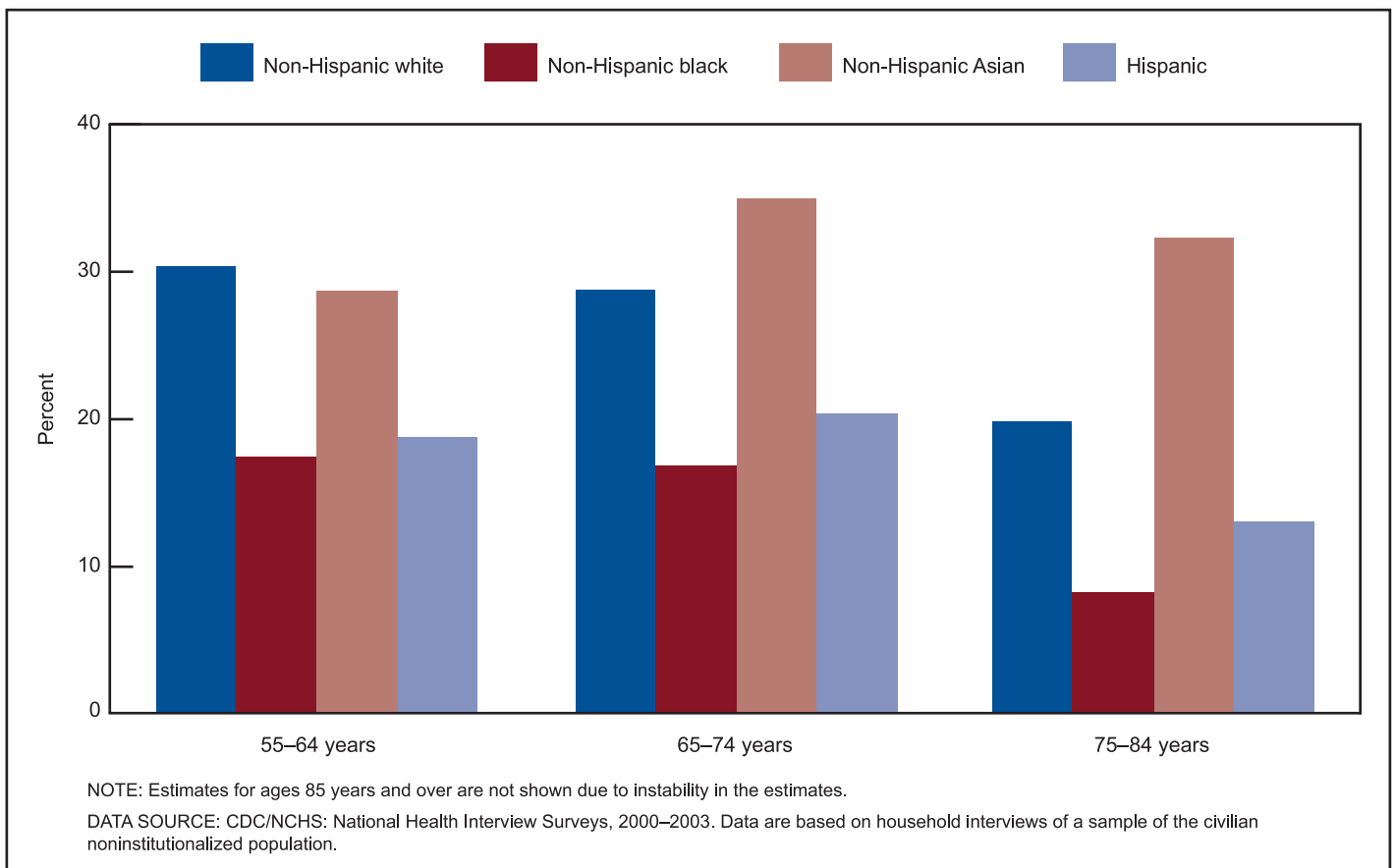


Figure 5. Percentage of older adults who engaged in regular leisure-time physical activity, by age, race and Hispanic ethnicity: United States, 2000–2003

- In the age groups 55–64 years and 65–74 years, non-Hispanic Asian adults and Hispanic adults were more likely than non-Hispanic black adults or non-Hispanic white adults to have never smoked cigarettes.

Cigarette smoking: nonsmokers

- Prevalence of being a current nonsmoker (that is, never smoked or a former smoker) was very high among adults aged 55 years over (85.6%), increasing from 79.3% among adults aged 55–64 years to 97.4% among adults aged 85 years and over.
- Among adults aged 55–64 years and 65–74 years, women were more likely than men to be nonsmokers. In the two oldest age groups, men and women were about equally likely to be nonsmokers.
- Adults who had private health insurance were more likely than those with public coverage to be nonsmokers. Among adults 55–64 years, 82.1% of those who had private health insurance coverage were nonsmokers compared with 67.7% of adults with public coverage and 72.0% of those who were uninsured. Among adults aged 65 years and over, adults with private health insurance coverage (91.7%) and those with Medicare only (89.2%) were more likely than adults with public coverage (85.5%) to be nonsmokers.
- Currently married adults were more likely than formerly married adults to be nonsmokers in every age group except ages 85 years and over. Differences were most notable among adults aged 55–64 years: 82.6% of currently married adults in this age group were nonsmokers compared with 70.0% of formerly married adults.

Discussion

The findings presented in this report are based on interviews with adults

living in households across the United States. Although the NHIS sample includes a few residential assisted-living units, for the most part the interviewed sample consists of adults who can manage in a regular household setting—either on their own or with the help of other household members or paid caregivers. Adults unable to manage in the home are living in nursing homes or other institutional settings and are out of scope for NHIS. This context should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings presented.

Overall, prevalence rates for fair or poor health, chronic health conditions (with the exception of diabetes), sensory impairments, and difficulties with physical and social activities increased with advancing age, doubling or tripling between the age groups 55–64 years and 85 years and over. Sociodemographic variations in health characteristics were found in each of the older age groups studied, although they were not always the same across age groups. For

example, among adults aged 65 years and over, women were more likely than men to have hypertension, but men were more likely to have heart disease. Men aged 55–64 years (29.6%) were about twice as likely as women (15.7%) in the same age group to have hearing impairment, with the gap narrowing considerably among men (63.0%) and women (55.4%) aged 85 years and over. Although men and women were about equally likely to be in fair or poor health across the age groups studied, women generally were more likely to have difficulty with physical or social activities. In interpreting the findings presented in this report, the reader should be mindful not only of the selectivity of the older adult household population mentioned earlier, but also of the differences in the survival of men and women in these older age groups, which may affect prevalence of conditions, impairments, and limitations for the two groups.

Race and ethnicity differences were found for most health indicators, although the groups with the higher rates of health problems varied. Non-Hispanic black adults had higher rates of hypertension than non-Hispanic white adults, but non-Hispanic white adults had higher rates of heart disease. Prevalence of difficulties with many of the physical or social activities was highest for non-Hispanic black adults and, in many cases, similar for Hispanic adults and non-Hispanic white adults. Non-Hispanic white adults were considerably more likely than non-Hispanic black adults to have gotten a flu shot and to have visited a dentist, but non-Hispanic black adults were more likely to have had an emergency room visit. Non-Hispanic white adults were more likely than non-Hispanic black adults to be physically active in leisure time and to be a healthy weight. However, non-Hispanic black adults were more likely than non-Hispanic white adults to have never smoked cigarettes.

The most consistent and striking findings are the health differences by poverty status and health insurance coverage. Poor and near poor adults and those with public health insurance were, by far, the most disadvantaged groups of

older adults. This report shows that older adults who were poor or nearly poor and those who lacked private health insurance had much higher rates of health problems, much lower rates of immunizations and dental care utilization, and lower rates of healthy behaviors than adults who were not poor and those who had private health insurance coverage. The causal direction of the association of health status, poverty, and health insurance coverage cannot be determined here. That is, whether these older adults were sick because they were poor, poor because they were sick, or both, cannot be determined with cross-sectional data. This limitation in identifying causation also applies to the relationship between public health insurance coverage and health status. In addition, it is likely that many of the demographic and health variables are correlated. In particular, income and health insurance are highly correlated. Future studies using multivariate models would improve understanding of the relationship of these factors. However, even in the absence of such studies, analyses identifying and monitoring differences in subpopulations serve a useful purpose in public health research.

Married adults generally were less likely to be in fair or poor health and less likely to have difficulty with physical and social activities than formerly married (widowed or divorced) adults, although, in some cases, the differences disappeared at the oldest ages. Currently married adults were more likely than formerly married adults to have gotten a flu shot and to have been to a dentist; among adults aged 65 years and over, currently married adults also were more likely than formerly married adults to have gotten a pneumonia shot. Currently married adults were more likely to engage in leisure-time physical activities, but were less likely to be a healthy weight than formerly married adults. Among adults aged 55–64 years, those who were currently married were much more likely to be nonsmokers but the marital status differences in this behavior diminished and eventually disappeared

with advancing age—a stage of life when smoking is rare.

Conclusions

Much remains to be studied and learned about healthy aging. Clearly, some groups are more advantaged than others when it comes to health status, chronic health conditions, utilization of health services, and personal health behaviors. Prevalence rates for many chronic health conditions were highest for the oldest age groups. Among adults aged 65 years and over—most of whom are eligible for Medicare—use of physician services was high. Utilization was lower among adults under age 65 years. Use of preventive health and dental services was highest among adults who are not poor.

Adoption of healthy behaviors was greater in some groups of older adults than others. Adults who were not poor were most likely to engage in life-enhancing behaviors such as leisure-time physical activity, abstinence from smoking and, for those aged 65 years and over, maintenance of healthy body weight. Although some declines in health with normal aging are inevitable, a better understanding of the disparities in health status, access to health services, and prevalence of health-promoting behaviors that exist among the Nation's older adults can help government and private agencies pinpoint areas of greatest need and greatest opportunity.

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Table 1. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health status, condition, or impairment, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003

Selected characteristic	Population	Health status, condition, or impairment						
		Fair or poor health ¹	Hypertension ²	Heart disease ³	Diabetes ⁴	Hearing impairment ⁵	Vision impairment ⁶	Lost all natural teeth ⁷
		Percent ⁹ (standard error)						
	Number in thousands ⁸							
Ages 55 years and over	58,529	23.2 (0.31)	44.9 (0.31)	25.0 (0.27)	14.5 (0.22)	31.5 (0.31)	14.6 (0.25)	21.6 (0.30)
55–64 years	25,310	19.6 (0.39)	38.0 (0.46)	17.0 (0.37)	12.6 (0.33)	22.3 (0.41)	11.0 (0.29)	13.7 (0.32)
65 years and over	33,219	26.0 (0.39)	50.1 (0.39)	31.1 (0.35)	15.9 (0.28)	38.5 (0.40)	17.4 (0.33)	27.6 (0.42)
65–74 years	17,876	22.9 (0.48)	47.9 (0.54)	26.7 (0.45)	17.0 (0.36)	31.4 (0.54)	13.9 (0.37)	24.0 (0.48)
75–84 years	12,075	28.5 (0.59)	53.2 (0.65)	35.6 (0.60)	15.5 (0.47)	43.9 (0.60)	19.1 (0.48)	29.5 (0.65)
85 years and over	3,268	33.6 (1.04)	50.5 (1.16)	38.5 (1.00)	11.0 (0.68)	58.0 (1.21)	30.3 (1.09)	40.2 (1.19)
55–64 years								
Sex:								
Men	12,100	19.3 (0.57)	38.7 (0.66)	19.7 (0.57)	14.1 (0.51)	29.6 (0.59)	9.5 (0.39)	13.4 (0.45)
Women	13,210	19.8 (0.49)	37.4 (0.62)	14.6 (0.47)	11.3 (0.37)	15.7 (0.46)	12.4 (0.41)	13.9 (0.45)
Race and Hispanic origin: ¹⁰								
White, not-Hispanic	20,008	16.8 (0.41)	36.0 (0.55)	17.4 (0.41)	10.7 (0.34)	24.2 (0.48)	10.3 (0.33)	13.9 (0.37)
Black, not-Hispanic	2,379	33.9 (1.32)	55.9 (1.28)	17.6 (0.96)	21.5 (1.07)	13.2 (0.95)	15.2 (1.02)	14.3 (0.82)
Asian, not-Hispanic	613	15.0 (2.42)	31.8 (2.99)	9.4 (2.06)	12.5 (2.26)	13.8 (2.38)	8.1 (1.49)	9.6 (1.78)
Hispanic	1,931	29.6 (1.35)	36.9 (1.42)	12.8 (1.00)	19.7 (1.19)	14.4 (1.08)	12.2 (0.97)	10.8 (0.90)
Poverty status: ¹¹								
Poor	1,694	51.1 (1.54)	49.9 (1.58)	27.5 (1.51)	21.2 (1.37)	28.0 (1.53)	22.4 (1.20)	27.0 (1.32)
Near poor	2,425	37.3 (1.35)	43.8 (1.34)	21.0 (1.08)	19.2 (1.02)	23.2 (1.20)	18.2 (1.01)	24.6 (1.26)
Not poor	14,228	12.6 (0.43)	36.5 (0.62)	15.9 (0.46)	10.4 (0.39)	23.0 (0.53)	9.3 (0.37)	10.7 (0.39)
Health insurance coverage: ¹²								
Private	19,443	13.1 (0.36)	36.0 (0.55)	15.3 (0.43)	11.0 (0.35)	21.6 (0.43)	9.0 (0.30)	10.7 (0.34)
Medicaid/other public	1,401	67.3 (1.65)	57.8 (1.74)	34.2 (1.80)	29.0 (1.59)	27.9 (1.65)	25.6 (1.45)	33.0 (1.70)
Uninsured	2,750	26.6 (1.22)	33.6 (1.23)	12.4 (0.89)	11.9 (0.80)	20.0 (1.01)	13.9 (0.87)	18.8 (1.06)
Marital status: ¹³								
Currently married	17,845	17.3 (0.44)	37.4 (0.56)	16.8 (0.44)	12.5 (0.42)	23.3 (0.51)	9.8 (0.34)	12.2 (0.39)
Formerly married	5,568	25.8 (0.67)	39.9 (0.75)	18.4 (0.67)	13.0 (0.50)	21.0 (0.74)	14.5 (0.58)	18.1 (0.68)
Never married	1,172	23.2 (1.43)	39.6 (1.73)	14.8 (1.12)	13.6 (1.14)	16.0 (1.18)	13.6 (1.24)	13.8 (1.18)
65 years and over								
Sex:								
Men	14,147	26.4 (0.52)	46.7 (0.65)	36.3 (0.56)	18.1 (0.50)	47.5 (0.67)	16.0 (0.44)	26.2 (0.56)
Women	19,072	25.7 (0.50)	52.6 (0.50)	27.2 (0.44)	14.2 (0.33)	31.9 (0.45)	18.5 (0.43)	28.6 (0.50)
Race and Hispanic origin: ¹⁰								
White, not-Hispanic	27,529	23.5 (0.41)	48.5 (0.42)	32.4 (0.38)	14.4 (0.31)	41.0 (0.44)	17.0 (0.35)	26.7 (0.47)
Black, not-Hispanic	2,685	41.1 (1.37)	66.9 (1.01)	25.8 (1.08)	24.2 (0.93)	24.4 (1.01)	20.5 (1.13)	35.4 (1.13)
Asian, not-Hispanic	649	25.7 (2.38)	53.5 (2.55)	24.6 (2.87)	14.6 (2.01)	34.0 (2.37)	15.2 (2.15)	24.3 (2.79)
Hispanic	2,015	39.6 (1.38)	46.9 (1.34)	21.5 (1.16)	23.5 (0.97)	24.5 (1.20)	19.1 (1.32)	28.7 (1.20)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health status, condition, or impairment, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Health status, condition, or impairment							
		Fair or poor health ¹	Hypertension ²	Heart disease ³	Diabetes ⁴	Hearing impairment ⁵	Vision impairment ⁶	Lost all natural teeth ⁷	
65 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ⁸	Percent ⁹ (standard error)							
Poverty status:¹¹									
Poor	2,479	42.5 (1.16)	56.2 (1.19)	32.7 (1.20)	20.4 (0.95)	36.8 (1.24)	24.7 (1.07)	44.6 (1.18)	
Near poor	6,083	33.8 (0.77)	55.2 (0.82)	33.5 (0.81)	18.4 (0.64)	40.6 (0.87)	22.4 (0.70)	38.2 (0.94)	
Not poor	12,791	19.7 (0.53)	48.6 (0.61)	31.2 (0.57)	14.8 (0.49)	40.0 (0.63)	15.7 (0.49)	20.9 (0.55)	
Health insurance coverage:¹²									
Private (with and without Medicare).	21,095	22.0 (0.47)	49.6 (0.49)	32.1 (0.41)	15.0 (0.37)	39.6 (0.50)	16.0 (0.38)	24.1 (0.49)	
Medicare/other public only	1,989	55.4 (1.39)	63.1 (1.44)	38.7 (1.26)	26.7 (1.17)	38.3 (1.41)	29.3 (1.41)	46.6 (1.30)	
Medicare only	7,953	27.8 (0.70)	48.6 (0.71)	27.3 (0.68)	14.8 (0.49)	35.9 (0.73)	17.3 (0.65)	30.8 (0.72)	
Marital status:¹³									
Currently married	18,456	24.4 (0.53)	47.6 (0.55)	31.6 (0.49)	16.1 (0.42)	38.7 (0.57)	15.0 (0.40)	22.6 (0.53)	
Formerly married	13,160	28.4 (0.53)	53.2 (0.53)	31.1 (0.48)	15.7 (0.37)	38.8 (0.52)	21.1 (0.50)	34.8 (0.52)	
Never married	1,177	24.8 (1.44)	53.4 (1.56)	23.9 (1.45)	13.7 (1.09)	34.4 (1.54)	17.1 (1.27)	26.9 (1.58)	
65–74 years									
Sex:									
Men	8,116	23.5 (0.68)	46.7 (0.84)	31.7 (0.72)	19.4 (0.63)	40.9 (0.88)	12.9 (0.56)	23.7 (0.66)	
Women	9,760	22.5 (0.61)	48.9 (0.69)	22.5 (0.56)	15.1 (0.46)	23.5 (0.57)	14.6 (0.51)	24.1 (0.60)	
Race and Hispanic origin:¹⁰									
White, not-Hispanic.	14,440	20.1 (0.53)	46.0 (0.57)	27.8 (0.51)	15.2 (0.41)	33.9 (0.61)	13.2 (0.41)	23.5 (0.54)	
Black, not-Hispanic.	1,578	37.0 (1.72)	65.5 (1.38)	23.3 (1.23)	26.5 (1.31)	18.9 (1.18)	17.0 (1.16)	29.3 (1.43)	
Asian, not-Hispanic.	378	19.8 (3.08)	51.6 (3.65)	19.0 (3.28)	14.7 (2.73)	24.0 (3.37)	12.9 (2.59)	15.5 (2.81)	
Hispanic	1,287	37.1 (1.58)	45.6 (1.66)	19.1 (1.35)	24.2 (1.28)	18.7 (1.36)	16.1 (1.34)	23.4 (1.43)	
Poverty status:¹¹									
Poor	1,284	41.7 (1.63)	55.2 (1.67)	29.0 (1.53)	21.6 (1.21)	29.9 (1.59)	21.1 (1.34)	41.4 (1.62)	
Near poor	2,897	33.9 (1.11)	54.9 (1.17)	30.6 (1.15)	21.3 (0.97)	33.3 (1.25)	19.3 (0.97)	35.5 (1.31)	
Not poor	7,594	16.9 (0.61)	46.4 (0.77)	26.9 (0.67)	15.3 (0.59)	33.4 (0.78)	12.8 (0.60)	18.4 (0.65)	
Health insurance coverage:¹²									
Private (with and without Medicare).	11,326	18.6 (0.57)	47.1 (0.67)	27.4 (0.57)	16.1 (0.49)	32.5 (0.67)	12.3 (0.45)	20.8 (0.59)	
Medicare/other public only	1,036	53.3 (1.81)	60.7 (1.98)	36.6 (1.71)	27.4 (1.56)	31.9 (1.76)	26.2 (1.64)	43.1 (1.84)	
Medicare only	4,190	25.4 (0.94)	47.3 (1.03)	23.6 (0.83)	15.9 (0.73)	28.4 (0.96)	13.5 (0.71)	25.9 (0.93)	
Marital status:¹³									
Currently married	11,595	21.6 (0.62)	46.2 (0.69)	27.3 (0.61)	16.7 (0.50)	33.3 (0.71)	12.6 (0.47)	20.9 (0.60)	
Formerly married	5,368	25.5 (0.71)	50.8 (0.83)	26.0 (0.66)	17.7 (0.55)	27.7 (0.75)	16.6 (0.62)	30.5 (0.72)	
Never married	629	23.7 (1.98)	53.8 (2.23)	21.7 (1.95)	17.6 (1.65)	29.6 (2.22)	14.2 (1.40)	24.6 (2.16)	

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health status, condition, or impairment, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Health status, condition, or impairment							
		Fair or poor health ¹	Hypertension ²	Heart disease ³	Diabetes ⁴	Hearing impairment ⁵	Vision impairment ⁶	Lost all natural teeth ⁷	
75–84 years	Number in thousands ⁸	Percent ⁹ (standard error)							
Sex:									
Men	4,905	29.0 (0.87)	48.1 (1.03)	42.9 (1.03)	17.4 (0.76)	54.9 (1.01)	17.9 (0.75)	27.6 (0.94)	
Women	7,170	28.2 (0.74)	56.6 (0.80)	30.6 (0.70)	14.2 (0.57)	36.4 (0.75)	20.0 (0.64)	30.9 (0.77)	
Race and Hispanic origin:¹⁰									
White, not-Hispanic.	10,294	26.2 (0.61)	51.7 (0.69)	36.7 (0.67)	14.4 (0.51)	45.8 (0.63)	18.7 (0.50)	28.2 (0.71)	
Black, not-Hispanic.	869	46.5 (2.02)	71.0 (1.87)	30.1 (1.72)	21.9 (1.77)	29.8 (1.93)	24.1 (2.01)	39.5 (1.89)	
Asian, not-Hispanic.	205	30.3 (4.21)	58.6 (5.06)	33.4 (4.94)	14.6 (3.59)	39.8 (5.00)	15.3 (3.40)	36.2 (4.53)	
Hispanic	593	42.3 (2.54)	49.3 (2.36)	25.8 (1.87)	23.5 (2.25)	32.7 (2.46)	21.4 (2.44)	35.4 (2.14)	
Poverty status:¹¹									
Poor	892	43.0 (1.83)	57.1 (1.81)	36.6 (1.90)	21.2 (1.55)	40.5 (1.97)	25.5 (1.73)	47.3 (2.14)	
Near poor	2,500	33.8 (1.27)	56.7 (1.27)	35.5 (1.24)	16.5 (0.93)	43.6 (1.19)	23.1 (1.09)	39.1 (1.28)	
Not poor	4,308	22.2 (0.94)	52.1 (1.11)	36.6 (1.03)	14.6 (0.85)	47.5 (1.07)	18.1 (0.83)	22.9 (0.98)	
Health insurance coverage:¹²									
Private (with and without Medicare).	7,796	24.9 (0.72)	52.6 (0.83)	36.7 (0.72)	14.8 (0.60)	45.0 (0.78)	18.0 (0.57)	26.3 (0.75)	
Medicare/other public only	724	59.0 (2.27)	66.9 (2.14)	41.2 (2.01)	26.7 (1.87)	39.9 (2.23)	28.8 (2.33)	47.6 (2.43)	
Medicare only	2,828	29.3 (1.09)	51.5 (1.20)	31.3 (1.22)	14.9 (0.83)	40.8 (1.14)	19.1 (1.04)	33.0 (1.16)	
Marital status:¹³									
Currently married	6,030	28.2 (0.84)	50.6 (0.99)	38.4 (0.91)	15.9 (0.72)	46.9 (0.94)	18.0 (0.66)	24.5 (0.93)	
Formerly married	5,508	29.1 (0.76)	55.8 (0.82)	33.4 (0.77)	15.4 (0.61)	41.2 (0.76)	20.8 (0.71)	35.4 (0.79)	
Never married	414	27.2 (2.47)	55.5 (2.65)	26.3 (2.49)	10.1 (1.53)	36.7 (2.65)	17.0 (2.21)	27.5 (2.43)	
85 years and over									
Sex:									
Men	1,126	35.9 (1.82)	40.3 (1.99)	40.3 (1.85)	11.8 (1.23)	63.0 (2.14)	29.3 (1.84)	37.4 (1.82)	
Women	2,142	32.4 (1.26)	56.0 (1.40)	37.5 (1.24)	10.6 (0.85)	55.4 (1.37)	30.8 (1.36)	41.7 (1.47)	
Race and Hispanic origin:¹⁰									
White, not-Hispanic.	2,795	31.0 (1.08)	49.6 (1.30)	40.4 (1.09)	10.1 (0.72)	59.9 (1.28)	29.7 (1.15)	37.9 (1.28)	
Black, not-Hispanic.	238	48.5 (3.88)	61.3 (3.23)	26.6 (3.45)	16.9 (2.82)	41.3 (3.70)	31.0 (3.43)	60.4 (3.17)	
Asian, not-Hispanic.	66	45.6 (9.64)	49.3 (10.25)	*29.3 (9.46)	*13.6 (5.80)	73.0 (8.49)	27.4 (8.21)	37.4 (9.30)	
Hispanic	135	52.6 (4.93)	48.4 (4.66)	25.7 (4.07)	16.8 (3.83)	44.0 (5.40)	37.6 (5.06)	49.8 (5.25)	
Poverty status:¹¹									
Poor	303	44.2 (2.92)	57.7 (3.25)	37.0 (2.57)	13.0 (2.01)	55.5 (2.92)	37.2 (3.08)	50.3 (2.90)	
Near poor	686	33.8 (2.22)	51.0 (2.46)	38.6 (2.31)	13.1 (1.68)	60.6 (2.27)	32.5 (2.11)	46.6 (2.30)	
Not poor	890	31.4 (2.27)	49.9 (2.34)	41.6 (2.35)	11.3 (1.48)	60.1 (2.47)	28.0 (2.28)	32.0 (2.05)	
Health insurance coverage:¹²									
Private (with and without Medicare).	1,972	29.8 (1.28)	52.3 (1.51)	41.5 (1.39)	9.9 (0.83)	59.0 (1.52)	29.2 (1.39)	34.9 (1.43)	
Medicare/other public only	229	54.1 (3.52)	62.3 (4.01)	40.8 (3.94)	23.7 (3.85)	62.5 (3.73)	45.0 (3.90)	58.8 (3.76)	
Medicare only	935	34.1 (2.12)	45.1 (2.06)	32.0 (1.96)	9.8 (1.24)	54.9 (2.24)	28.5 (2.10)	45.9 (2.14)	

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health status, condition, or impairment, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Health status, condition, or impairment							
		Fair or poor health ¹	Hypertension ²	Heart disease ³	Diabetes ⁴	Hearing impairment ⁵	Vision impairment ⁶	Lost all natural teeth ⁷	
85 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ⁸	Percent ⁹ (standard error)							
Marital status:¹³									
Currently married	831	35.8 (2.46)	45.8 (2.56)	42.3 (2.49)	10.1 (1.38)	55.8 (2.82)	25.8 (2.02)	31.8 (2.37)	
Formerly married	2,284	33.3 (1.18)	52.4 (1.32)	37.6 (1.16)	11.4 (0.83)	59.3 (1.22)	32.0 (1.33)	43.6 (1.42)	
Never married	134	22.6 (3.97)	44.9 (5.13)	27.0 (4.11)	*6.3 (2.03)	50.6 (4.74)	30.9 (4.87)	36.0 (4.69)	

* Estimates preceded by an asterisk have a relative standard error of greater than 30% and less than or equal to 50%. These should be interpreted with caution as they do not meet the standard of reliability or precision.

¹Based on the question, "Would you say [your/subject name's] health in general is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?" This information was obtained during the family interview and therefore could have been proxy reported.

²Had been told on two or more different visits that they had hypertension or high blood pressure.

³Ever told by a doctor or other health professional that they had coronary heart disease, angina pectoris, heart attack, or any other heart condition or disease.

⁴Based on the question, "Have you ever been told by a doctor or other health professional that you had diabetes or sugar diabetes?" (excludes during pregnancy). Responses of "borderline" were treated as unknown and excluded from the analysis.

⁵Based on the question, "Which statement best describes your hearing without a hearing aid: good, a little trouble, a lot of trouble, deaf?" Adults who responded a "little trouble," "a lot of trouble," or "deaf" were classified as having hearing impairment.

⁶Based on the question, "Do you have any trouble seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses?" Adults who responded "yes" were classified as having vision impairment.

⁷Based on the question, "Have you lost all your upper and lower natural (permanent) teeth?"

⁸Includes adults with unknown health characteristics.

⁹Unknowns for the columns were not included in the denominators when calculating percents (see "Technical Notes").

¹⁰Races shown are single race only. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Other race categories are not shown separately due to small sample sizes.

¹¹Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty thresholds for the previous calendar year. "Poor" persons are those with family incomes below the poverty threshold. "Near poor" persons had incomes of 100% to less than 200% of the poverty threshold. "Not poor" persons had incomes that were 200% of the poverty threshold or greater.

¹²Classification of health insurance coverage differs for persons below and above age 65 years: For persons under age 65 years, "private insurance" includes all adults who have any private coverage. The category "Medicaid or other public" includes those with Medicaid or other public health insurance coverage (e.g., most State-sponsored coverage). The category "uninsured" includes adults who had no health insurance coverage (including those covered only by the Indian Health Service). For persons aged 65 years and over, "private insurance" includes all persons who had private coverage, including those who also had Medicare. "Public coverage" for this age group, similarly, includes adults who also may be covered by Medicare. The category "Medicare only" includes adults who have no other health insurance coverage. Because of the near universal coverage for adults aged 65 years and over, due to Medicare, the sample size for the category "uninsured" is very small and is not shown separately for this age group.

¹³Marital status categories include: married (living with or without spouse); formerly married (widowed, divorced, separated); and never married. Adults living with a partner are not shown separately due to small sample size.

NOTE: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population.

Table 2. Number of adults aged 55 years and over and percentage (with standard errors) who had some difficulty with physical or social functioning, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003

Selected characteristic	Population	Physical and social activities that are at least somewhat difficult ¹													
		Walking 1/4 mile	Walking up 10 steps	Standing for 2 hours	Sitting for 2 hours	Stooping or bending	Reaching	Grasping	Carrying 10 pounds	Pushing or pulling large objects	Shopping	Socializing	Relaxing		
		Number in thousands ²		Percent ³ (standard error)											
Ages 55 years and over	58,529	23.8 (0.28)	18.6 (0.27)	27.6 (0.30)	10.5 (0.19)	29.2 (0.31)	10.9 (0.20)	9.4 (0.20)	15.0 (0.25)	20.5 (0.28)	12.4 (0.22)	9.4 (0.19)	4.0 (0.13)		
55–64 years	25,310	16.5 (0.38)	12.9 (0.32)	20.3 (0.40)	10.3 (0.28)	22.2 (0.43)	8.7 (0.27)	7.4 (0.25)	10.9 (0.28)	15.5 (0.33)	9.0 (0.28)	6.5 (0.22)	3.1 (0.16)		
65 years and over	33,219	29.6 (0.38)	23.2 (0.37)	33.4 (0.40)	10.6 (0.25)	34.6 (0.41)	12.7 (0.28)	11.0 (0.27)	18.1 (0.35)	24.5 (0.40)	15.1 (0.32)	11.7 (0.27)	4.7 (0.18)		
65–74 years	17,876	22.4 (0.43)	17.4 (0.41)	25.7 (0.46)	9.1 (0.31)	29.2 (0.51)	9.9 (0.32)	8.4 (0.28)	12.9 (0.36)	19.0 (0.45)	10.5 (0.33)	7.8 (0.31)	3.1 (0.18)		
75–84 years	12,075	34.2 (0.63)	26.2 (0.58)	38.8 (0.68)	11.3 (0.42)	38.1 (0.65)	14.1 (0.48)	12.3 (0.45)	20.9 (0.55)	27.7 (0.61)	17.2 (0.48)	13.1 (0.41)	5.3 (0.28)		
85 years and over	3,268	56.0 (1.20)	46.2 (1.17)	59.6 (1.16)	16.1 (0.87)	52.4 (1.14)	23.3 (0.98)	20.6 (1.00)	38.5 (1.24)	46.6 (1.32)	35.8 (1.23)	29.2 (1.22)	11.6 (0.82)		
55–64 years															
Sex:															
Men	12,100	14.0 (0.50)	10.3 (0.42)	17.1 (0.55)	7.9 (0.39)	18.5 (0.58)	7.5 (0.40)	5.9 (0.33)	7.6 (0.39)	11.4 (0.44)	7.2 (0.39)	5.3 (0.32)	2.6 (0.21)		
Women	13,210	18.8 (0.51)	15.3 (0.46)	23.2 (0.53)	12.5 (0.38)	25.6 (0.57)	9.8 (0.37)	8.8 (0.33)	14.0 (0.41)	19.3 (0.45)	10.6 (0.39)	7.6 (0.31)	3.5 (0.22)		
Race and Hispanic origin: ⁴															
White, not-Hispanic	20,008	15.5 (0.42)	11.5 (0.35)	19.6 (0.45)	9.9 (0.33)	21.9 (0.49)	8.2 (0.30)	7.0 (0.28)	9.9 (0.31)	14.8 (0.37)	8.5 (0.31)	6.0 (0.24)	2.7 (0.17)		
Black, not-Hispanic	2,379	25.6 (1.07)	22.8 (1.04)	28.1 (1.21)	13.3 (0.90)	27.8 (1.14)	12.6 (1.03)	10.0 (0.71)	17.3 (0.98)	21.8 (1.10)	13.5 (0.91)	10.7 (0.82)	5.5 (0.66)		
Asian, not-Hispanic	613	7.2 (1.51)	4.3 (1.09)	11.9 (1.92)	3.9 (1.12)	10.3 (1.89)	3.7 (1.04)	*3.5 (1.21)	6.2 (1.38)	11.0 (2.10)	4.5 (1.07)	*3.0 (1.10)	†		
Hispanic	1,931	16.5 (1.07)	15.7 (0.97)	18.6 (1.12)	11.6 (0.94)	20.2 (1.15)	9.5 (0.85)	8.6 (0.84)	14.3 (0.98)	14.8 (0.95)	8.3 (0.76)	6.5 (0.62)	3.5 (0.42)		
Poverty status: ⁵															
Poor	1,694	42.4 (1.48)	35.5 (1.46)	46.5 (1.55)	24.8 (1.31)	45.2 (1.59)	21.8 (1.19)	17.2 (1.15)	31.1 (1.38)	38.8 (1.61)	25.3 (1.39)	20.7 (1.31)	10.6 (0.97)		
Near poor	2,425	30.8 (1.31)	25.8 (1.32)	35.4 (1.31)	19.3 (1.05)	36.6 (1.27)	16.4 (1.10)	14.6 (0.97)	22.9 (1.23)	30.8 (1.36)	19.3 (1.11)	13.9 (0.94)	6.1 (0.66)		
Not poor	14,228	11.6 (0.41)	8.4 (0.36)	15.4 (0.45)	7.5 (0.31)	18.5 (0.49)	6.0 (0.30)	5.3 (0.28)	7.0 (0.31)	10.9 (0.37)	5.7 (0.29)	3.9 (0.23)	1.7 (0.16)		
Health insurance coverage: ⁶															
Private	19,443	11.8 (0.37)	8.5 (0.33)	15.5 (0.41)	7.4 (0.28)	18.1 (0.47)	5.9 (0.26)	5.3 (0.25)	7.2 (0.27)	11.3 (0.36)	5.8 (0.27)	4.0 (0.22)	1.8 (0.13)		
Medicaid or other public	1,401	55.9 (1.88)	49.1 (1.73)	62.3 (1.77)	33.3 (1.66)	57.0 (1.79)	31.1 (1.61)	23.2 (1.43)	43.5 (1.83)	52.8 (1.79)	37.9 (1.75)	31.2 (1.64)	14.6 (1.21)		
Uninsured	2,750	16.4 (1.01)	12.6 (0.85)	18.9 (1.07)	10.5 (0.83)	21.4 (1.16)	8.6 (0.78)	7.5 (0.74)	10.6 (0.83)	14.4 (0.95)	7.6 (0.77)	5.3 (0.61)	3.1 (0.45)		
Marital status: ⁷															
Currently married	17,845	14.2 (0.43)	10.7 (0.39)	18.0 (0.47)	9.0 (0.33)	20.3 (0.51)	7.7 (0.33)	6.6 (0.30)	9.2 (0.34)	13.5 (0.41)	7.5 (0.33)	5.3 (0.27)	2.4 (0.17)		
Formerly married	5,568	23.1 (0.73)	19.1 (0.63)	26.8 (0.73)	14.1 (0.52)	27.8 (0.74)	11.1 (0.52)	9.7 (0.45)	15.8 (0.57)	21.2 (0.66)	12.8 (0.53)	9.7 (0.48)	4.9 (0.35)		
Never married	1,172	21.4 (1.53)	18.1 (1.42)	23.8 (1.47)	12.0 (1.17)	26.1 (1.57)	10.4 (1.19)	9.8 (1.07)	13.4 (1.14)	17.4 (1.37)	12.8 (1.19)	10.4 (1.11)	4.0 (0.53)		
65 years and over															
Sex:															
Men	14,147	24.4 (0.52)	17.9 (0.45)	28.5 (0.54)	8.7 (0.34)	28.9 (0.55)	9.8 (0.40)	8.4 (0.37)	10.7 (0.38)	16.5 (0.45)	11.3 (0.41)	8.8 (0.35)	3.6 (0.23)		
Women	19,072	33.6 (0.51)	27.2 (0.50)	37.1 (0.50)	12.0 (0.31)	38.9 (0.53)	14.8 (0.36)	12.9 (0.33)	23.7 (0.46)	30.9 (0.53)	18.0 (0.42)	13.8 (0.36)	5.5 (0.24)		
Race and Hispanic origin: ⁴															
White, not-Hispanic	27,529	29.0 (0.40)	21.8 (0.39)	33.1 (0.44)	9.9 (0.28)	34.5 (0.46)	12.0 (0.31)	10.6 (0.29)	16.8 (0.36)	23.7 (0.43)	14.5 (0.34)	10.9 (0.28)	4.2 (0.19)		
Black, not-Hispanic	2,685	39.3 (1.13)	35.2 (1.20)	40.1 (1.24)	14.1 (0.77)	38.7 (1.07)	18.0 (0.89)	15.3 (1.02)	27.5 (1.21)	31.0 (1.27)	21.7 (1.09)	18.4 (1.04)	8.2 (0.59)		
Asian, not-Hispanic	649	21.9 (2.44)	20.2 (2.40)	29.4 (2.81)	12.0 (2.09)	26.3 (2.76)	14.3 (2.37)	9.3 (1.78)	21.5 (2.36)	26.9 (2.54)	13.1 (2.09)	11.1 (1.72)	5.2 (1.23)		
Hispanic	2,015	27.0 (1.08)	26.8 (1.22)	29.8 (1.19)	14.0 (0.87)	32.1 (1.13)	14.4 (0.85)	10.9 (0.79)	21.9 (1.16)	25.4 (1.33)	15.3 (1.00)	13.4 (0.96)	6.3 (0.65)		

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Number of adults aged 55 years and over and percentage (with standard errors) who had some difficulty with physical or social functioning, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Physical and social activities that are at least somewhat difficult ¹													
		Walking 1/4 mile	Walking up 10 steps	Standing for 2 hours	Sitting for 2 hours	Stooping or bending	Reaching	Grasping	Carrying 10 pounds	Pushing or pulling large objects	Shopping	Socializing	Relaxing		
65 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ²	Percent ³ (standard error)													
Poverty status:⁵															
Poor	2,479	45.4 (1.17)	40.8 (1.25)	48.0 (1.31)	18.6 (0.88)	48.8 (1.25)	22.7 (0.94)	17.8 (0.88)	32.6 (1.10)	38.0 (1.30)	26.8 (1.06)	21.7 (0.99)	10.3 (0.74)		
Near poor	6,083	39.0 (0.82)	31.7 (0.75)	43.2 (0.81)	14.2 (0.55)	43.6 (0.81)	16.7 (0.62)	13.9 (0.58)	24.2 (0.72)	32.8 (0.83)	20.4 (0.74)	15.0 (0.63)	5.4 (0.38)		
Not poor	12,791	23.3 (0.56)	16.7 (0.49)	27.9 (0.59)	7.9 (0.35)	30.5 (0.60)	9.6 (0.38)	8.5 (0.35)	12.7 (0.45)	19.6 (0.56)	10.9 (0.41)	7.8 (0.35)	2.9 (0.22)		
Health insurance coverage:⁶															
Private (with and without Medicare)	21,095	26.8 (0.47)	19.4 (0.42)	30.8 (0.49)	8.9 (0.26)	32.4 (0.50)	10.6 (0.31)	9.6 (0.31)	15.2 (0.37)	22.0 (0.51)	12.8 (0.36)	9.5 (0.31)	3.4 (0.19)		
Medicare and other public only	1,989	52.8 (1.38)	49.5 (1.33)	58.3 (1.50)	23.4 (1.17)	57.3 (1.42)	29.1 (1.35)	22.4 (1.32)	43.5 (1.36)	50.2 (1.52)	36.5 (1.44)	30.6 (1.34)	13.5 (0.98)		
Medicare only	7,953	31.8 (0.74)	26.2 (0.74)	33.9 (0.81)	11.7 (0.47)	35.4 (0.72)	14.2 (0.53)	11.9 (0.51)	19.7 (0.61)	25.3 (0.74)	16.8 (0.64)	13.0 (0.55)	6.0 (0.36)		
Marital status:⁷															
Currently married	18,456	24.2 (0.47)	17.7 (0.43)	28.5 (0.50)	9.3 (0.32)	30.4 (0.55)	10.3 (0.36)	8.9 (0.32)	12.7 (0.39)	19.6 (0.47)	11.6 (0.36)	8.6 (0.32)	3.4 (0.21)		
Formerly married	13,160	37.5 (0.54)	30.8 (0.58)	40.5 (0.58)	12.5 (0.36)	40.6 (0.54)	16.1 (0.43)	14.2 (0.42)	25.8 (0.53)	31.9 (0.58)	20.2 (0.49)	15.9 (0.43)	6.5 (0.31)		
Never married	1,177	30.6 (1.47)	25.6 (1.43)	35.3 (1.54)	10.7 (0.96)	34.7 (1.58)	12.2 (1.06)	9.4 (0.96)	21.1 (1.25)	26.2 (1.47)	16.7 (1.24)	13.9 (1.20)	5.1 (0.72)		
65–74 years															
Sex:															
Men	8,116	18.2 (0.63)	13.1 (0.53)	21.9 (0.64)	7.2 (0.40)	24.6 (0.66)	8.0 (0.46)	6.8 (0.39)	7.8 (0.42)	12.8 (0.53)	8.0 (0.46)	6.2 (0.39)	2.4 (0.23)		
Women	9,760	26.0 (0.59)	21.0 (0.56)	28.8 (0.60)	10.7 (0.42)	33.1 (0.67)	11.4 (0.44)	9.8 (0.38)	17.2 (0.54)	24.3 (0.62)	12.5 (0.46)	9.2 (0.42)	3.7 (0.26)		
Race and Hispanic origin:⁴															
White, not-Hispanic	14,440	21.6 (0.47)	16.0 (0.45)	25.1 (0.51)	8.7 (0.34)	29.0 (0.58)	9.3 (0.36)	8.2 (0.32)	11.5 (0.38)	18.1 (0.49)	9.8 (0.37)	7.1 (0.35)	2.7 (0.20)		
Black, not-Hispanic	1,578	33.0 (1.45)	28.4 (1.47)	33.6 (1.57)	12.0 (0.93)	34.2 (1.42)	14.1 (0.89)	11.9 (1.02)	22.1 (1.26)	25.4 (1.46)	16.7 (1.18)	14.0 (1.15)	5.6 (0.69)		
Asian, not-Hispanic	378	12.2 (2.42)	12.0 (2.80)	21.6 (3.32)	*7.7 (2.41)	19.2 (3.36)	*9.2 (2.82)	*4.9 (1.65)	13.6 (2.77)	20.2 (3.43)	*7.8 (2.42)	*4.5 (1.43)	*2.6 (0.94)		
Hispanic	1,287	20.7 (1.41)	20.9 (1.40)	23.2 (1.40)	11.4 (1.13)	26.5 (1.50)	11.0 (1.05)	7.5 (0.93)	17.0 (1.13)	20.5 (1.40)	10.7 (1.08)	8.8 (1.03)	4.5 (0.72)		
Poverty status:⁵															
Poor	1,284	39.8 (1.67)	36.3 (1.70)	42.9 (1.77)	17.5 (1.31)	45.7 (1.80)	20.4 (1.35)	15.4 (1.13)	29.0 (1.56)	33.2 (1.63)	23.3 (1.48)	18.2 (1.35)	8.6 (0.99)		
Near poor	2,897	31.5 (1.14)	26.7 (1.10)	36.2 (1.18)	13.9 (0.87)	39.6 (1.13)	15.4 (0.88)	12.7 (0.81)	20.6 (0.97)	29.5 (1.20)	15.8 (0.94)	11.3 (0.79)	4.5 (0.47)		
Not poor	7,594	18.0 (0.66)	12.5 (0.53)	21.6 (0.64)	6.9 (0.40)	26.4 (0.72)	7.5 (0.39)	6.7 (0.38)	8.6 (0.44)	15.2 (0.61)	7.5 (0.43)	5.3 (0.37)	1.7 (0.18)		
Health insurance coverage:⁶															
Private (with and without Medicare)	11,326	19.8 (0.54)	13.9 (0.50)	22.9 (0.55)	7.5 (0.33)	27.2 (0.63)	7.9 (0.35)	7.0 (0.31)	9.9 (0.38)	16.2 (0.53)	8.3 (0.38)	6.1 (0.34)	1.9 (0.18)		
Medicare and other public only	1,036	49.0 (2.05)	45.3 (2.02)	54.2 (2.08)	21.8 (1.69)	53.6 (2.02)	26.8 (1.83)	18.8 (1.59)	39.9 (2.03)	46.8 (2.18)	32.0 (2.01)	25.2 (1.93)	11.2 (1.21)		
Medicare only	4,190	23.3 (0.95)	19.2 (0.89)	25.5 (1.04)	10.3 (0.62)	29.5 (0.99)	10.5 (0.67)	9.5 (0.63)	13.9 (0.75)	19.5 (0.90)	11.3 (0.70)	8.1 (0.61)	4.2 (0.44)		
Marital status:⁷															
Currently married	11,595	19.6 (0.56)	14.5 (0.50)	23.4 (0.56)	8.3 (0.38)	27.1 (0.65)	8.5 (0.40)	7.4 (0.37)	9.9 (0.41)	16.5 (0.54)	8.9 (0.41)	6.5 (0.37)	2.4 (0.22)		
Formerly married	5,368	28.0 (0.75)	23.0 (0.75)	30.0 (0.79)	10.8 (0.48)	33.2 (0.82)	12.6 (0.52)	10.7 (0.47)	18.9 (0.67)	24.3 (0.73)	13.6 (0.55)	10.3 (0.50)	4.4 (0.34)		
Never married	629	24.5 (1.84)	21.5 (1.71)	29.8 (2.03)	10.1 (1.23)	32.2 (2.07)	10.4 (1.32)	7.7 (1.09)	15.9 (1.60)	20.8 (1.84)	13.8 (1.49)	12.1 (1.40)	5.5 (1.05)		

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Number of adults aged 55 years and over and percentage (with standard errors) who had some difficulty with physical or social functioning, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Physical and social activities that are at least somewhat difficult ¹													
		Walking 1/4 mile	Walking up 10 steps	Standing for 2 hours	Sitting for 2 hours	Stooping or bending	Reaching	Grasping	Carrying 10 pounds	Pushing or pulling large objects	Shopping	Socializing	Relaxing		
75–84 years	Number in thousands ²	Percent ³ (standard error)													
Sex:															
Men	4,905	29.6 (0.93)	21.1 (0.81)	34.3 (1.01)	9.5 (0.66)	32.4 (0.98)	11.2 (0.72)	9.3 (0.69)	12.3 (0.71)	18.9 (0.82)	13.6 (0.69)	10.2 (0.59)	4.4 (0.44)		
Women	7,170	37.5 (0.80)	29.7 (0.77)	41.8 (0.82)	12.6 (0.47)	42.0 (0.81)	16.1 (0.57)	14.3 (0.56)	27.0 (0.71)	34.1 (0.78)	19.6 (0.61)	15.1 (0.57)	5.9 (0.35)		
Race and Hispanic origin:⁴															
White, not-Hispanic	10,294	33.3 (0.66)	24.6 (0.62)	38.2 (0.73)	10.6 (0.45)	37.8 (0.69)	13.3 (0.52)	11.7 (0.49)	19.6 (0.58)	26.8 (0.66)	16.2 (0.51)	12.0 (0.43)	4.6 (0.29)		
Black, not-Hispanic	869	46.2 (1.98)	42.2 (2.03)	47.3 (2.03)	14.9 (1.50)	42.2 (1.95)	20.7 (1.63)	17.4 (1.75)	31.4 (2.11)	35.7 (2.07)	25.9 (1.98)	21.5 (1.80)	10.7 (1.16)		
Asian, not-Hispanic	205	30.4 (5.10)	24.8 (4.62)	33.5 (5.55)	14.0 (3.15)	29.2 (4.82)	14.9 (3.98)	10.4 (2.71)	27.1 (5.09)	31.4 (4.96)	19.5 (3.73)	16.1 (3.93)	*5.0 (1.71)		
Hispanic	593	34.0 (2.22)	32.6 (2.05)	37.5 (2.32)	17.1 (1.74)	38.2 (2.27)	17.3 (1.54)	14.9 (1.86)	27.1 (2.16)	29.9 (2.09)	19.7 (1.82)	18.4 (1.87)	8.4 (1.30)		
Poverty status:⁵															
Poor	892	48.8 (2.05)	42.7 (2.00)	50.5 (2.13)	20.5 (1.48)	49.9 (1.99)	23.9 (1.50)	18.9 (1.54)	34.3 (1.84)	39.6 (2.11)	26.5 (1.84)	22.6 (1.75)	10.0 (1.21)		
Near poor	2,500	42.3 (1.38)	33.4 (1.23)	46.2 (1.45)	13.7 (0.85)	45.0 (1.36)	16.1 (0.95)	13.8 (0.91)	25.0 (1.18)	33.4 (1.33)	21.9 (1.17)	15.8 (0.97)	6.1 (0.59)		
Not poor	4,308	27.8 (0.94)	19.9 (0.82)	33.9 (1.06)	8.4 (0.63)	34.1 (1.04)	11.6 (0.72)	9.7 (0.64)	16.3 (0.89)	23.8 (0.98)	13.6 (0.75)	9.7 (0.65)	3.5 (0.43)		
Health insurance coverage:⁶															
Private (with and without Medicare)	7,796	31.2 (0.75)	22.3 (0.65)	36.7 (0.82)	9.7 (0.47)	36.1 (0.76)	12.3 (0.54)	11.2 (0.54)	18.1 (0.63)	25.6 (0.78)	14.6 (0.58)	10.6 (0.47)	3.9 (0.33)		
Medicare and other public only	724	54.2 (2.37)	50.5 (2.26)	59.8 (2.28)	24.4 (2.10)	59.2 (2.35)	28.4 (2.02)	23.4 (2.05)	44.6 (2.22)	50.6 (2.39)	38.3 (2.31)	32.4 (2.33)	13.2 (1.59)		
Medicare only	2,828	37.0 (1.31)	29.8 (1.22)	38.9 (1.27)	12.1 (0.73)	38.3 (1.20)	16.1 (0.90)	12.6 (0.87)	22.4 (1.05)	28.0 (1.14)	19.0 (0.98)	15.0 (0.89)	7.0 (0.61)		
Marital status:⁷															
Currently married	6,030	29.8 (0.89)	21.4 (0.81)	35.5 (0.99)	10.3 (0.61)	35.2 (1.01)	12.6 (0.66)	10.8 (0.64)	16.1 (0.74)	23.3 (0.84)	14.7 (0.66)	10.9 (0.55)	4.8 (0.41)		
Formerly married	5,508	39.3 (0.78)	31.6 (0.78)	42.7 (0.82)	12.5 (0.52)	41.8 (0.75)	15.8 (0.63)	14.2 (0.60)	26.3 (0.77)	32.7 (0.81)	20.0 (0.68)	15.7 (0.64)	6.1 (0.38)		
Never married	414	33.0 (2.73)	26.5 (2.59)	38.4 (2.87)	10.8 (1.61)	33.9 (2.78)	12.9 (1.93)	10.7 (1.78)	23.4 (2.25)	30.4 (2.76)	17.5 (2.20)	12.7 (1.83)	3.1 (0.82)		
85 years and over															
Sex:															
Men	1,126	49.4 (2.07)	39.3 (1.94)	53.4 (1.98)	16.4 (1.56)	45.4 (2.20)	17.6 (1.70)	16.7 (1.54)	26.3 (1.92)	33.9 (2.09)	27.3 (1.93)	23.2 (1.89)	9.6 (1.29)		
Women	2,142	59.9 (1.39)	50.3 (1.43)	63.1 (1.37)	15.9 (1.08)	56.1 (1.32)	26.4 (1.22)	22.6 (1.26)	45.7 (1.44)	54.2 (1.51)	40.3 (1.52)	32.4 (1.52)	12.6 (0.97)		
Race and Hispanic origin:⁴															
White, not-Hispanic	2,795	55.2 (1.30)	44.2 (1.25)	58.9 (1.27)	14.3 (0.91)	51.5 (1.24)	21.5 (1.10)	19.3 (1.07)	36.6 (1.31)	45.1 (1.42)	34.8 (1.34)	27.7 (1.27)	10.7 (0.86)		
Black, not-Hispanic	238	62.8 (3.77)	59.3 (3.38)	61.5 (3.04)	25.5 (3.29)	57.4 (3.69)	34.9 (3.81)	31.7 (3.69)	53.3 (4.00)	55.7 (3.89)	42.8 (3.58)	38.7 (4.05)	16.3 (2.62)		
Asian, not-Hispanic	66	61.5 (9.83)	57.9 (9.23)	66.9 (9.01)	*31.6 (10.32)	61.3 (9.54)	43.1 (11.09)	31.6 (9.09)	55.4 (9.82)	54.4 (9.61)	*32.3 (10.66)	39.8 (10.60)	*21.3 (7.85)		
Hispanic	135	61.2 (5.35)	64.4 (4.72)	65.2 (4.67)	26.8 (4.94)	61.5 (4.72)	35.6 (4.99)	27.3 (4.26)	50.4 (5.52)	58.2 (5.15)	47.5 (5.79)	43.2 (6.20)	15.9 (3.58)		
Poverty status:⁵															
Poor	303	62.6 (3.44)	56.1 (3.26)	63.8 (2.96)	18.0 (2.37)	59.2 (3.07)	29.6 (2.77)	24.6 (2.68)	44.1 (3.19)	56.1 (3.40)	44.8 (3.48)	35.3 (3.52)	18.6 (2.59)		
Near poor	686	60.7 (2.37)	47.7 (2.33)	64.0 (2.22)	17.7 (2.09)	56.0 (2.17)	24.4 (1.99)	19.6 (1.92)	37.9 (2.31)	45.6 (2.38)	35.4 (2.31)	28.1 (2.28)	6.6 (1.15)		
Not poor	890	50.7 (2.59)	39.5 (2.54)	57.4 (2.48)	14.2 (1.72)	48.2 (2.35)	18.5 (2.10)	18.6 (2.02)	32.9 (2.47)	40.9 (2.79)	28.9 (2.56)	21.9 (2.26)	10.3 (1.66)		

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Number of adults aged 55 years and over and percentage (with standard errors) who had some difficulty with physical or social functioning, by selected characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Physical and social activities that are at least somewhat difficult ¹													
		Walking 1/4 mile	Walking up 10 steps	Standing for 2 hours	Sitting for 2 hours	Stooping or bending	Reaching	Grasping	Carrying 10 pounds	Pushing or pulling large objects	Shopping	Socializing	Relaxing		
85 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ²	Percent ³ (standard error)													
Health insurance coverage: ⁶															
Private (with and without Medicare)	1,972	53.5 (1.57)	41.9 (1.49)	57.2 (1.58)	13.4 (1.06)	49.2 (1.55)	20.0 (1.25)	18.4 (1.26)	35.9 (1.60)	44.2 (1.74)	33.1 (1.47)	26.3 (1.42)	9.9 (0.95)		
Medicare and other public only	229	68.5 (4.21)	68.1 (4.08)	74.5 (3.65)	27.5 (4.09)	69.0 (3.63)	42.1 (4.21)	36.2 (4.22)	58.8 (4.15)	65.6 (4.13)	54.6 (4.51)	51.6 (4.51)	25.5 (3.91)		
Medicare only	935	58.7 (2.11)	49.6 (2.17)	60.1 (1.98)	17.3 (1.74)	54.6 (2.12)	25.7 (1.95)	21.1 (1.77)	39.6 (2.26)	46.8 (2.39)	37.6 (2.37)	31.1 (2.30)	11.5 (1.37)		
Marital status: ⁷															
Currently married	831	49.6 (2.61)	38.7 (2.37)	51.2 (2.54)	15.6 (1.77)	43.2 (2.71)	18.2 (2.13)	16.1 (1.77)	28.1 (2.45)	38.3 (2.78)	29.8 (2.43)	24.1 (2.45)	8.6 (1.48)		
Formerly married	2,284	58.6 (1.35)	49.3 (1.36)	63.0 (1.29)	16.4 (1.01)	55.8 (1.25)	25.4 (1.17)	22.6 (1.18)	42.5 (1.38)	50.5 (1.40)	38.4 (1.41)	31.3 (1.37)	12.7 (0.98)		
Never married	134	55.3 (5.21)	43.4 (5.37)	54.9 (5.46)	12.9 (3.24)	50.7 (5.35)	18.4 (3.84)	13.4 (3.24)	40.9 (4.96)	41.8 (5.56)	30.3 (4.75)	27.4 (5.33)	*8.8 (2.79)		

* Estimates preceded by an asterisk have a relative standard error of greater than 30% and less than or equal to 50%. These should be interpreted with caution as they do not meet the standard of reliability or precision.

† Estimate has a relative standard error of greater than 50% and is not shown.

¹In a series of questions, respondents were asked if they experienced difficulty performing one or more of the nine physical and three social activities by themselves, and without using any special equipment. The activities included walking a quarter of a mile (or three city blocks); standing for 2 hours; stooping, bending, or kneeling; climbing 10 steps without resting; sitting for two hours; reaching over one's head; using one's fingers to grasp or handle small objects; lifting or carrying a 10-pound object (such as a bag of groceries); and pushing or pulling a large object (such as a living room chair), going out to things like shopping, movies, or sporting events; participating in social activities such as visiting friends, attending clubs and meetings, going to parties; doing things to relax at home or for leisure (reading, watching TV, sewing, listening to music...). The response categories consisted of "not at all difficult," "only a little difficult," "somewhat difficult," "very difficult," "can't do at all," or "do not do this activity." The estimates shown include adults who responded "somewhat difficult," "very difficult," or "cannot do at all."

²Includes adults with unknown health characteristics.

³Unknowns for the columns were not included in the denominators when calculating percents (see "Technical Notes").

⁴Races shown are single race only. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Other race categories are not shown separately due to small sample sizes.

⁵Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty thresholds for the previous calendar year. "Poor" persons are those with family incomes below the poverty threshold. "Near poor" persons had incomes of 100% to less than 200% of the poverty threshold. "Not poor" persons had incomes that were 200% of the poverty threshold or greater.

⁶Health insurance coverage differs for persons above and below age 65 years. The category "private insurance" includes all adults who have private coverage, regardless of age or any additional coverage they may have. For persons under age 65 years, the category "Medicaid/other public" includes those with Medicaid or other public health insurance coverage (e.g., most State-sponsored coverage). The category "uninsured" indicates no health insurance coverage. Persons with only Indian Health Service coverage are considered uninsured. Among persons aged 65 years and over, public insurance may be combined with Medicare coverage. The category "Medicare only" includes adults who have no other health insurance coverage. Because of the near universal coverage due to Medicare, the category "uninsured" includes very few adults and is not shown separately.

⁷Marital status categories include: married (living with or without spouse); formerly married (widowed, divorced, separated); and never married. Adults living with a partner are not shown separately due to small sample size.

NOTE: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population.

Table 3. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected measures of health care access, health care utilization, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003

Selected characteristic	Population Number in thousands ⁸	Has a regular source of health care ¹	Immunizations		Health care contacts in past 12 months			
			Pneumonia (ever) ²	Flu (past 12 months) ³	Dentist ⁴	Doctor ⁵	Emergency room ⁶	Home care ⁷
		Percent ⁹ (standard error)						
Ages 55 years and over	58,529	94.8 (0.13)	39.2 (0.36)	53.3 (0.33)	60.2 (0.38)	91.5 (0.16)	21.1 (0.24)	4.7 (0.13)
55–64 years	25,310	92.6 (0.22)	19.2 (0.37)	38.4 (0.46)	64.9 (0.48)	88.6 (0.27)	18.4 (0.33)	2.1 (0.14)
65 years and over	33,219	96.5 (0.14)	54.5 (0.44)	64.6 (0.38)	56.5 (0.47)	93.7 (0.18)	23.2 (0.33)	6.7 (0.20)
65–74 years	17,876	96.0 (0.20)	49.5 (0.57)	60.7 (0.52)	58.9 (0.60)	92.8 (0.26)	20.6 (0.42)	3.9 (0.20)
75–84 years	12,075	97.0 (0.20)	60.9 (0.66)	69.5 (0.61)	55.9 (0.71)	94.7 (0.26)	24.9 (0.50)	7.9 (0.32)
85 years and over	3,268	97.0 (0.37)	58.9 (1.13)	67.6 (1.10)	46.0 (1.18)	94.9 (0.53)	31.8 (1.09)	17.0 (0.88)
55–64 years								
Sex:								
Men	12,100	91.2 (0.35)	17.4 (0.49)	36.0 (0.63)	62.9 (0.72)	85.8 (0.45)	18.3 (0.52)	2.0 (0.22)
Women	13,210	93.8 (0.27)	20.9 (0.51)	40.6 (0.64)	66.7 (0.61)	91.1 (0.35)	18.5 (0.43)	2.1 (0.17)
Race and Hispanic origin: ¹⁰								
White, not-Hispanic	20,008	93.7 (0.24)	20.5 (0.43)	40.5 (0.54)	67.8 (0.55)	89.6 (0.30)	17.3 (0.36)	2.0 (0.14)
Black, not-Hispanic	2,379	92.9 (0.62)	16.5 (0.94)	29.1 (1.22)	51.7 (1.36)	88.6 (0.77)	26.2 (1.15)	3.0 (0.60)
Asian, not-Hispanic	613	85.7 (2.02)	10.6 (1.88)	33.9 (3.21)	61.5 (3.32)	80.8 (2.18)	15.4 (2.65)	†
Hispanic	1,931	83.5 (1.01)	10.7 (1.00)	28.4 (1.31)	53.5 (1.51)	81.4 (1.13)	19.5 (1.12)	2.0 (0.37)
Poverty status: ¹¹								
Poor	1,694	87.1 (1.06)	21.6 (1.34)	32.9 (1.55)	36.0 (1.50)	84.2 (1.17)	30.7 (1.48)	5.5 (0.72)
Near poor	2,425	88.2 (0.81)	23.3 (1.21)	34.0 (1.26)	42.0 (1.42)	83.9 (0.98)	26.5 (1.18)	3.4 (0.50)
Not poor	14,228	94.3 (0.27)	18.7 (0.51)	40.0 (0.60)	71.8 (0.53)	90.0 (0.35)	16.4 (0.42)	1.4 (0.13)
Health insurance coverage: ¹²								
Private	19,443	95.6 (0.20)	18.6 (0.43)	40.2 (0.53)	72.1 (0.49)	91.1 (0.29)	16.4 (0.37)	1.5 (0.13)
Medicaid or other public	1,401	96.2 (0.72)	27.9 (1.70)	41.6 (1.77)	39.8 (1.62)	95.8 (0.69)	39.2 (1.79)	9.9 (1.05)
Uninsured	2,750	67.8 (1.16)	12.0 (0.89)	20.8 (1.11)	37.1 (1.34)	66.1 (1.28)	16.8 (0.97)	*0.8 (0.34)
Marital status: ¹³								
Currently married	17,845	94.0 (0.25)	19.2 (0.46)	39.5 (0.56)	68.1 (0.56)	89.7 (0.32)	16.8 (0.43)	1.7 (0.17)
Formerly married	5,568	89.3 (0.47)	19.8 (0.65)	35.3 (0.73)	56.4 (0.81)	86.3 (0.54)	22.9 (0.66)	3.0 (0.29)
Never married	1,172	88.0 (1.13)	17.8 (1.24)	39.3 (1.63)	60.5 (1.79)	83.0 (1.36)	19.6 (1.36)	3.9 (0.66)
65 years and over								
Sex:								
Men	14,147	96.3 (0.21)	53.8 (0.62)	65.9 (0.58)	56.4 (0.65)	92.8 (0.29)	22.6 (0.50)	5.4 (0.27)
Women	19,072	96.6 (0.18)	55.0 (0.55)	63.6 (0.52)	56.7 (0.57)	94.4 (0.22)	23.6 (0.40)	7.6 (0.29)
Race and Hispanic origin: ¹⁰								
White, not-Hispanic	27,529	96.8 (0.15)	58.7 (0.46)	67.4 (0.42)	59.4 (0.52)	94.2 (0.19)	22.7 (0.34)	6.5 (0.21)
Black, not-Hispanic	2,685	96.3 (0.45)	34.5 (1.24)	48.2 (1.15)	36.9 (1.34)	93.7 (0.47)	27.5 (1.17)	9.0 (0.74)
Asian, not-Hispanic	649	95.9 (1.15)	34.1 (2.97)	59.9 (3.06)	54.1 (2.90)	92.5 (1.43)	20.6 (2.78)	5.0 (1.29)
Hispanic	2,015	92.9 (0.78)	30.3 (1.46)	50.3 (1.35)	45.3 (1.40)	88.3 (0.95)	25.0 (1.18)	6.5 (0.71)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected measures of health care access, health care utilization, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Has a regular source of health care ¹	Immunizations		Health care contacts in past 12 months				
			Pneumonia (ever) ²	Flu (past 12 months) ³	Dentist ⁴	Doctor ⁵	Emergency room ⁶	Home care ⁷	
65 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ⁸	Percent ⁹ (standard error)							
Poverty status:¹¹									
Poor	2,479	94.5 (0.56)	41.8 (1.17)	53.2 (1.31)	32.1 (1.20)	91.0 (0.75)	29.0 (1.07)	10.8 (0.78)	
Near poor	6,083	96.4 (0.27)	53.5 (0.91)	61.5 (0.81)	40.4 (0.83)	93.0 (0.38)	26.8 (0.73)	7.6 (0.41)	
Not poor	12,791	97.0 (0.23)	58.4 (0.63)	68.6 (0.59)	66.8 (0.62)	94.8 (0.28)	22.1 (0.51)	5.6 (0.32)	
Health insurance coverage:¹²									
Private (with and without Medicare).	21,095	97.5 (0.15)	59.3 (0.53)	68.7 (0.49)	62.9 (0.52)	95.1 (0.20)	22.2 (0.37)	5.9 (0.24)	
Medicare and other public only	1,989	97.5 (0.36)	40.8 (1.42)	54.3 (1.42)	31.5 (1.32)	95.3 (0.72)	37.0 (1.32)	17.6 (1.05)	
Medicare only	7,953	94.7 (0.33)	47.4 (0.77)	57.8 (0.72)	48.0 (0.77)	90.9 (0.40)	22.1 (0.66)	6.4 (0.35)	
Marital status:¹³									
Currently married	18,456	97.1 (0.19)	56.6 (0.58)	67.7 (0.53)	62.2 (0.63)	94.2 (0.25)	21.2 (0.43)	4.8 (0.23)	
Formerly married	13,160	95.7 (0.22)	52.6 (0.59)	60.8 (0.55)	49.0 (0.57)	93.2 (0.25)	26.1 (0.45)	9.2 (0.33)	
Never married	1,177	95.1 (0.62)	47.7 (1.78)	60.6 (1.68)	52.9 (1.70)	91.7 (0.86)	23.1 (1.32)	8.4 (0.96)	
65–74 years									
Sex:									
Men	8,116	95.7 (0.29)	48.2 (0.79)	61.7 (0.78)	57.5 (0.89)	91.7 (0.42)	19.9 (0.62)	3.5 (0.27)	
Women	9,760	96.3 (0.27)	50.4 (0.75)	60.0 (0.73)	60.1 (0.75)	93.7 (0.32)	21.1 (0.54)	4.2 (0.27)	
Race and Hispanic origin:¹⁰									
White, not-Hispanic.	14,440	96.4 (0.23)	53.3 (0.63)	63.3 (0.60)	61.9 (0.70)	93.2 (0.29)	19.6 (0.45)	3.7 (0.21)	
Black, not-Hispanic.	1,578	96.0 (0.55)	33.4 (1.67)	46.6 (1.50)	40.9 (1.66)	93.2 (0.71)	26.8 (1.40)	6.4 (0.87)	
Asian, not-Hispanic.	378	95.9 (1.42)	32.2 (3.34)	62.1 (3.95)	60.9 (4.11)	94.0 (1.43)	20.3 (3.38)	*1.8 (0.85)	
Hispanic	1,287	92.0 (1.11)	29.4 (1.71)	48.4 (1.61)	47.5 (1.64)	87.6 (1.25)	23.0 (1.42)	4.1 (0.66)	
Poverty status:¹¹									
Poor	1,284	93.8 (0.92)	37.1 (1.61)	48.9 (1.74)	34.2 (1.60)	89.1 (1.18)	27.3 (1.50)	7.5 (0.81)	
Near poor	2,897	95.9 (0.43)	48.5 (1.29)	56.1 (1.18)	40.2 (1.20)	91.5 (0.66)	24.5 (1.09)	5.3 (0.50)	
Not poor	7,594	96.6 (0.31)	53.3 (0.85)	65.1 (0.75)	68.1 (0.80)	93.9 (0.38)	19.7 (0.64)	3.2 (0.29)	
Health insurance coverage:¹²									
Private (with and without Medicare).	11,326	97.1 (0.22)	53.6 (0.71)	64.7 (0.68)	65.8 (0.70)	94.2 (0.29)	19.2 (0.50)	3.4 (0.23)	
Medicare and other public only	1,036	97.3 (0.54)	38.4 (1.95)	50.2 (1.90)	33.6 (1.58)	95.2 (0.97)	35.4 (1.79)	11.1 (1.23)	
Medicare only	4,190	94.4 (0.46)	42.9 (1.00)	54.0 (1.01)	49.8 (1.08)	89.9 (0.60)	19.6 (0.80)	3.6 (0.37)	
Marital status:¹³									
Currently married	11,595	96.8 (0.24)	51.3 (0.70)	63.8 (0.68)	62.9 (0.78)	93.3 (0.34)	18.9 (0.49)	3.2 (0.24)	
Formerly married	5,368	94.7 (0.36)	46.5 (0.90)	55.0 (0.79)	51.5 (0.79)	92.1 (0.41)	24.0 (0.67)	5.2 (0.36)	
Never married	629	94.3 (0.95)	44.2 (2.30)	56.5 (2.22)	50.9 (2.23)	89.9 (1.22)	22.0 (1.75)	5.1 (0.87)	

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected measures of health care access, health care utilization, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Has a regular source of health care ¹	Immunizations		Health care contacts in past 12 months			
			Pneumonia (ever) ²	Flu (past 12 months) ³	Dentist ⁴	Doctor ⁵	Emergency room ⁶	Home care ⁷
75–84 years	Number in thousands ⁸	Percent ⁹ (standard error)						
Sex:								
Men	4,905	97.1 (0.32)	62.6 (1.07)	71.9 (0.95)	56.5 (1.04)	94.4 (0.45)	24.9 (0.84)	6.8 (0.50)
Women	7,170	96.9 (0.26)	59.8 (0.83)	67.9 (0.75)	55.5 (0.84)	94.9 (0.34)	24.8 (0.63)	8.7 (0.44)
Race and Hispanic origin:¹⁰								
White, not-Hispanic	10,294	97.2 (0.22)	64.9 (0.66)	72.1 (0.63)	58.7 (0.77)	95.1 (0.25)	24.5 (0.56)	7.7 (0.34)
Black, not-Hispanic	869	96.9 (0.67)	37.9 (2.38)	51.0 (2.14)	33.8 (1.79)	95.3 (0.75)	28.3 (2.10)	10.5 (1.31)
Asian, not-Hispanic	205	96.2 (1.67)	36.2 (5.19)	61.4 (4.38)	48.5 (4.91)	93.5 (2.24)	21.7 (4.63)	*6.1 (2.50)
Hispanic	593	94.0 (1.01)	32.9 (2.51)	55.6 (2.48)	42.9 (2.85)	88.6 (1.81)	27.1 (1.81)	8.3 (1.30)
Poverty status:¹¹								
Poor	892	95.2 (0.85)	47.0 (1.76)	57.4 (1.91)	31.2 (1.89)	92.6 (0.95)	30.4 (1.69)	12.0 (1.35)
Near poor	2,500	96.9 (0.40)	57.6 (1.31)	66.1 (1.26)	41.7 (1.30)	94.3 (0.55)	28.1 (1.06)	7.6 (0.61)
Not poor	4,308	97.8 (0.31)	66.6 (1.05)	74.7 (0.95)	66.8 (1.00)	96.1 (0.39)	23.8 (0.80)	7.3 (0.58)
Health insurance coverage:¹²								
Private (with and without Medicare)	7,796	97.9 (0.21)	65.7 (0.77)	73.3 (0.72)	61.3 (0.84)	96.0 (0.29)	24.2 (0.61)	6.9 (0.41)
Medicare and other public only	724	97.9 (0.56)	43.4 (2.29)	57.5 (2.18)	29.8 (2.44)	94.6 (1.11)	37.1 (2.09)	22.0 (1.80)
Medicare only	2,828	95.2 (0.52)	53.8 (1.28)	63.3 (1.17)	48.4 (1.20)	92.3 (0.57)	24.0 (1.10)	7.5 (0.59)
Marital status:¹³								
Currently married	6,030	97.6 (0.27)	65.6 (0.92)	74.4 (0.86)	61.9 (1.01)	95.8 (0.36)	23.8 (0.80)	6.5 (0.46)
Formerly married	5,508	96.4 (0.31)	56.6 (0.86)	64.7 (0.82)	49.1 (0.87)	93.6 (0.38)	25.9 (0.65)	9.3 (0.48)
Never married	414	95.4 (1.07)	52.2 (2.84)	64.5 (2.83)	57.2 (2.72)	94.5 (1.13)	25.7 (2.47)	11.7 (1.71)
85 years and over								
Sex:								
Men	1,126	96.9 (0.64)	56.6 (1.95)	70.2 (1.76)	48.2 (1.99)	93.8 (0.97)	32.4 (2.01)	13.2 (1.46)
Women	2,142	97.1 (0.49)	60.1 (1.33)	66.3 (1.35)	44.8 (1.44)	95.4 (0.58)	31.5 (1.34)	19.0 (1.10)
Race and Hispanic origin:¹⁰								
White, not-Hispanic	2,795	97.1 (0.40)	63.4 (1.19)	70.9 (1.16)	49.2 (1.28)	95.5 (0.53)	32.1 (1.19)	16.5 (0.98)
Black, not-Hispanic	238	96.2 (1.47)	30.2 (3.09)	49.2 (3.91)	20.8 (3.00)	91.7 (2.53)	29.2 (2.89)	20.7 (2.69)
Asian, not-Hispanic	66	95.0 (4.87)	38.7 (10.53)	41.5 (10.30)	*29.4 (9.45)	81.5 (8.32)	*18.6 (6.21)	*20.0 (8.06)
Hispanic	135	96.5 (1.34)	27.7 (4.87)	44.3 (4.53)	33.5 (5.00)	94.0 (2.49)	35.0 (5.06)	21.3 (4.63)
Poverty status:¹¹								
Poor	303	95.0 (1.30)	46.2 (3.25)	58.8 (3.07)	25.7 (2.79)	94.2 (1.42)	31.9 (2.68)	21.3 (2.77)
Near poor	686	97.1 (0.59)	60.2 (2.26)	67.7 (2.06)	36.4 (1.95)	94.8 (0.96)	32.1 (2.09)	16.6 (1.64)
Not poor	890	97.7 (0.75)	62.7 (2.06)	69.8 (2.23)	55.7 (2.39)	95.9 (1.00)	34.4 (2.30)	18.2 (2.06)
Health insurance coverage:¹²								
Private (with and without Medicare)	1,972	98.1 (0.34)	66.7 (1.38)	73.4 (1.25)	52.4 (1.49)	96.5 (0.56)	31.9 (1.40)	16.1 (1.19)
Medicare and other public only	229	97.6 (1.10)	44.0 (4.01)	62.8 (3.83)	27.0 (3.68)	97.9 (1.10)	44.2 (3.97)	33.2 (3.81)
Medicare only	935	94.9 (0.95)	48.2 (2.19)	58.4 (2.33)	38.0 (1.91)	91.3 (1.25)	27.8 (1.96)	15.4 (1.40)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected measures of health care access, health care utilization, and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Has a regular source of health care ¹	Immunizations		Health care contacts in past 12 months				
			Pneumonia (ever) ²	Flu (past 12 months) ³	Dentist ⁴	Doctor ⁵	Emergency room ⁶	Home care ⁷	
85 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ⁸	Percent ⁹ (standard error)							
Marital status:¹³									
Currently married	831	97.9 (0.68)	64.5 (2.56)	74.0 (2.17)	54.2 (2.59)	95.2 (1.08)	33.9 (2.47)	14.1 (1.95)	
Formerly married	2,284	96.6 (0.47)	57.3 (1.24)	65.3 (1.35)	42.7 (1.33)	94.9 (0.60)	31.5 (1.18)	18.3 (1.01)	
Never married	134	98.3 (1.18)	50.6 (5.41)	67.8 (5.22)	48.8 (5.07)	91.5 (3.49)	19.6 (3.44)	13.6 (3.45)	

* Estimates preceded by a single asterisk have a relative standard error of greater than 30% and less than or equal to 50%. These should be interpreted with caution as they do not meet the standard of reliability or precision.

† Estimate has a relative standard error of greater than 50% and is not shown.

¹Based on the question, "Is there a place you usually go when you are sick or need advice about your health?" Includes responses of "yes" and "more than one place."

²Based on the question, "Have you ever had a pneumonia shot?"

³Based on the question, "During the past 12 months, have you had a flu shot?"

⁴Based on the question, "How long has it been since you last saw or talked to a dentist? Include all types of dentists including orthodontists, oral surgeons, and other dental specialists, as well as dental hygienists."

⁵Based on the question, "About how long has it been since you last saw or talked to a doctor or other health care professional about your own health? Include doctors seen while a patient in a hospital."

⁶Based on the question, "During the past 12 months, how many times have you gone to a hospital emergency room about your own health? (This includes emergency room visits that resulted in a hospital admission.)"

⁷Based on the question, "During the past 12 months, did you receive care at home from a health care professional?"

⁸Includes adults with unknown utilization characteristics.

⁹Unknowns for the columns were not included in the denominators when calculating percents (see "Technical Notes").

¹⁰Races shown are single race only. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Other race categories are not shown separately due to small sample sizes.

¹¹Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty thresholds for the previous calendar year. "Poor" persons are defined as below the poverty threshold. "Near poor" persons have incomes of 100% to less than 200% of the poverty threshold. "Not poor" persons have incomes that are 200% of the poverty threshold or greater.

¹²Health insurance coverage differs for persons above and below age 65 years. The category "private insurance" includes all adults who have private coverage, regardless of age or any additional coverage they may have. For persons under age 65 years, the category "Medicaid or other public" includes those with Medicaid or other public health insurance coverage (e.g., most State-sponsored coverage). The category "uninsured" indicates no health insurance coverage. Persons with only Indian Health Service coverage are considered uninsured. Among persons aged 65 years and over, public insurance may be combined with Medicare coverage. The category "Medicare only" includes adults who have no other health insurance coverage. Because of the near universal coverage due to Medicare, the category "uninsured" includes very few adults and is not shown separately.

¹³Marital status categories include: married (living with or without spouse); formerly married (widowed, divorced, separated); and never married. Adults living with a partner are not shown separately due to small sample size.

NOTE: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population.

Table 4. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health behaviors and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003

Selected characteristic	Population	Health behavior					
		Any leisure-time physical activity (regular and irregular) ¹	Regular leisure-time physical activity ²	Strengthening activity ³	Healthy weight ⁴	Never smoked ⁵	Nonsmoker (never and former) ⁶
		Percent ⁸ (standard error)					
	Number in thousands ⁷						
Ages 55 years and over	58,529	51.7 (0.46)	24.7 (0.32)	14.3 (0.26)	35.3 (0.31)	48.1 (0.32)	85.6 (0.22)
55–64 years	25,310	57.6 (0.60)	28.1 (0.48)	17.2 (0.40)	30.6 (0.42)	44.2 (0.50)	79.3 (0.36)
65 years and over	33,219	47.2 (0.49)	22.1 (0.37)	12.1 (0.28)	38.9 (0.40)	51.1 (0.41)	90.5 (0.22)
65–74 years	17,876	53.6 (0.58)	26.9 (0.52)	13.8 (0.38)	33.4 (0.51)	46.5 (0.54)	87.4 (0.33)
75–84 years	12,075	43.4 (0.71)	18.7 (0.52)	10.9 (0.40)	42.4 (0.63)	53.8 (0.64)	93.1 (0.32)
85 years and over	3,268	27.0 (1.13)	8.2 (0.58)	7.2 (0.64)	56.0 (1.18)	66.6 (1.08)	97.4 (0.32)
55–64 years							
Sex:							
Men	12,100	58.1 (0.80)	29.9 (0.66)	18.1 (0.55)	24.3 (0.59)	34.2 (0.68)	77.9 (0.55)
Women	13,210	57.1 (0.72)	26.5 (0.58)	16.3 (0.50)	36.7 (0.61)	53.4 (0.63)	80.6 (0.47)
Race and Hispanic origin: ⁹							
White, not-Hispanic	20,008	60.8 (0.66)	30.2 (0.55)	18.7 (0.47)	31.1 (0.48)	41.8 (0.58)	79.2 (0.42)
Black, not-Hispanic	2,379	43.5 (1.39)	17.3 (1.08)	11.5 (0.78)	23.2 (1.21)	47.3 (1.21)	76.6 (1.07)
Asian, not-Hispanic	613	58.0 (3.38)	28.5 (3.08)	11.8 (1.54)	63.7 (3.43)	67.5 (3.09)	87.5 (2.26)
Hispanic ¹⁰	1,931	41.9 (1.55)	18.6 (1.06)	9.7 (0.88)	24.0 (1.27)	59.5 (1.39)	83.3 (1.09)
Poverty status: ¹⁰							
Poor	1,694	36.4 (1.58)	15.1 (1.19)	7.9 (0.88)	29.8 (1.58)	40.6 (1.54)	67.8 (1.37)
Near poor	2,425	41.1 (1.43)	17.6 (1.02)	8.2 (0.67)	29.4 (1.33)	40.6 (1.29)	69.6 (1.21)
Not poor	14,228	66.3 (0.70)	32.4 (0.63)	21.4 (0.53)	30.0 (0.55)	43.2 (0.66)	81.3 (0.47)
Health insurance coverage: ¹¹							
Private	19,443	63.0 (0.64)	31.3 (0.56)	19.8 (0.47)	31.0 (0.46)	45.0 (0.57)	82.1 (0.40)
Medicaid/other public	1,401	30.2 (1.56)	11.1 (1.07)	6.3 (0.79)	27.4 (1.55)	38.9 (1.64)	67.7 (1.47)
Uninsured	2,750	44.1 (1.37)	20.8 (1.04)	8.7 (0.81)	31.5 (1.25)	46.8 (1.29)	72.0 (1.04)
Marital status: ¹²							
Currently married	17,845	60.2 (0.72)	30.0 (0.60)	18.0 (0.50)	29.5 (0.50)	45.2 (0.64)	82.6 (0.43)
Formerly married	5,568	50.9 (0.85)	23.8 (0.68)	15.4 (0.63)	32.9 (0.73)	40.3 (0.70)	70.0 (0.68)
Never married	1,172	52.9 (1.73)	22.8 (1.43)	14.8 (1.18)	32.5 (1.84)	52.2 (1.68)	79.4 (1.36)
65 years and over							
Sex:							
Men	14,147	52.6 (0.65)	26.7 (0.54)	14.4 (0.45)	34.2 (0.62)	34.4 (0.58)	89.5 (0.35)
Women	19,072	43.3 (0.57)	18.7 (0.46)	10.3 (0.32)	42.5 (0.54)	63.4 (0.49)	91.1 (0.27)
Race and Hispanic origin: ⁹							
White, not-Hispanic	27,529	49.3 (0.54)	23.2 (0.41)	12.7 (0.31)	39.7 (0.43)	49.3 (0.47)	90.7 (0.25)
Black, not-Hispanic	2,685	31.7 (1.21)	12.7 (0.88)	7.2 (0.62)	29.5 (1.17)	56.2 (1.19)	87.2 (0.71)
Asian, not-Hispanic	649	59.3 (3.08)	32.3 (3.32)	14.8 (2.27)	64.0 (3.17)	69.9 (2.71)	94.7 (1.21)
Hispanic	2,015	35.8 (1.31)	17.1 (1.08)	8.3 (0.70)	33.2 (1.28)	65.3 (1.21)	91.7 (0.63)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health behaviors and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Health behavior					
		Any leisure-time physical activity (regular and irregular) ¹	Regular leisure-time physical activity ²	Strengthening activity ³	Healthy weight ⁴	Never smoked ⁵	Nonsmoker (never and former) ⁶
65 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ⁷	Percent ⁸ (standard error)					
Poverty status:¹⁰							
Poor	2,479	29.7 (1.19)	11.8 (0.85)	6.8 (0.59)	36.0 (1.22)	56.5 (1.13)	85.4 (0.81)
Near poor	6,083	38.8 (0.88)	15.7 (0.59)	8.3 (0.52)	36.8 (0.80)	51.2 (0.82)	88.1 (0.52)
Not poor	12,791	58.6 (0.69)	28.8 (0.61)	16.5 (0.47)	39.3 (0.63)	46.2 (0.63)	91.5 (0.35)
Health insurance coverage:¹¹							
Private (with and without Medicare)	21,095	52.5 (0.56)	24.7 (0.48)	13.7 (0.35)	39.1 (0.48)	50.0 (0.52)	91.7 (0.26)
Medicare and other public only	1,989	27.2 (1.35)	10.0 (0.93)	5.4 (0.59)	35.5 (1.41)	57.0 (1.39)	85.5 (0.92)
Medicare only	7,953	40.2 (0.86)	18.7 (0.64)	9.7 (0.43)	39.7 (0.76)	53.0 (0.75)	89.2 (0.44)
Marital status:¹²							
Currently married	18,456	52.6 (0.65)	25.9 (0.54)	13.3 (0.41)	36.5 (0.54)	47.4 (0.57)	91.8 (0.30)
Formerly married	13,160	40.2 (0.60)	16.9 (0.40)	10.4 (0.32)	42.0 (0.55)	56.0 (0.54)	88.8 (0.37)
Never married	1,177	41.9 (1.74)	20.0 (1.28)	10.7 (0.91)	42.6 (1.71)	59.1 (1.69)	90.1 (0.99)
65–74 years							
Sex:							
Men	8,116	57.2 (0.78)	30.4 (0.73)	15.7 (0.58)	27.8 (0.75)	32.4 (0.74)	86.5 (0.50)
Women	9,760	50.6 (0.70)	24.0 (0.64)	12.1 (0.43)	38.2 (0.67)	58.1 (0.73)	88.2 (0.41)
Race and Hispanic origin:⁹							
White, not-Hispanic	14,440	56.2 (0.65)	28.6 (0.58)	14.5 (0.44)	34.1 (0.55)	44.0 (0.62)	87.5 (0.38)
Black, not-Hispanic	1,578	37.8 (1.53)	16.7 (1.23)	9.3 (0.87)	24.3 (1.36)	52.2 (1.50)	83.4 (1.07)
Asian, not-Hispanic	378	66.3 (3.47)	34.8 (3.94)	15.7 (2.90)	61.0 (4.15)	66.1 (4.27)	94.1 (1.58)
Hispanic	1,287	40.9 (1.69)	20.2 (1.50)	9.7 (0.94)	29.3 (1.43)	64.2 (1.54)	90.5 (0.84)
Poverty status:¹⁰							
Poor	1,284	32.9 (1.62)	13.5 (1.18)	7.7 (0.91)	30.9 (1.62)	50.0 (1.83)	80.4 (1.34)
Near poor	2,897	43.2 (1.24)	20.0 (0.99)	9.4 (0.81)	31.0 (1.04)	45.5 (1.23)	83.1 (0.92)
Not poor	7,594	63.9 (0.79)	33.4 (0.81)	17.7 (0.61)	34.2 (0.79)	43.7 (0.84)	89.5 (0.52)
Health insurance coverage:¹¹							
Private (with and without Medicare)	11,326	59.2 (0.70)	30.3 (0.68)	15.6 (0.51)	33.7 (0.61)	45.4 (0.68)	89.0 (0.39)
Medicare and other public only	1,036	31.1 (1.86)	11.6 (1.38)	6.9 (0.96)	30.3 (1.82)	50.9 (1.93)	80.5 (1.39)
Medicare only	4,190	46.5 (1.17)	22.5 (0.90)	11.1 (0.69)	33.4 (1.09)	48.1 (1.04)	85.5 (0.68)
Marital status:¹²							
Currently married	11,595	56.7 (0.77)	29.1 (0.69)	14.3 (0.51)	32.5 (0.65)	45.9 (0.70)	89.8 (0.39)
Formerly married	5,368	47.9 (0.83)	22.5 (0.66)	12.8 (0.49)	35.0 (0.74)	47.2 (0.82)	82.9 (0.62)
Never married	629	46.4 (2.26)	24.3 (1.89)	11.5 (1.25)	34.9 (2.28)	53.0 (2.49)	86.7 (1.57)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health behaviors and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Health behavior					
		Any leisure-time physical activity (regular and irregular) ¹	Regular leisure-time physical activity ²	Strengthening activity ³	Healthy weight ⁴	Never smoked ⁵	Nonsmoker (never and former) ⁶
	Number in thousands ⁷	Percent ⁸ (standard error)					
75–84 years							
Sex:							
Men	4,905	49.4 (1.11)	24.2 (0.89)	13.5 (0.71)	39.4 (0.98)	34.9 (1.05)	92.7 (0.52)
Women	7,170	39.2 (0.82)	15.0 (0.61)	9.1 (0.44)	44.6 (0.84)	66.8 (0.70)	93.4 (0.38)
Race and Hispanic origin: ⁹							
White, not-Hispanic.	10,294	45.4 (0.77)	19.7 (0.57)	11.5 (0.44)	42.7 (0.70)	52.4 (0.70)	93.2 (0.34)
Black, not-Hispanic.	869	26.0 (1.71)	8.1 (1.10)	4.9 (1.02)	35.1 (1.93)	58.6 (2.19)	91.5 (1.15)
Asian, not-Hispanic.	205	56.8 (6.05)	32.1 (5.87)	13.7 (2.76)	67.5 (5.45)	72.0 (4.93)	96.2 (1.83)
Hispanic	593	28.8 (2.08)	12.9 (1.61)	6.2 (1.06)	39.1 (2.51)	66.9 (2.13)	93.8 (1.07)
Poverty status: ¹⁰							
Poor	892	27.9 (1.79)	10.4 (1.26)	6.3 (0.95)	38.8 (2.09)	59.8 (1.81)	89.0 (1.14)
Near poor	2,500	36.7 (1.34)	13.1 (0.87)	7.6 (0.72)	38.3 (1.30)	54.2 (1.27)	91.6 (0.66)
Not poor	4,308	54.3 (1.14)	24.7 (0.94)	15.2 (0.81)	44.5 (1.03)	48.2 (1.04)	93.7 (0.52)
Health insurance coverage: ¹¹							
Private (with and without Medicare).	7,796	47.7 (0.86)	20.7 (0.67)	12.3 (0.49)	42.5 (0.76)	52.8 (0.82)	94.2 (0.35)
Medicare and other public only	724	25.9 (1.98)	10.1 (1.36)	3.9 (0.71)	40.2 (2.40)	60.4 (2.34)	88.7 (1.51)
Medicare only	2,828	37.8 (1.28)	16.8 (0.98)	8.8 (0.71)	43.2 (1.24)	55.7 (1.26)	92.5 (0.63)
Marital status: ¹²							
Currently married	6,030	47.5 (1.08)	21.9 (0.88)	12.0 (0.64)	41.5 (0.95)	49.3 (1.00)	94.9 (0.41)
Formerly married	5,508	39.3 (0.83)	15.5 (0.59)	9.7 (0.49)	43.1 (0.84)	58.6 (0.77)	91.1 (0.49)
Never married	414	39.9 (2.93)	16.2 (1.92)	11.3 (1.59)	47.7 (2.67)	63.3 (2.54)	93.5 (1.28)
85 years and over							
Sex:							
Men	1,126	33.9 (2.04)	11.6 (1.26)	9.1 (1.28)	57.9 (2.07)	47.7 (1.93)	97.2 (0.59)
Women	2,142	23.4 (1.20)	6.5 (0.56)	6.2 (0.70)	54.9 (1.35)	76.6 (1.11)	97.4 (0.36)
Race and Hispanic origin: ⁹							
White, not-Hispanic.	2,795	28.6 (1.22)	8.4 (0.61)	7.7 (0.71)	57.3 (1.27)	65.4 (1.18)	97.7 (0.32)
Black, not-Hispanic.	238	12.4 (2.54)	*3.2 (1.03)	*2.4 (1.14)	44.2 (3.89)	74.3 (3.45)	97.0 (1.10)
Asian, not-Hispanic.	66	*28.6 (8.88)	*19.3 (7.59)	*13.1 (6.55)	69.4 (10.09)	86.3 (7.55)	92.9 (5.93)
Hispanic	135	18.8 (4.24)	*6.3 (2.59)	*4.3 (2.01)	45.5 (5.17)	70.0 (5.17)	94.7 (1.98)
Poverty status: ¹⁰							
Poor	303	21.9 (2.62)	8.6 (1.82)	4.0 (1.14)	50.0 (2.91)	74.5 (2.56)	95.7 (1.20)
Near poor	686	28.3 (2.15)	7.3 (1.17)	6.0 (0.98)	56.1 (2.39)	64.3 (2.17)	96.5 (0.70)
Not poor	890	33.7 (2.35)	9.6 (1.31)	12.1 (1.50)	57.3 (2.36)	58.2 (2.40)	98.2 (0.47)
Health insurance coverage: ¹¹							
Private (with and without Medicare).	1,972	32.7 (1.47)	9.3 (0.75)	8.6 (0.88)	56.3 (1.52)	65.6 (1.38)	98.0 (0.39)
Medicare and other public only	229	13.8 (2.49)	*2.6 (1.06)	*3.5 (1.33)	43.8 (4.30)	74.3 (3.75)	97.7 (1.14)
Medicare only	935	19.2 (1.77)	8.0 (1.20)	5.6 (0.98)	57.9 (2.05)	67.2 (2.25)	96.1 (0.80)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. Number and percentage (with standard errors) of adults aged 55 years and over by selected health behaviors and other characteristics: United States, average annual, 2000–2003—Con.

Selected characteristic	Population	Health behavior					
		Any leisure-time physical activity (regular and irregular) ¹	Regular leisure-time physical activity ²	Strengthening activity ³	Healthy weight ⁴	Never smoked ⁵	Nonsmoker (never and former) ⁶
85 years and over—Con.	Number in thousands ⁷	Percent ⁸ (standard error)					
Marital status:¹²							
Currently married	831	33.5 (2.48)	10.9 (1.50)	9.5 (1.58)	56.2 (2.64)	54.4 (2.41)	97.8 (0.56)
Formerly married	2,284	24.6 (1.10)	7.1 (0.57)	6.5 (0.63)	55.6 (1.32)	70.7 (1.18)	97.3 (0.37)
Never married	134	27.4 (4.75)	*11.1 (3.70)	*5.4 (2.27)	63.1 (4.89)	74.5 (4.63)	95.1 (3.15)

* Data preceded by an asterisk have a relative standard error of greater than 30% and should be used with caution as they do not meet the standard of reliability or precision.

¹Any leisure-time physical activity includes all adults who indicated they engaged in either vigorous or moderate physical activities, regardless of frequency or duration. It is based on the same four questions as regular activity.

²Regular activity consists of usually engaging in vigorous leisure-time physical activities at least three times a week for at least 20 minutes each time or moderate activities five times a week for at least 30 minutes each time. It is based on four questions that asked about frequency and duration of vigorous and of moderate leisure-time physical activities.

³Strengthening activities include weight lifting, calisthenics, or any activities designed to strengthen muscles. These may overlap with moderate and vigorous activities.

⁴Healthy weight is a body mass index value of greater than 18.5 and less than 25, based on self-reported height and weight (see "Technical Notes").

⁵"Never smoked" includes adults who had never smoked 100 cigarettes in their entire lifetimes.

⁶Nonsmokers are adults who have never smoked 100 cigarettes in their lifetime (never smoked) or had smoked 100 cigarettes but were not smoking as of the date of the interview (former smokers).

⁷Includes adults with unknown health behaviors.

⁸Unknowns for the columns were not included in the denominators when calculating percents (see "Technical Notes").

⁹Races shown are single race only. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Other race categories are not shown separately due to small sample sizes.

¹⁰Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty thresholds for the previous calendar year. "Poor" persons are those with family incomes below the poverty threshold. "Near poor" persons had incomes of 100% to less than 200% of the poverty threshold. "Not poor" persons had incomes that were 200% of the poverty threshold or greater.

¹¹Health insurance coverage differs for persons above and below age 65 years. The category "private insurance" includes all adults who have private coverage, regardless of age or any additional coverage they may have. For persons under age 65 years, the category "Medicaid or other public" includes those with Medicaid or other public health insurance coverage (e.g., most State-sponsored coverage). The category "uninsured" indicates no health insurance coverage. Persons with only Indian Health Service coverage are considered uninsured. Among persons aged 65 years and over, public insurance may be combined with Medicare coverage. The category "Medicare only" includes adults who have no other health insurance coverage. Because of the near universal coverage due to Medicare, the category "uninsured" includes very few adults and is not shown separately.

¹²Marital status categories include: married (living with or without spouse); formerly married (widowed, divorced, separated); and never married. Adults living with a partner are not shown separately due to small sample size.

NOTE: Data are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population.

Technical notes

Sample design

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a cross-sectional household interview survey of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population. Data are collected continuously throughout the year in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. NHIS uses a multi-stage, clustered sample design that allows production of national estimates for a variety of health indicators. Information on basic health topics is collected for all household members, by proxy from one family member if necessary. Additional information is collected from one randomly sampled adult and about one randomly sampled child in each family. Self-response is required for the Sample Adult questionnaire except in the rare cases of sample adults who are physically or mentally incapable of responding for themselves. Interviews are conducted in the home using a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) questionnaire with telephone followup permitted, if necessary.

Response rates

The household response rate for the NHIS data years 2000–2003 was 89.1%. The final response rate for the Sample Adult component of the National Health Interview Survey was 73.6%. NHIS interviews were completed for 127,596 sample adults aged 18 years and over, of whom 39,990 were aged 55 years and over. Response rates for single years are shown in [Table I](#). Procedures used in calculating response rates for combined data years are described in detail in Appendix I of the Survey Description of the NHIS data files (28–31).

Item nonresponse

Item nonresponse for each of the sociodemographic indicators was less than 1%, with the exception of questions related to income. Item nonresponse for detailed income was about 19.5%. Estimates for persons with unknown sociodemographic characteristics are not shown separately in the tables, but are included in the totals and in all other

Table I. Completed interviews and response rates by year: National Health Interview Survey, 2000–2003

Interviews and rates	2000	2001	2002	2003
Completed interviews				
	Number			
Household	38,633	38,932	36,161	35,921
Family or person.	39,264	39,633	36,831	36,573
Sample adult.	32,374	33,326	31,044	30,852
Final response rates				
	Percent			
Household	88.9	88.9	89.6	89.2
Family or person.	87.3	87.6	88.1	87.9
Sample adult.	72.1	73.8	74.3	74.2

variables for which data were reported. Item nonresponse for the health-related variables was less than 3%. The denominators for percents shown in [Tables 1–4](#) exclude persons for whom the relevant information was not reported.

Tests of significance

Statistical tests performed to assess the significance of differences between percentages were two-tailed with no adjustments for multiple comparisons. The test statistic used was:

$$Z = \frac{|X_a - X_b|}{\sqrt{S_a^2 + S_b^2}}$$

where X_a and X_b are the two percents being compared, and S_a and S_b are the standard errors of the percents. The critical value used for two-sided tests at the 0.05 level of significance was 1.96.

Relative standard error

The relative standard error $RSE(x)$ of an estimate x is obtained by dividing the standard error $SE(x)$ of the estimate by the estimate itself. This quantity is expressed as a percentage:

$$RSE = 100 \left(\frac{SE(x)}{x} \right)$$

In [Tables 1–4](#), estimates having an RSE of more than 30% and up to and including 50% are indicated by an asterisk (*) and are considered statistically unreliable. These should be interpreted with extreme caution. Estimates having an RSE of more than

50%, if any, are indicated with a dagger (†) and are not shown.

Definition of terms

Demographic terms

Age—The age recorded for each person is the age at the last birthday. Age is recorded in single years and grouped in the tables shown in this report.

Health insurance coverage—Classification of health insurance coverage differs for adults above and below age 65 years. For adults aged 55–64 years, three categories of insurance status were used: private coverage, public coverage only such as Medicaid, and uninsured. For adults aged 65 years and over, for whom Medicare coverage is nearly universal, very few persons are completely uninsured, although a substantial number have Medicare-only coverage. For each of the age groups that are 65 years and over, the health insurance categories used are: private coverage (with and without Medicare); Medicare combined with other public coverage (such as Medicaid); and Medicare only.

Marital status—Marital status categories shown are: 1) currently married, which can include legal marriage or common law with spouses living together or apart; 2) formerly married, which includes divorced, separated, or widowed adults; and 3) never married adults. The category “living with a partner,” though identified in NHIS, is not shown due to the small number of older adults

identifying themselves as living with a partner.

Poverty status—Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty thresholds. "Poor" persons had family incomes below the poverty threshold. "Near poor" persons had family incomes of 100% to less than 200% of the poverty threshold. "Not poor" persons had incomes that are 200% of the poverty threshold or greater.

Race and Hispanic origin—Race and Hispanic origin are combined into a single measure in this report. Anyone with any Hispanic or Latino origin (including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, or Spanish origins) were classified as Hispanic. The race categories were limited to the three largest single race groups due to issues of statistical reliability with the smaller groups. Data for single race persons other than non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic white, and non-Hispanic Asian, and for multiple race persons, though not shown separately, are included in the analysis for all other variables.

Health terms

Fair or poor health—Fair or poor health status is a measure of respondent-assessed health, usually reported by the individual, but may be reported by proxy. Family respondents were asked to assess the health status of each family member. Response options were excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor. The last two categories were combined for this report.

Hearing impairment—Adults were asked to describe their hearing, without use of a hearing aid. The response categories consisted of "good," "a little trouble," "a lot of trouble," and "deaf." Adults who responded "a little trouble," "a lot of trouble," or "deaf" were classified as having hearing impairment.

Heart disease—In separate questions, respondents were asked if they ever had been told by a doctor or other health professional that they had coronary heart disease, angina pectoris, heart attack, or any other heart condition or disease. Persons who had any of

these conditions were classified as having heart disease.

Physical and social activities—Physical and social activities include 12 types of activities: 1) walking a quarter of a mile (or 3 city blocks); 2) standing for 2 hours; 3) stooping, bending, kneeling; 4) climbing 10 steps without resting; 5) sitting for 2 hours; 6) reaching over one's head; 7) using one's fingers to grasp or handle small objects; 8) lifting or carrying a 10-pound object (such as a full bag of groceries); 9) pushing or pulling a large object (such as a living room chair); 10) going shopping, going to movies, or attending sporting events; 11) participating in social activities such as visiting friends, attending clubs or meetings, or going to parties; and 12) activities to relax at home or for leisure (such as reading, watching television, sewing, or listening to music). For each of these activities, respondents were asked if, by themselves and without the use of special equipment, the activity was "not at all difficult," "only a little difficult," "somewhat difficult," "very difficult," "can't do at all," or "do not do this activity." The estimates shown include responses of "somewhat difficult," "very difficult," or "cannot do at all." Adults who said "do not do this activity" were excluded from the analysis.

Vision impairment—Adults were classified as having vision impairment if they answered "yes" to the question "Do you have any trouble seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses?"

Health behavior terms

Healthy (body) weight—is defined as a body mass index greater than or equal to 18 and less than 25. Body mass index is based on self-reported height and weight and calculated using the formula:

Body Mass Index (BMI) = $\text{kg}/(\text{m}^2)$, where:
 kg (kilograms) = weight in pounds/2.205,
 and m (meters) = height in inches/39.37.

Cigarette smoking status—was based on lifetime and current use of cigarettes. *Never smokers* are adults who had never smoked 100 cigarettes in their

entire lifetime. *Nonsmokers* include never smokers (adults who had never smoked 100 cigarettes in their lifetime) and former smokers (adults who had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime, but were not currently smoking).

Leisure-time physical activity—is based on responses to questions on frequency of participation in vigorous leisure-time physical activity lasting at least 10 minutes and frequency of participation in light or moderate physical activity lasting at least 10 minutes. Adults who said they ever engaged in either type of activity, regardless of frequency or duration, were considered to have engaged in "any leisure-time physical activity."

Regular leisure-time physical activity—is engaging in vigorous activity at least three times per week for at least 20 minutes each time or engaging in light-moderate leisure-time physical activity five times per week for at least 30 minutes each time.

Strengthening activities—include activities such as weight lifting or doing calisthenics, regardless of frequency or duration. These activities may overlap with other leisure-time physical activities.

The complete NHIS Sample Adult questionnaire as well as information about other components of the NHIS is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>.

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