

2019 Cleveland Clinic MENTion It® Survey Results Overview

METHODOLOGY

This overview presents the findings of an online survey conducted among a national probability sample consisting of 1,174 American males 18 years of age and older, living in the continental United States.

The total sample data is nationally representative regarding age, gender, ethnicity and educational attainment. The online surveys were conducted by YouGov and completed between April 9-11, 2019. The margin of error (MOE) for the total sample of each survey at the 95% confidence level is +/- 2.86 percentage points.

This document contains the data and key findings for:

- The total sample overall
- Marital status
 - Single (n= 552, MOE +/- 4.2)
 - Married or in domestic/civil partnership (also referred to as “partnered men”) (n= 622, MOE +/- 3.9)
- Age breakdown
 - 18-34 years old (n= 358, MOE +/- 5.2)
 - 35-54 years old (n= 363, MOE +/- 5.1)
 - 55+ (n=453, +/- 4.6)
- Race
 - White (n= 761, MOE +/- 3.6)
 - Black (n= 135, MOE +/- 8.4)
 - Hispanic (n= 189, MOE +/- 7.1)
- Sexuality
 - Heterosexual or straight (n=978, MOE +/- 3.1)
 - Homosexual/Bisexual (n=144, MOE +/- 8.2)

AVOIDANCE

- **About two-thirds (65%) of men tend to wait as long as possible to see their doctor if they have any health symptoms or an injury.**
 - This is particularly true for men ages 35-54 who are more likely to agree they tend to tough it out as long as possible before going to the doctor (72%), compared to men 55 and up (59%).
- **In fact, going to the doctor is so unappealing that most men (72%) would rather do household chores, like cleaning the bathroom or mowing the lawn, than go to the doctor (28%).**
 - Three-quarters (77%) of men who are married or in a domestic partnership would rather go shopping with their wife or significant other than go to the doctor (23%).
- **Single men disagree – a date with their doctor isn't as bad as a blind date.**
 - Two-thirds (65%) of single men would rather go to the doctor than go on a blind date.
- **Why do men avoid the doctor? Stereotypes taught at a young age may be to blame.**
 - Two-fifths (41%) of men were told as children that men don't complain about health issues.
- **Men prefer to self-diagnose.**
 - Over three-fifths (65%) of men prefer to try to self-diagnose before going to the doctor.
 - But if they had to choose, 81% of US men would rather go to the doctor than ask for medical advice on social media, blogs or forums (aka "crowdsourcing") (19%).
 - That said, younger men aged 18 to 34 (30%) are more likely to crowdsource a diagnosis online than men aged 35 to 54 (17%) or 55 and older (12%).

MEN + DOCTORS

- **Even if men do go to a doctor, some are holding back.**
 - One-fifth (20%) of men admit they have not been completely honest with their doctor before.
- **Why are men withholding the truth from their doctors?**
 - **A sense of shame and judgment is one reason keeping men from being entirely honest.**
 - One-quarter of men (25%) have felt judged by their doctor before.
 - Among those who have not been completely honest with their doctor in the past, the top reasons why include:
 - They were embarrassed (46%)
 - They felt uncomfortable (40%)
 - They didn't want to be judged (39%)
 - Men aged 35-54-years-old who have been dishonest with their doctor in the past are more likely to hold back from their doctor because they don't want to be judged (45%), compared to men 55 and up (35%).

- **They also don't want to know they may have a health problem.**
 - About two-fifths (38%) of men who were not completely honest with their doctor held back because they thought the problem would resolve itself.
 - One-third (36%) of men who haven't been honest with their doctor held back because they didn't want to hear that they needed to change their diet/lifestyle (i.e. exercise more, change diet, quit smoking, etc.).
 - Of those who haven't been entirely honest with doctors, older men 55 and up (43%) are more likely to withhold from their doctor because they don't want to hear they need to change their lifestyle, compared to 25% of 18-34-year-olds.
 - Two-fifths (37%) of men who admit they haven't been completely honest with their doctor withheld information because they knew something was wrong but weren't ready to face the diagnosis and/or would rather not know if they have any health issues.
- **Finally, many men are simply uncomfortable talking about "below the belt" issues and sexual health.**
 - When asked about a range of health issues, 46% of men are most uncomfortable talking to their doctors about sex-related concerns, such as "below the belt issues" (skin irritations, erectile dysfunction, sexually transmitted diseases/infections) and/or their sexual history – more so than talking about:
 - Weight/diet – 23%
 - Workout frequency – 14%
 - Alcohol consumption – 12%
 - Drug (illegal and un-prescribed) – 10%
 - Smoking habits – 9%
 - Adherence to medication prescribed – 9%
 - Blood in urine – 7%

MOTIVATING MEN TO TAKE ACTION

When asked "Which, if any, of the following activities do you regularly do to "take care of yourself"?" we saw the following responses:

- **Only half of men surveyed said that they consider getting their annual check-up a regular part of taking care of themselves.**
 - Drinking water (76%)
 - Getting their annual check-up (50%)
 - Taking vitamins (49%)
 - Getting enough sleep (49%)
 - Monitoring weight (41%)

- **For many men, their personal and family responsibilities drive healthy behaviors.**
 - Eight-in-ten (82%) men try to stay healthy to live longer for friends and family who rely on them.
 - And despite their desire to stay healthy for their loved ones, only 50% engage in preventative care by getting an annual physical.
 - That number declines to 26% among younger men aged 18-34-year-olds, compared to 43% of those 35-54-year-olds and three-quarters (74%) of men 55 and older.
 - And men who aren't already inclined to see their doctor would be most motivated to go if their health starts to interfere with their work (43%), becomes a burden on their family and friends (39%) or interferes with their sex life (18%).
 - Younger men ages 18-34-years-old (21%) and men 35-54-years-old (20%) who aren't motivated to see a doctor are more driven to do so when their health interferes with their sex life, compared to 11% of men 55 and up.

- **Flexibility and convenience are key.**
 - Of the men who aren't already seeing their doctor for annual check-ups, 61% would be more likely to do so if seeing the doctor was more convenient- in terms of offering virtual visits, scheduling appointments outside of work hours, having someone else make the appointment for them and/or getting screened at events they're already participating in.
 - Men 35-54-years-old (46%) who aren't already getting an annual check-up are more likely than younger men ages 18-34-years-old (34%) to be incentivized by the option of making appointments outside of work hours.
 - Another top way to encourage men to visit their doctor for their annual health checkup is not having to tell the office the reason for their visit when making the call (21%).