



Toplines

May/June 2001 Health News Index Survey

June 2001

Methodology

The Kaiser Family Foundation *Health News Index Survey* was designed and analyzed by researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between May 31 and June 3, 2001, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,001 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?

COSTS (NET)	32
Cost of health care	8
Cost of prescription drugs/medicines	15
Cost of insurance/affordable insurance	7
Costs – other (incl. doctor and hospital costs)	5
ACCESS (NET)	29
Universal coverage / coverage for uninsured	12
Health insurance (general)	4
Health care availability (general)	5
Health care for the poor	4
Access to health care – other (incl. staff cutbacks and difficulties w/pre-existing conditions)	5
POLICY/SOCIAL ISSUES (NET)	32
Senior citizens' care/ issues (incl. Social Security)	15
Coverage of rx drugs (for elderly and disabled)	5
Medicare	6
Children's care/issues	4
Policy/Social issues – other (incl. abortion, drug abuse, Medicaid, etc.)	8
MEDICAL CONDITIONS/PROCEDURES (NET)	19
Cancer/Cancer Research	10
AIDS/AIDS research/HIV	9
Medical Conditions/ Procedures – other	7
QUALITY OF CARE (NET)	7
HMO/Managed care concerns	5
Quality of care – other	3
OTHER	8
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	19

NOTE: "Don't know" and responses mentioned by less than 5 percent are not shown. Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple responses

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. President Bush's appointment of a new commission to make recommendations about Social Security	19	29	21	28	2
b. Recent proposals to establish a global AIDS fund to help combat the AIDS epidemic in developing countries	15	28	22	33	1
c. Supreme Court ruling regarding the distribution of marijuana for medical purposes	21	33	20	25	1
d. New guidelines for the treatment of high cholesterol released by the National Institutes of Health	13	21	21	44	1
e. Congressional action on President Bush's ban on funding to international family planning groups that counsel on or perform abortions	18	21	20	39	2
f. The continuing debate in Congress over the "Patients' Bill of Rights"	17	27	22	32	2
g. The energy crisis in California	39	34	14	12	1
h. The delay in Timothy McVeigh's execution	34	36	15	13	1
i. Approval of Gleevac, a new cancer drug, to treat leukemia by the FDA, that is the Food and Drug Administration	15	25	19	39	2
j. The FDA's hearing about prescription allergy medicines Claritin, Allegra, and Zyrtec	17	26	22	33	2

3. As you may know, the Secretary General of the United Nations has been working to establish a global fund to help combat the AIDS epidemic in developing countries. From what you may have seen or heard in the news has President Bush . . . **(INSERT—READ ITEMS IN ORDER)**

- 6 Said that the U.S. will NOT contribute to the fund
- 9 Said that the U.S. will contribute to the fund – *correct answer*
- 22 Said that the U.S. will only contribute to the fund if we are in control of managing it
- 63 Don't know/Refused

4. Debate over Patients' Rights Legislation has been in the news lately. From what you may have seen or heard, is the major debate about . . . **(INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE)**

- 24 Allowing patients to sue their health insurance plans – *correct answer*
- 20 How much managed care plans can charge patients
- 18 The privacy of medical records
- 37 Don't know/Refused

5. The FDA is considering taking action on three common prescription allergy medicines, Claritin, Allegra, and Zyrtec. As far as you know, are they considering . . . **(INSERT--READ AND RANDOMIZE)**

- 36 Making these medicines available over the counter without a doctor's prescription - *correct answer*
- 7 Pulling these medicines from the market over safety concerns
- 9 Suggesting new guidelines for determining who should take these medicines
- 48 Don't know/Refused

(NOTE: Results for this question do not come from the May/June HNI. The question was asked on a survey of 1,108 adults conducted June 7 – June 10, 2001)

6. As you may know, the FDA is considering allowing some common prescription allergy medicines to be sold over the counter. Do you think the FDA should or should not approve the sale of these allergy medicines over the counter?

- 64 Yes
- 26 No
- 10 Don't know/Refused

7. If the FDA were to approve this plan, the overall price of these medicines is likely to decrease, but health insurance plans would no longer cover the cost of these medicines. Consumers would pay the full cost out of their own pockets. Now that I've told you what might happen, do you still think the FDA should approve selling Claritin, Allegra, and Zyrtec over the counter?
- 42 Still Favor
 - 26 Initially Opposed
 - 17 Would Switch to Oppose
 - 15 Don't know/Refused
8. Do you think you and your family would be better off, worse off, or not much affected either way if such a change were made?
- 17 Better off
 - 12 Worse off
 - 66 Not much affected either way
 - 5 Don't know/Refused
9. Prescription antihistamines, such as Claritin, Allegra, and Zyrtec, are used to treat allergies. In the past 12 months, has a doctor prescribed a prescription antihistamine for you or someone in your family?
- 37 Yes
 - 62 No
 - 1 Don't know/Refused
10. In the past 12 months, have you or someone in your family purchased an over the counter antihistamine such as Benadryl, Tavist, or Chlortrimeton? These are also used to treat allergies.
- 45 Yes
 - 54 No
 - 1 Don't know/Refused
11. Are you, yourself now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? A health plan would include any private insurance plan through your employer or a plan that you purchased yourself, as well as a government program like Medicare or (Medicaid)? **USE VARIANT WORDING IN CALIFORNIA:** (Medi-Cal)
- 86 Yes, insured
 - 14 No, not insured
 - * Don't Know/Refused

12. Thinking about the next six months, please tell me how worried are you that each of the following might happen to you. First, how worried are you that...? (**INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE**)

READ FOR FIRST ITEM AND THEN AS NECESSARY: Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

	<u>Very worried</u>	<u>Somewhat worried</u>	<u>Not too worried</u>	<u>Not at all worried</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>	<u>Not Insured</u>
a. You might not be able to get the health care services you think you need	27	19	21	32	2	N/A
b. The amount you pay for your health care services or health insurance will increase	36	23	16	23	1	N/A
c. You might not be able to get the health care you think you need because you can't afford it	29	17	20	33	1	N/A
d. The quality of health care services you receive will get worse	30	22	21	24	2	N/A
e. You will have to stay in your current job instead of taking a new job for fear of losing your health benefits	15	8	12	48	4	14
f. You might lose your health insurance coverage	16	9	18	42	*	14
g. Your HEALTH PLAN would be more concerned about saving money for the plan than about what is the best treatment for you	28	24	14	18	2	14

13. Which ONE of the following has been your MOST important source of news and information about health issues? Would you say...(READ)?
- 13a. (IF TELEVISION ASK) Would you say your MOST important source of news and information about health issues is specifically...(READ)

- 48 Television
 - 20 News shows on major broadcast TV networks, such as ABC, CBS, NBC or PBS,
 - 12 Cable TV channels such as CNN, MSNBC, or Fox News Channel,
 - 7 Local TV news, OR
 - 5 Morning shows like Today or Good Morning America?
 - 3 TV in general (VOL.)
 - 1 Don't know/Refused
- 21 Newspapers
- 10 Talking with friends and family
- 7 Radio
- 7 The Internet
- 4 Magazines
- 1 Other most important source (VOL.)
- 1 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?

- 29 Republican
- 30 Democrat
- 33 Independent
- 4 No preference/Not interested in politics (VOL.)
- 1 Other party (VOL.)
- 2 Don't know
- 3 Refused

D3. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school?

- 3 None, or grade 1-8
- 11 High school incomplete (grades 9-11)
- 35 High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
- 2 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)
- 8 Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a master's degree or Ph.D; law or medical school)
- 0 Don't Know
- 1 Refused

D4. What is your age?

- 20 18-29
- 41 30-49
- 20 50-64
- 16 65+
- 0 Don't know
- 2 Refused

D5. Last year -- that is, in 2000 -- what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category.

- 7 Less than \$10,000
- 13 \$10,000 to under \$20,000
- 13 \$20,000 to under \$30,000
- 19 \$30,000 to under \$50,000
- 15 \$50,000 to under \$75,000
- 8 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
- 6 \$100,000 to under \$200,000
- 1 \$200,000 or more
- 4 Don't know
- 13 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?**

73	White, Non Hispanic
27	Total Non-White
11	Black or African-American
9	Hispanic
3	Asian
6	Other or mixed race
3	Don't know/Refused



The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation
2400 Sand Hill Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025
Phone: (650) 854-9400 Fax: (650) 854-4800

Washington Office:
1330 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 347-5270 Fax: (202) 347-5274

www.kff.org

Additional copies of this publication (#7264) are available on the
Kaiser Family Foundation's website at www.kff.org.

The Kaiser Family Foundation is a non-profit, private operating foundation dedicated to providing information and analysis on health care issues to policymakers, the media, the health care community, and the general public. The Foundation is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries.