

Mental Health Among Older Adults Before and During COVID-19 Pandemic

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www.healthyagingpoll.org

Questions were answered by respondents age 50–80.

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q1. In general, how would you rate your mental health?

1. Excellent
2. Very Good
3. Good
4. Fair
5. Poor

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q2. Compared to 20 years ago, how would you rate your overall mental health now?

1. Better
2. About the same
3. Worse

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q3. Compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic began, how would you rate your current overall mental health?

1. Better than before the pandemic
2. About the same
3. Worse than before the pandemic

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q4. How comfortable are you talking about your mental health?

1. Very comfortable
2. Somewhat comfortable
3. Not very comfortable
4. Not at all comfortable

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q5. If you had a mental health concern, who would you most want to talk with about it?

1. Primary care provider
2. Mental health professional (e.g. counselor, therapist, or psychiatrist)
3. Religious clergy
4. Spouse/Partner
5. Other family/friends
6. No one

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q6. In the past 2 years, have you talked with any of the following about your mental health?

Select all that apply.

1. Primary care provider
2. Mental health professional (e.g. counselor, therapist, psychiatrist)
3. Religious clergy
4. Spouse/Partner
5. Other family/friends
6. No one

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q7. In the past 2 years, have you been referred to or considered seeing a mental health professional (e.g. counselor, therapist, psychiatrist)?

1. Yes, referred
2. Yes, considered seeing
3. No



ALL RESPONDENTS

Q8. Have you ever seen a mental health professional (e.g. counselor, therapist, psychiatrist)?

1. Yes, within the past year
2. Yes, 1-2 years ago
3. Yes, more than 2 years ago
4. No

If Q7 = 4

Q9. Do you have any hesitations about seeing a mental health professional in the future?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q12. Since March 2020, have you done any of the following for your mental health:

| | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Discussed any new mental health concerns with your primary care provider | | |
| Started seeing a mental health professional (counselor, therapist, psychiatrist) | | |
| Used a new app or web-based program for your mental health | | |
| Adjusted or started a new mental health medication | | |
| Made a lifestyle change to improve my well-being (such as exercise, diet, meditation) | | |

If Q8 = 1 or 3

Q10. Why would you be hesitant to see a mental health professional? Select all that apply.

1. I don't think I would need to
2. I don't think it would help
3. I could not afford it
4. I would feel embarrassed
5. Too hard to find a provider
6. Other

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q11. Since March 2020, how would you describe the following for yourself?

| | Better | Same | Worse |
|--------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Sleep | | | |
| Anxiety/worry | | | |
| Depression/sadness | | | |

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q13. Over the past 2 weeks, including today, how often have you been bothered by the following problems:

| | Not at all | Several days | More than half the days | Nearly every day |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Having little interest or pleasure in doing things | | | | |
| Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless | | | | |
| Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge | | | | |
| Not being able to stop or control worrying | | | | |
| Feeling stressed | | | | |

Data Source and Methods

This National Poll on Healthy Aging report presents findings from a nationally representative household survey conducted exclusively by Ipsos Public Affairs, LLC (“Ipsos”) for the University of Michigan’s Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation. National Poll on Healthy Aging surveys are conducted by recruiting from Ipsos KnowledgePanel®, the largest national, probability-based panel in the U.S.

This survey module was administered online in January 2021 to a randomly selected, stratified group of older adults age 50–80 (n=2,023). The sample was subsequently weighted to reflect population figures from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The completion rate was 78% among panel members contacted to participate. The margin of error is ±1 to 3 percentage points for questions asked of the full sample and higher among subgroups.

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