

1978 NATIONAL HEALTH INTERVIEW SURVEY 10/01/2009  
PUBLIC USE DATA RELEASE

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WARNING - DATA USE RESTRICTIONS! Read Carefully before Using

The Public Health Service Act (Section 308 (d)) provides that the data collected by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), may be used only for the purpose of health statistical reporting and analysis.

Any effort to determine the identity of any reported case is prohibited by this law.

NCHS does all it can to assure that the identity of data subjects cannot be disclosed. All direct identifiers, as well as any characteristics that might lead to identification, are omitted from the data files. Any intentional identification or disclosure of a person or establishment violates the assurances of confidentiality given to the providers of the information.

Therefore, users will:

1. Use the data in these data files for statistical reporting and analysis only.
2. Make no use of the identity of any person or establishment discovered inadvertently and advise the Director, NCHS, of any such discovery (301-458-4000).
3. Not link these data files with individually identifiable data from other NCHS or non-NCHS data files.

By using these data, you signify your agreement to comply with the above-stated statutory based requirements.

INTRODUCTION

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is conducted annually by the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The NHIS administers face-to-face interviews in a nationally representative sample of households. Each week a probability sample of the civilian non-institutionalized population of the United States is interviewed by personnel of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Information is obtained about the health and other characteristics of each member of the household.

The NHIS includes a basic questionnaire that remains the same each year plus one or more additional questionnaires that change periodically. More information on the survey in general and the 1978 version, in particular, is found in the Current Estimates Series report:

[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr\\_10/sr10\\_130.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_10/sr10_130.pdf)

NOTES TO USERS

Users are advised to subscribe to the NHIS Listserv to receive notice of any corrections/updates. For information about joining the Listserv, see the CONTACT INFORMATION section at the bottom of this document.

## 1978 NHIS FILES AND DOCUMENTATION

The 1978 NHIS files and related documentation, not including FAMEDEXP.DAT and IMMUNIZE.DAT, have been previously distributed via various formats -- magnetic tape, ASCII CDs, etc. FAMEDEXP.DAT and IMMUNIZE.DAT were released for the first time in 2009 on the Internet.

The files listed below comprise the 1978 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) public use data release as found on the Internet.

A copy of this file (README.PDF) is located at the following ftp location:

`ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Dataset_Documentation/NHIS/1978/`

## 1978 NHIS DATA FILES

Five 1978 NHIS files are referred to as "core" files because they were administered each year (through 1996) without major modification. The five core files are Household, Person, Condition, Doctor Visit, and Hospital.

The 1978 NHIS data have been divided into nine data files, consisting of the five core files and four supplemental files. For ease of transmission, each of the 1978 NHIS data files has been converted into a self-extracting compressed format. To load and expand a compressed file into an ASCII file, perform the following steps:

Download a compressed file onto your hard drive into an appropriate directory (folder). For example: Copy the data file HOUSEHLD.EXE into a directory called NHIS1978. To do this, create a directory on your C: drive called NHIS1978. Then, using your browser, go to the FTP site containing the 1978 NHIS data files (see address at end of this section). Right click on the HOUSEHLD.EXE file. Depending on your browser, select Save Link As... or Save Target As... Type `c:\nhis1978\HOUSEHLD.EXE` in the box labeled File Name and hit Enter. To then extract HOUSEHLD.EXE into the ASCII file HOUSEHLD.DAT, go to the directory NHIS1978 and do the following:

- From DOS        - in the `c:\nhis1978` directory, type HOUSEHLD and hit Enter
  
- From Windows - Double-click on HOUSEHLD.EXE  
                  or  
                  Click the Start Button, Click Run, enter  
                  `c:\nhis1978\HOUSEHLD.EXE` and hit Enter.

The ASCII file HOUSEHLD.DAT will be generated which can then be used for processing by PC statistical software packages which utilize ASCII formatted input, or transferred to another computer for processing.

NOTE: The 1978 NHIS files are large in size. Please use caution and check your disk drive capacity before extracting.

## 1978 NHIS DATA FILES

| NHIS FILE TYPE       | FILE NAME    | RECORD LENGTH | # RECS  |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------|---------|
| HOUSEHOLD            | HOUSEHLD.DAT | 516           | 41,164  |
| PERSON               | PERSONSX.DAT | 516           | 109,940 |
| CONDITION            | CONDITON.DAT | 516           | 57,517  |
| HOSPITAL             | HOSPITAL.DAT | 516           | 14,583  |
| DOCTOR VISIT         | DRVISITX.DAT | 516           | 20,100  |
| HEALTH INSURANCE     | HEALTHIN.DAT | 576           | 109,940 |
| SMOKING              | SMOKINGX.DAT | 263           | 11,896  |
| FAMILY MED. EXPENSES | FAMEDEXP.DAT | 670           | 27,253  |
| IMMUNIZATION         | IMMUNIZE.DAT | 535           | 15,705  |

Note: The above data files are the unzipped files in ASCII format.

The 1978 NHIS data files are located at:

[ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health\\_Statistics/NCHS/Datasets/NHIS/1978](ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Datasets/NHIS/1978)

### 1978 NHIS FILE LAYOUTS (CODEBOOKS)

There is a file layout (also called codebook or data dictionary) for with each data file. The file layouts are in PDF format and can be viewed with Adobe Acrobat software. The Adobe Acrobat Reader software can be downloaded from the Adobe Acrobat Web site at:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

| File Name     | Description of Component            | File Format |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| FAMEDEXP.PDF  | Family Medical Expenses file layout | Adobe PDF   |
| HEALTHIN.PDF  | Health Insurance file layout        | Adobe PDF   |
| IMMUNIZE.PDF  | Immunization file layout            | Adobe PDF   |
| NHISCORE.PDF* | Core files layout                   | Adobe PDF   |
| SMOKINGX.PDF  | Smoking file layout                 | Adobe PDF   |

\*NHISCORE.PDF contains the file layouts for the following five core files: Household, Person, Condition, Doctor Visit, and Hospital.

The 1978 NHIS data file layout documentation files are located at:

[ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health\\_Statistics/NCHS/Dataset\\_Documentation/NHIS/1978](ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Dataset_Documentation/NHIS/1978)

## 1978 NHIS SAS INPUT STATEMENTS

Sample SAS programs containing input statements have been provided for each data file. By using the ASCII data files (.DAT files) as input to these programs, SAS data files can be created. The SAS input statement programs are stored in ASCII format.

| File Name    | Description of Component                 | File Format |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| CONDITON.SAS | Condition file SAS program               | ASCII       |
| DRVISITX.SAS | Doctor Visit file SAS program            | ASCII       |
| FAMEDEXP.SAS | Family Medical Expenses file SAS program | ASCII       |
| HEALTHIN.SAS | Health Insurance file SAS program        | ASCII       |
| HOSPITAL.SAS | Hospital file SAS program                | ASCII       |
| HOUSEHLD.SAS | Household file SAS program               | ASCII       |
| IMMUNIZE.SAS | Immunization file SAS program            | ASCII       |
| PERSONSX.SAS | Person file SAS program                  | ASCII       |
| SMOKINGX.SAS | Smoking file SAS program                 | ASCII       |

The 1978 NHIS sample SAS input statement programs are located at:

[ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health\\_Statistics/NCHS/Program\\_Code/NHIS/1978](ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Program_Code/NHIS/1978)

## 1978 NHIS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES AND FLASHCARDS

The 1978 NHIS questionnaires and flashcards can be found as an appendix to the 1978 Current Estimates publication which is on the Internet at:

[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr\\_10/sr10\\_130.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_10/sr10_130.pdf)

One NHIS supplement questionnaire is not included in the 1978 Current Estimates publication. This questionnaire is available at:

[ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health\\_Statistics/NCHS/Survey\\_Questionnaires/NHIS/1978/](ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Survey_Questionnaires/NHIS/1978/)

| File Name        | Description of Component                          | File Format |
|------------------|---|-------------|
| FAMEDEXP_2Ba.PDF | Family Medical Expenses "long form" questionnaire | Adobe PDF   |

## MISCELLANEOUS

All information collected in the survey is from reports by responsible family members residing in the household. When possible, all adult family members participate in the interview. However, proxy responses are accepted for family members who are not at home and are required for all children and for family members who are physically or mentally incapable of responding for themselves. Although a considerable effort is made to ensure accurate reporting, the information from both proxy respondents and self-respondents may be inaccurate because the respondent is unaware of relevant information, has forgotten it, does not wish to reveal it to an interviewer, or does not understand the intended meaning of a question.

Data from the core in 1978 were collected for 52 weeks. Data from the Immunization special health topic (supplement) were collected for 26 weeks (July-December 1978). Data from the Family Medical Expenses special health topic (supplement) were collected for 13 weeks (January-March 1978).

The sample for the NHIS is redesigned every decade using population data from the most recent decennial census. The design used in 1978 was used in 1973-1984.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Updates about new data releases, publications, or errors will be sent to members of the NHIS Listserv. To join, visit the CDC website at:

[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis\\_listserv.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis_listserv.htm)

For additional information on the NHIS, visit the website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>

If you have questions or comments on any aspect of the NHIS, please contact us:

E-mail : [nhislist@cdc.gov](mailto:nhislist@cdc.gov)  
Call : 301-458-4901  
FAX : 301-458-4035  
Mail : DHHS:PHS:CDC:NCHS:DHIS  
3311 Toledo RD Room 2217  
Hyattsville MD 20782  
Home Page: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>

For additional information on NCHS data products, contact the:

Data Dissemination Branch, NCHS  
3311 Toledo Road  
Hyattsville, MD 20782  
Tel: 1-301-458-4636 or 1-866-441-NCHS  
E-mail: [nchsquery@cdc.gov](mailto:nchsquery@cdc.gov)  
Internet: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

This material has been cleared for public distribution by CDC/ATSDR and will be authentic if obtained directly from [ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health\\_Statistics/NCHS/](ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/). CDC/ATSDR takes all effort to assure the authenticity of electronically distributed documents. However, in all instances where the electronic and official agency record differ, the authenticity of the official agency record is controlling.

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