



# NCHS Data Access and Resources

## About NCHS

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

Collaborating with other public and private health partners, NCHS uses a variety of data collection mechanisms to obtain accurate information from multiple sources. This process provides a broad perspective on the population's health, influences on health, and health outcomes.

## Accessing NCHS data

NCHS releases data from its surveys and systems in a variety of ways to accommodate users with varying needs and interests, including policymakers, researchers, medical and public health professionals, teachers, students, business leaders, and the general public.

## Reports and publications

Each year, NCHS produces hundreds of publications in a variety of formats.

**Data Briefs** summarize the latest data on current public health topics in 8 pages of easily understandable text and graphics. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs.htm>.

**National Health Statistics Reports** provide annual data summaries, analyses of health topics, or new information on methods or measurement issues. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nhsr.htm>.

**National Vital Statistics Reports** provide data on vital events—such as births, deaths, marriages, and divorces—using tables and charts, along with a discussion of analyses. Examples include preliminary and final annual birth and death data, leading causes of death, and pregnancy rates. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nvsr.htm>.

**Health E-Stats** are brief reports published several times each year on current and timely health topics, such as trends in fertility rates and prevalence of obesity. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/hestats.htm>.

**QuickStats** highlight survey findings in a chart and brief caption each week in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/quickstats.htm>.

**Life Tables** are annual reports that track life expectancy in the United States by age, race, Hispanic origin, and sex. Every 10 years, NCHS also releases a decennial volume of life expectancy data, with one volume for each state. For more information, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/life\\_tables.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/life_tables.htm).

**Vital and Health Statistics Series** reports provide details on survey design and operation, methods of statistical analysis, and statistics derived from data collection systems or a family of related systems. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/series.htm>.

**Early Releases of Selected Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)** provide expedited estimates of key health and health-related indicators based on data from NHIS. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/releases.htm>.

**Selected Estimates Based on Data From the National Health Interview Survey** is published quarterly and provides estimates of 15 health measures, ranging from vaccinations to obesity.

**Health Insurance Coverage: Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey** is published quarterly and provides detailed estimates of health insurance coverage by selected demographic characteristics.

**Wireless Substitution: Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey** is published in May and December of each year and provides updated estimates of trends in use of landline and wireless telephones by persons and in households.

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## Reports and publications, cont.

**Fact Sheets** provide brief summaries of the NCHS surveys and data systems and topics of interest to policymakers and the general public. For more information, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/fact\\_sheets.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/fact_sheets.htm).

**Health, United States** is the annual report on the health status of the nation, submitted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to the President and Congress. Detailed tables and charts display health statistics trends over time on topics including health status and its determinants, health care resources, and health care use. Each year the chartbook contains a special feature on a topic of importance to current discussions in public health, such as emergency care or socioeconomic status. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus.htm>.

**Healthy People Reviews** measure the nation's progress toward Healthy People 2020 benchmarks for health promotion and disease prevention using data from NCHS data systems, other federal government data systems, and other data sources. For more information, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy\\_people/publications.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy_people/publications.htm).

**Vital Statistics Rapid Releases** provide access to the timeliest vital statistics for public health surveillance, through releases of: 1) Quarterly Provisional Estimates, 2) Vital Statistics Rapid Release Reports, 3) focused surveillance activities, and 4) state and national provisional control counts of births, deaths and infant deaths based on a current flow of vital statistics data from state vital records offices. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/vsrr.htm>.

## Microdata files

NCHS provides access to its rich data sets so researchers can conduct their own analyses and add to NCHS' knowledge of public health issues.

**Public-use documentation and data files** are available through the FTP file server and provide users with free access to data sets, documentation, and questionnaires from NCHS surveys and data collection systems. For more information, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/ftp\\_data.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/ftp_data.htm).

**Non-public-use data files** are available through a network of Research Data Centers that provide secure access to detailed data that cannot be released online due to confidentiality concerns. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/rdc/index.htm>.

**Data Linkage Program** allows researchers to study factors that influence disability, chronic disease, health care use, morbidity, and mortality through the linkage of NCHS survey data with data from administrative records and other surveys. For more information, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/data\\_linkage\\_activities.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/data_linkage_activities.htm).

**National Death Index** is a database of all deaths in the United States (beginning with 1979) derived from state death certificates and a resource to aid epidemiologists and other health and medical investigators with their mortality ascertainment activities. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/ndi.htm>.

## Online resources and tools

The NCHS website provides quick access to key health data as well as tools that allow users to customize and display data in ways that fit their needs.

**FastStats A to Z** provides quick access to statistics and associated web links and pre-tabulated tables on topics of public health importance, including diseases and conditions, life stages and populations, health-related behaviors, injuries, health care and insurance, and births and deaths. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/>.

## Data analysis aids

**Urban/Rural Classification Scheme for Counties** is used to study the associations between urbanization level of residence and health and to monitor the health of urban and rural residents. For more information, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/urban\\_rural.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/urban_rural.htm).

**Injury Tools and Frameworks** provides an overview of injury morbidity and mortality data and statistics to provide details on injury surveillance methodology and tools to assist in data analysis. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/injury/index.htm>.

## Data visualizations

**NCHS Data Visualization Gallery** contains varying interactive visuals depicting trends in injury mortality, drug poisoning mortality, teen birth, and many more topics. Each visual provides national, state, and county trends by age, sex, and race and ethnicity. For more information, visit <https://blogs.cdc.gov/nchs-data-visualization/>.

**Stats of the States** is an interactive map of the United States that displays individual state data on birth rates, leading causes of death, mortality rates, marriage rates, health insurance coverage, and divorce rates. For more information, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/nav\\_us.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/nav_us.htm).