

Preface

Health, United States, 2018 is the 42nd report on the health status of the nation and is submitted by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to the President and the Congress of the United States in compliance with Section 308 of the Public Health Service Act. This report was compiled by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The *Health, United States* series presents an annual overview of national trends in key health indicators. The 2018 report presents trends and current information on selected measures of morbidity, mortality, health care utilization and access, health risk factors, prevention, health insurance, and personal health care expenditures in a 20-figure chartbook.

The *Health, United States, 2018* Chartbook is supplemented by several other products including Trend Tables, an **At-a-Glance** table, Appendixes, and Spotlight Infographics available for download on the *Health, United States* website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/index.htm>.

The 2018 Edition

The *Health, United States, 2018* Chartbook contains 20 figures and 20 tables on health and health care in the United States. Examining trends in health informs the development, implementation, and evaluation of health policies and programs. The first section (Figures 1–12) focuses on health status and determinants: life expectancy, infant mortality, leading causes of death, overdose deaths, teen births, preterm births, use of tobacco products, obesity, asthma, diabetes prevalence, hypertension, and functional limitations. The second section (Figures 13–15) presents trends in health care utilization: childhood vaccination coverage, use of prescription drugs, and unmet medical needs. The third section (Figures 16–17) focuses on health care resources: availability of dentists and use of long-term care facilities. The fourth section (Figures 18–20) describes trends in personal health care expenditures and health insurance coverage. The Highlights section summarizes major findings from the Chartbook.

Supplementary Materials Available on the Web

Trend Tables

With the release of *Health, United States, 2018*, 47 detailed Trend Tables that highlight major trends in key health indicators in the four areas: health status and determinants, health care utilization, health care resources,

and health care expenditures will be available for download at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/contents2018.htm>. An important criterion used in selecting Trend Tables for the *Health, United States* series is the availability of comparable national data over a period of several years. Trend Tables are included in the online supplement for indicators featured in the Chartbook or on the NCHS FastStats site. FastStats provides quick access to statistics on topics of public health importance and is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/default.htm>.

The **At-a-Glance** table summarizes major findings from the Trend Tables, and is available for download from the web at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/ataglance.htm>.

Appendixes

Appendix I. Data Sources describes each data source used in *Health, United States, 2018* and provides references for further information about the sources. Data sources are listed alphabetically within two broad categories: Government Sources and Private and Global Sources.

Appendix II. Definitions and Methods includes selected terms used in *Health, United States, 2018*. It also contains information on the statistical methodologies used in the report.

The Appendixes for *Health, United States, 2018* are available for download at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/appendix.htm>.

Spotlight Infographics

The *Health, United States* Spotlight is an infographic series that explores topics of public health importance using trend data from *Health, United States*. Spotlights are published throughout the year and feature the most current data available at the time of publication.

The Spotlight infographics are available for download at: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/spotlight_infographic.htm.

Data Finder

The Data Finder is a useful tool on the *Health, United States* website for locating data by topic. Using the Data Finder, users may narrow down the list of tables and charts by health topic and populations of interest. Topics include areas such as drug overdose, prescription drug use, and functional limitation. Populations include groups classified by age, race and Hispanic origin, and geographic region. See the *Health, United States* website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/contents2018.htm>.

Data Considerations

Racial and Ethnic Data

Some tables in *Health, United States* present data according to race and Hispanic origin, consistent with a department-wide emphasis on ensuring that health data on racial and ethnic minority populations are presented whenever possible. Trend data on race and ethnicity are presented in the greatest detail possible after taking into account the quality of the data, the amount of missing data, and the number of observations. These issues significantly affect the availability of reportable data for certain populations, such as the Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander populations and the American Indian or Alaska Native populations. Standards for the classification of federal data on race and ethnicity are described in [Appendix II](#). (See [Appendix II](#), Race.)

Education and Income Data

Some tables in *Health, United States* present data according to socioeconomic status, using education and family income as proxy measures. Education and income data are generally obtained directly from survey respondents, and are not usually available from records-based data collection systems. (See [Appendix II](#), Education; Family income; Poverty.)

Statistical Significance

All statements in the text describing differences, or lack thereof, between estimates or across time indicate that statistical testing was performed. Differences between two point estimates were determined to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level using two-sided significance tests (z-tests) without correction for multiple comparisons. Terms such as “similar,” “no difference,” “stable,” and “no clear trend” indicate that the statistics being compared were not significantly different or that the slope of the trend line was not significantly different from zero. For data sources with no standard errors, relative differences greater than 10% are generally discussed in the text. Trends are tested using regression analysis. The specific approaches used to analyze trends over time depend on the data source, type of dependent variable, and number of data points (1). Chartbook data tables and Trend Tables include point estimates and standard errors, when available, for users who would like to perform additional statistical tests. Additional information on statistical reliability and testing can be found in the [Technical Notes](#), which follow the Chartbook.

Accessing *Health, United States*

The *Health, United States, 2018* Chartbook can be accessed at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/index.htm>. The Chartbook figures are also available for download as PowerPoint slides. Trend Tables and Chartbook data tables are available for download as Excel and PDF files. Excel Trend Table files include additional years of data not shown in the PDF files, along with standard errors, where available. Files may be downloaded from the *Health, United States* website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/contents2018.htm>.

Visitors to the website can join the *Health, United States* e-mail distribution list (https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/hus_electronic_mailing.htm) to receive announcements about release dates and notices of updates. Previous editions of *Health, United States* and its Chartbooks can also be accessed from the website.

Printed copies of *Health, United States* can be purchased from the U.S. Government Publishing Office at: <https://bookstore.gpo.gov>.

Questions?

If you have questions about *Health, United States* or related data products, please contact:

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Online request form: <https://www.cdc.gov/cdc-info/requestform.html>

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