

Industrial Sickness Absenteeism

Rates for Specific Causes in 1951 and half of 1952

Men and Women 1951 The 1951 rate for sickness and nonindustrial injuries among men (131.2) is 12 percent above the 1950 rate (116.8) and 9 percent above the 10-year mean (120.7). With the exception of the influenza and grippe rate, 1951 rates for specific causes do not differ notably from 1950 rates (see table 1). But 1951 rates for four causes are more than 30 percent above their 10-year means. Cancer is 57 percent above; other diseases of genitourinary system, 41 percent; infectious and parasitic diseases, 37 percent; and hernia, 31 percent. Frequency rates for these are all relatively low, varying from 0.7 for cancer for 1942-51 to 4.8 for other diseases of the genitourinary system for 1951.

The 1951 over-all rate among women (315.1) is 22 percent above the 1950 rate (258.4) and 29 percent above the 10-year mean (244.5). With only a few exceptions, the 1951 rates for specific causes are either approximate to or higher than the corresponding 1950 and 1942-51 rates. Note the increase in rates for influenza and grippe, pneumonia, neurasthenia and the like, and other diseases of genitourinary system.

1942-51

Among men, rates for nonindustrial injuries and the digestive group of diseases were highest in 1951, respectively, 27 and 20 percent above their 10-year means. Among women, 1951 showed the highest rates for all causes, for the respiratory group, and for the nonrespiratory-nondigestive group of diseases. In terms of

the 10-year means, the percentage excesses are 29, 35, and 30 percent, respectively.

Frequency by Duration

Frequency rates, shown in table 2, reveal that the rate for women is about twice the rate for men except for absences lasting more than 6 months. Table 2 is derived from the experience of 10 of the reporting organizations which pay benefits for 26 or 52 weeks.

Among both men and women, approximately four-fifths of the respiratory absences and one-half of the nonrespiratory absences lasted less than 1 month. Nonrespiratory diseases accounted for 80 percent of all absences lasting 57 days or longer (30.1 per 1,000 men, and 59.7 per 1,000 women). Twenty percent of the absences were caused by respiratory diseases and nonindustrial injuries combined. During 1951, 7 of every 1,000 men workers and 9 of every 1,000 women workers had an illness lasting more than 6 months. Ten men and 22 women of each 1,000 had an illness lasting from 3 to 6 months.

Days of Disability

Relatively small differences are found in the corresponding disability rates among men dur-

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Table 1. Absences per 1,000 persons by cause—sickness and nonindustrial injuries disabling for 8 consecutive days or longer—1951, 1950, and 1942–51¹

Cause ²	Number of absences per 1,000 persons beginning in specified period					
	Males			Females		
	1951	1942–51 ³	1950	1951	1942–51 ³	1950
Sickness and nonindustrial injuries	131.2	120.7	116.8	315.1	244.5	258.4
Percent of female rate.....	42	49	45	240	203	221
Percent of male rate.....						
Nonindustrial injuries (169–195)	15.9	12.5	13.7	19.2	16.8	19.3
Sickness	115.3	108.2	103.1	295.9	227.7	239.1
Respiratory diseases	41.7	43.3	34.1	136.7	101.1	106.1
Tuberculosis of respiratory system (13).....	.6	.7	.5	.5	.5	.2
Influenza, grippe (33).....	16.1	16.7	10.9	52.7	34.3	30.7
Bronchitis, acute and chronic (106).....	6.2	7.0	5.9	11.1	11.1	11.6
Pneumonia, all forms (107–109).....	5.8	5.3	5.4	7.7	4.2	5.4
Diseases of pharynx and tonsils (115b, 115c).....	3.6	4.6	3.2	14.8	16.0	13.1
Other respiratory diseases (104, 105, 110–114).....	9.4	9.0	8.2	49.9	35.0	45.1
Digestive diseases	22.3	18.6	20.1	34.6	31.1	28.5
Diseases of stomach except cancer (117, 118).....	7.0	5.9	6.2	4.5	3.6	3.7
Diarrhea and enteritis (120).....	2.9	2.4	2.6	9.6	6.4	7.3
Appendicitis (121).....	4.5	4.1	4.1	9.4	11.7	7.2
Hernia (122a).....	3.4	2.6	3.1	.2	.6	1.0
Other digestive diseases (115a, 115d, 116, 122b–129).....	4.5	3.6	4.1	10.9	8.8	9.3
Nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases	48.1	42.7	45.3	117.6	90.4	100.4
Infectious and parasitic diseases (1–12, 14–24, 26–29, 31, 32, 34–44) ⁴	3.7	2.7	3.0	13.6	7.0	9.8
Cancer, all sites (45–55).....	1.1	.7	1.1	.9	.6	1.1
Rheumatism, acute and chronic (58, 59).....	3.5	4.5	3.6	4.4	4.4	4.5
Neurasthenia and the like (part of 84d).....	1.7	1.9	1.5	16.1	12.3	12.2
Neuralgia, neuritis, sciatica (87b).....	2.2	2.6	2.1	2.8	2.9	3.3
Other diseases of nervous system (80–85, 87, except part of 84d, and 87b).....	2.1	1.8	2.3	3.4	2.1	3.7
Diseases of heart (90–95).....	5.3	4.4	5.4	1.8	2.3	2.3
Diseases of arteries and high blood pressure (96–99, 102).....	2.3	2.1	2.3	1.5	1.4	1.6
Other diseases of circulatory system (100, 101, 103).....	4.9	4.2	4.8	7.2	6.0	6.7
Nephritis, acute and chronic (130–132).....	.4	.4	.4	.4	.4	.3
Other diseases of genitourinary system (133–139).....	4.8	3.4	4.2	30.5	21.0	23.5
Diseases of skin (151–153).....	3.6	3.5	3.6	4.9	5.5	5.3
Diseases of organs of movement except diseases of joints (156b).....	3.6	3.5	3.5	9.7	6.2	7.4
All other diseases (56, 57, 60–79, 88, 89, 154, 155, 156a, 157, 162).....	8.9	7.0	7.5	20.4	18.3	18.7
Ill-defined and unknown causes (200)	3.2	3.6	3.6	7.0	5.1	4.1
Average number of persons.....	173, 853	2, 301, 041	173, 881	15, 154	212, 413	14, 113

¹ Industrial injuries and venereal diseases are not included. ² Numbers in parentheses are disease title numbers from International List of Causes of Death, 1939. ³ Average of the 10 annual rates. ⁴ Exclusive of influenza and grippe, respiratory tuberculosis, and venereal diseases.

Table 2. Absences¹ per 1,000 persons by duration—sickness and nonindustrial injuries disabling for 8 consecutive days or longer—1951

Duration of absence in calendar days	Sickness and nonindustrial injuries ²		Nonindustrial injuries		Respiratory diseases		Nonrespiratory diseases ³	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Number of absences per 1,000 persons								
8 days or longer.....	146.7	302.2	14.8	19.0	49.8	125.8	82.1	157.4
8-28 days.....	86.9	176.6	8.3	9.7	40.6	99.2	38.0	67.7
29-56 days.....	29.7	65.9	3.3	5.0	5.7	18.3	20.7	42.6
57-91 days.....	13.1	29.1	1.7	1.9	1.7	6.0	9.7	21.2
92-183 days.....	10.0	21.9	1.2	1.7	.9	1.5	7.9	18.7
184 days or longer.....	7.0	8.7	.3	.7	.9	.8	5.8	7.2
Number of absences per 1,000 persons (cumulative)								
8 days or longer.....	146.7	302.2	14.8	19.0	49.8	125.8	82.1	157.4
29 days or longer.....	59.8	125.6	6.5	9.3	9.2	26.6	44.1	89.7
57 days or longer.....	30.1	59.7	3.2	4.3	3.5	8.3	23.4	47.1
92 days or longer.....	17.0	30.6	1.5	2.4	1.8	2.3	13.7	25.9
184 days or longer.....	7.0	8.7	.3	.7	.9	.8	5.8	7.2

¹ Data from 10 reporting organizations paying benefits for 26 or 52 weeks. ² Industrial injuries and venereal diseases are not included. ³ Digestive diseases, nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases and ill-defined and unknown causes are included. Average number of persons: males, 55,853; females, 12,831.

ing 1951 and 1950 (table 3). Table 3 is based on the same population as table 2. In each year, nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases accounted for one-half of the days of disability per man. Respiratory diseases and digestive diseases each accounted for about the same number of days of disability.

In 1951, women averaged 11.9 days of disability. Compare this with 9.8 in 1950. The excess is explained by an increase in both the frequency and the severity of nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases (103.8 to 124.6 absences per 1,000, and 48.7 to 53.5 days per absence). If time lost from absences lasting less than 8 days were included, the number of disability days would have increased to approximately 13 per woman and 9 per man.

Men Sickness absenteeism among men workers during the first half of 1952 (table 4) was about the same as in the corresponding 1951 period. In both years, the first quarter rates (170.9 and 168.8) are approximately 40 percent above the corresponding second quarter rates (120.9 and 121.5). Respiratory diseases account for the higher rates in the first quarter.

Note the similarity of the 1952 and 1951 second quarter rates for specific causes. Likewise, the 1952 first quarter rates for specific causes differ little from the 1951 corresponding rates with the exception of influenza and grippe.

NOTE: Data are derived from periodic reports of industrial sick benefit organizations and are limited to sickness and nonindustrial injuries causing absence from work for more than 1 week.

The 1950 annual report on men and women workers and an index of the reports from 1920-50 appeared in *Public Health Reports*, November 23, 1951, pp. 1550-1552.

Table 3. Summary of disability data ¹—sickness and nonindustrial injuries disabling for 8 consecutive days or longer—1951 and 1950

Cause ²	Males		Females	
	1951	1950	1951	1950
	Number of days of disability per person			
Sickness and nonindustrial injuries	6.4	6.1	11.9	9.8
Nonindustrial injuries .....	.6	.6	.9	.9
Respiratory diseases	1.3	1.1	2.9	2.5
Digestive diseases	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.4
Nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases	3.3	3.2	6.7	5.0
	Number of days of disability per absence			
Sickness and nonindustrial injuries	43.7	45.3	39.4	38.0
Nonindustrial injuries	41.9	45.4	45.6	46.2
Respiratory diseases	25.5	25.6	23.4	23.3
Digestive diseases	47.5	49.2	44.1	48.5
Nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases	58.3	58.4	53.5	48.7
	Number of absences per 1,000 persons			
Sickness and nonindustrial injuries	146.7	133.7	302.2	258.9
Nonindustrial injuries	14.8	13.7	19.0	19.9
Respiratory diseases	49.8	41.2	125.8	106.7
Digestive diseases	25.0	23.5	32.8	28.5
Nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases	57.1	55.3	124.6	103.8
Average number of persons	55,853	51,327	12,831	10,513

¹ Data from 10 reporting organizations paying benefits for 26 or 52 weeks.

² Industrial injuries and venereal diseases are not included. Ill-defined and unknown causes are included in the nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases.

Table 4. Absences per 1,000 males by cause (annual basis)—sickness and nonindustrial injuries disabling for 8 consecutive days or longer—first and second quarters, 1952 ¹

Cause ²	Number of absences per 1,000 males beginning in specified period						
	Second quarter		First quarter		First half		
	1952	1951	1952	1951	1952	1951	1947-51
Sickness and nonindustrial injuries	120.9	121.5	170.9	168.8	146.0	144.8	122.0
Nonindustrial injuries (169-195)	14.5	14.8	16.9	15.4	15.7	15.1	12.6
Sickness	106.4	106.7	154.0	153.4	130.3	129.7	109.4
Respiratory diseases	33.6	33.7	67.1	78.3	50.5	55.6	43.5
Tuberculosis of respiratory system (13) .....	.6	.6	.8	.9	.7	.7	.7
Influenza, grippe (33)	10.5	12.1	26.0	39.6	18.3	25.6	17.4
Bronchitis, acute and chronic (106)	4.3	4.4	9.5	10.1	6.9	7.2	6.6
Pneumonia, all forms (107-109)	4.9	5.0	8.6	10.5	6.8	7.7	5.7
Diseases of pharynx and tonsils (115b, 115c)	4.4	3.9	5.3	4.2	4.8	4.1	4.0
Other respiratory diseases (104, 105, 110-114)	8.9	7.7	16.9	13.0	13.0	10.3	9.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. Absences per 1,000 males by cause (annual basis)—sickness and nonindustrial injuries disabling for 8 consecutive days or longer—first and second quarters, 1952¹—Continued

Cause ²	Number of absences per 1,000 males beginning in specified period						
	Second quarter		First quarter		First half		
	1952	1951	1952	1951	1952	1951	1947-51
Digestive diseases	22.0	22.2	26.1	21.8	24.1	22.0	18.7
Diseases of stomach except cancer (117, 118).....	6.4	6.9	7.8	6.9	7.1	6.9	5.9
Diarrhea and enteritis (120).....	3.1	2.4	3.6	2.9	3.4	2.6	2.3
Appendicitis (121).....	4.1	4.8	4.3	4.6	4.2	4.7	3.9
Hernia (122a).....	3.5	3.5	4.8	3.0	4.2	3.3	2.8
Other digestive diseases (115a, 115d, 116, 122b-129).....	4.9	4.6	5.6	4.4	5.2	4.5	3.8
Nonrespiratory-nondigestive diseases	48.4	47.5	57.5	50.0	52.9	48.8	43.7
Infectious and parasitic diseases (1-12, 14-24, 26-29, 31, 32, 34-44) ³	4.2	3.4	6.9	5.3	5.5	4.3	3.3
Rheumatism, acute and chronic (58, 59).....	3.9	3.3	3.9	4.3	3.9	3.8	4.3
Neurasthenia and the like (part of 84d).....	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.2	1.7	1.5	1.7
Neuralgia, neuritis, sciatica (87b).....	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.4
Other diseases of nervous system (80-85, 87, except part of 84d, and 87b).....	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.9
Diseases of heart, arteries, high blood pressure, and nephritis (90-99, 102, 130-132).....	6.8	8.1	9.1	9.2	7.9	8.6	7.8
Other diseases of genitourinary system (133-138).....	5.0	4.9	5.8	4.9	5.4	4.9	3.7
Diseases of skin (151-153).....	4.1	3.4	4.1	3.4	4.1	3.4	3.2
Diseases of organs of movement except diseases of joints (156b).....	3.6	3.2	4.3	3.6	4.0	3.4	3.1
All other diseases (45-57, 60-79, 88, 89, 100, 101, 103, 154, 155, 156a, 157, 162).....	15.2	15.1	16.9	13.7	16.1	14.5	12.3
Ill-defined and unknown causes (200)	2.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.8	3.3	3.5
Average number of males.....	169, 435	169, 965	171, 363	166, 670	170, 399	168, 317	917, 010

¹ Industrial injuries and venereal diseases are not included. ² Numbers in parentheses are disease title numbers from International List of Causes of Death, 1939. ³ Exclusive of influenza and grippe, respiratory tuberculosis, and venereal diseases.

World Health Day

The fifth annual observance of World Health Day will occur on April 7.

The theme for 1953 "Health is Wealth" is based on the economic value of health, which was emphasized in the discussions at the Fifth World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland, in May 1952. The theme also is the main consideration in the World Health Organization monograph "The Cost of Sickness and the Price of Health," written by Dr. C.-E. A. Winslow, editor of the American Journal of Public Health.

"Every step that can be taken toward lessening the burden of preventable diseases will not only diminish suffering and prolong human life; it will also increase productivity and promote prosperity," Dr. Winslow stated in the monograph.