



*Toplines*

***September/October 2000 Health News Index  
Survey***

**October 2000**

### **Methodology**

The Kaiser Family Foundation *Health News Index Survey* was designed and analyzed by researchers from the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between September 29 and October 2, 2000, among a nationally representative random sample of 949 adults ages 18 and over.

The margin of sampling error for the survey is plus or minus 3 percentage points for total respondents. For results based on smaller subsets of respondents the margin of sampling error is higher. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.

Values less than 0.5% are indicated by an asterisk (\*). “VOL” indicates that a response was volunteered by respondent, not an explicitly offered choice.

1. To begin... What do you think is the most important problem in health or health care for the government to address? Is there another health problem you think is almost as important?

<u>Total Mention</u>	
14	Cost of health care
12	Senior citizens' care/ issues
	Cost of prescription drugs/medicines
10	Policy/social issues – other specified
8	Universal coverage/ coverage for the uninsured
7	
6	Medicare*
6	HMO/Managed care concerns
5	Coverage for prescription drugs

NOTE: "Don't know" and responses mentioned by less than 5 percent are not shown.

2. Now I'm going to read you a list of some stories covered by news organizations in the last month or so. As I read each one, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (First,) how closely did you follow this story...? (**INSERT--READ AND RANDOMIZE**)

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not Too Closely</u>	<u>Not At All Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Ref. *</u>
a. Recall of Firestone tires on Ford Explorer sports utility vehicles because of safety problems	45	39	11	5	*
b. Release of former Los Alamos nuclear weapons scientist Wen Ho Lee, who had been accused of spying	16	26	22	33	2
c. Presidential candidate George W. Bush's plan to help the elderly pay for prescription drugs	22	32	24	21	2
d. New reports about the cost of health insurance premiums that employers pay for their workers	16	26	21	34	3
e. The Supreme Court's decision to temporarily stop California doctors from prescribing marijuana for medicinal use	10	19	22	45	3
f. Government decision about the use of federal funding for stem cell research	6	14	19	56	5
g. A new government study's findings about adult diabetes in the U.S.	12	19	18	47	3
h. Presidential and vice presidential candidates Gore and Lieberman's Medicare proposals	22	27	23	26	3

**READ INTRODUCTION:** Now I have a few more questions about some of the news stories that I just mentioned. If you're not sure of an answer, that's okay. Just tell me and I'll go to the next question...

3. As you may know, Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush recently presented a plan to provide prescription drugs to seniors. From what you've seen or heard in the news, does Bush's plan:

17 Expand the traditional Medicare program to pay directly for part of the prescription medicine costs for people age 65 and older

24 Have the federal government help people age 65 and over to buy PRIVATE health insurance plans that would pay part of their prescription medicine costs? (*correct answer*)

59 Don't know/Refused

4. As you may know, Democratic presidential candidate Al Gore recently presented a plan to provide prescription drugs to seniors. From what you've seen or heard in the news, does Gore's plan:

27 Expand the traditional Medicare program to pay directly for part of the prescription medicine costs for people age 65 and older (*correct answer*)

16 Have the federal government help people age 65 and over to buy PRIVATE health insurance plans that would pay part of their prescription medicine costs?

57 Don't know/Refused

5. From what you may have seen or heard in the news in the last month, have the health insurance premiums employers in the U. S. pay for their workers increased faster, slower, or about the same as they have in the previous years?

29 Faster (*correct answer*)  
11 Slower  
27 About the same  
33 Don't Know/Refused

6. In the past month or so, you may have seen or heard news about a new research study about diabetes done by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. From what you've seen or heard in the news, did this study find that the rates of adult diabetes have increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

42 Increased (*correct answer*)  
3 Decreased  
10 Stayed the same  
45 Don't Know/Refused

7. As you may know the Government recently made a decision about the use of federal funds to do research on stem cells that come from very early human embryos. From what you've seen or heard in the news, did they decide to...

17 Allow scientists to use federal funds for this type of research (*correct answer*)  
18 Continue to ban the use of federal funds for this type of research  
65 Don't Know/Refused

**DEMOGRAPHICS:****D1. RECORD SEX:**

- 48 Male
- 52 Female

**D2. Finally, I have just a few questions we will use to describe the people who took part in our survey... In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?**

- 26 Republican
- 32 Democrat
- 28 Independent
- 8 No preference/Not interested in politics
- 1 Other party
- 3 Don't know
- 2 Refused

**D3. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school? (DO NOT READ)**

- 3 None, or grade 1-8
- 12 High school incomplete (grades 9-11)
- 32 High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
- 5 Business, technical, or vocational school AFTER high school
- 23 Some college, no 4-year degree
- 17 College graduate (B.S., B.A. or other 4-year degree)
- 7 Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a master's degree or Ph.D; law or medical school)
- \* Don't Know
- 1 Refused

**D4. What is your age?**

- 21 18-29
- 41 30-49
- 21 50-64
- 15 65+
- 2 Don't know/Refused

D5. Last year -- that is, in 1999 -- what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. **(READ)**

- 8 Less than \$10,000
- 10 \$10,000 to under \$20,000
- 14 \$20,000 to under \$30,000
- 20 \$30,000 to under \$50,000
- 16 \$50,000 to under \$75,000
- 6 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
- 5 \$100,000 to under \$200,000
- 1 \$200,000 or more
- 10 Don't know
- 9 Refused

D6. Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background?

D7. What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian or some other race? **(IF RESPONDENT SAYS HISPANIC ASK: Do you consider yourself a white Hispanic or a black Hispanic?)**

- 74 White, Non Hispanic
- 24 Total Non-White
  - 11 Black or African-American
  - 9 Hispanic
  - 2 Asian
  - 2 Other or mixed race
- 2 Don't know/Refused





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