

## AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes for December 1987

### Provisional Data From the National Health Interview Survey

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#### Introduction

The National Center for Health Statistics has introduced in the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) a special set of supplemental questions on the adult population's knowledge and attitudes about acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). This report presents provisional findings for December, the fifth month of data collection with the AIDS questionnaire. Data for August, September, October, and November 1987 have been published in *Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics* Nos. 146, 148, 150, and 151.

The *Advance Data* reports describing the NHIS AIDS data have been restricted to simple descriptive statistics in order to permit their timely release. Thus, these reports do not attempt to explain or interpret differences among population subgroups in AIDS knowledge or to examine relationships among various measures of knowledge, attitudes, and perceived risk. The AIDS data base will permit more complex analyses than those presented in this series of *Advance Data* reports, and such analyses currently are being undertaken by various groups in the Public Health Service.

The AIDS questionnaire was designed to provide baseline estimates of public knowledge and attitudes about AIDS transmission and prevention of AIDS virus infection and to measure changes in knowledge and attitudes over time. The data also were needed as input for the planning and development of AIDS educational campaigns and for evaluation of major educational efforts.

The AIDS questionnaire was developed by the National Center for Health Statistics and interagency working groups established by the Information, Education and Risk Factor Reduction Subcommittee of the Public Health Service Executive Task Force on AIDS. The working groups included representatives from the Centers for Disease Control; the National Institutes of Health; the Alcohol, Drug

Abuse and Mental Health Administration; and the Health Resources and Services Administration.

The questionnaire includes items on self-assessment of knowledge about AIDS; sources of information about AIDS; knowledge about AIDS and AIDS-related risk factors, modes of transmission, and blood tests for the AIDS virus; plans to take such a test; recent experience with blood donation; self-assessment of chances of getting AIDS; personal knowledge of people with AIDS or the AIDS virus; and finally, willingness of respondents to take part in a proposed national seroprevalence study.

December 1987 was the last month in which AIDS data were collected using the questionnaire described in this report. In May 1988, a new AIDS questionnaire will be included in the National Health Interview Survey. This revised questionnaire will modify some of the questions on sources of AIDS information, blood donation history, and blood testing and will include items designed to measure the impact of educational campaigns.

This report presents provisional data for December 1987 for all AIDS questionnaire items. Table 1 displays percent distributions of persons 18 years of age and over by response categories according to age, sex, race, and education. In most cases, the actual question asked of the respondent is reproduced verbatim in table 1, along with the response categories. In a few cases, questions or response categories have been rephrased or combined. Refusals and other nonresponses are excluded from the denominators in calculating estimates, but responses of "don't know" are included.

#### Selected findings

The following highlights describe various aspects of changes in AIDS knowledge and attitudes as observed in the August through December data from the NHIS AIDS

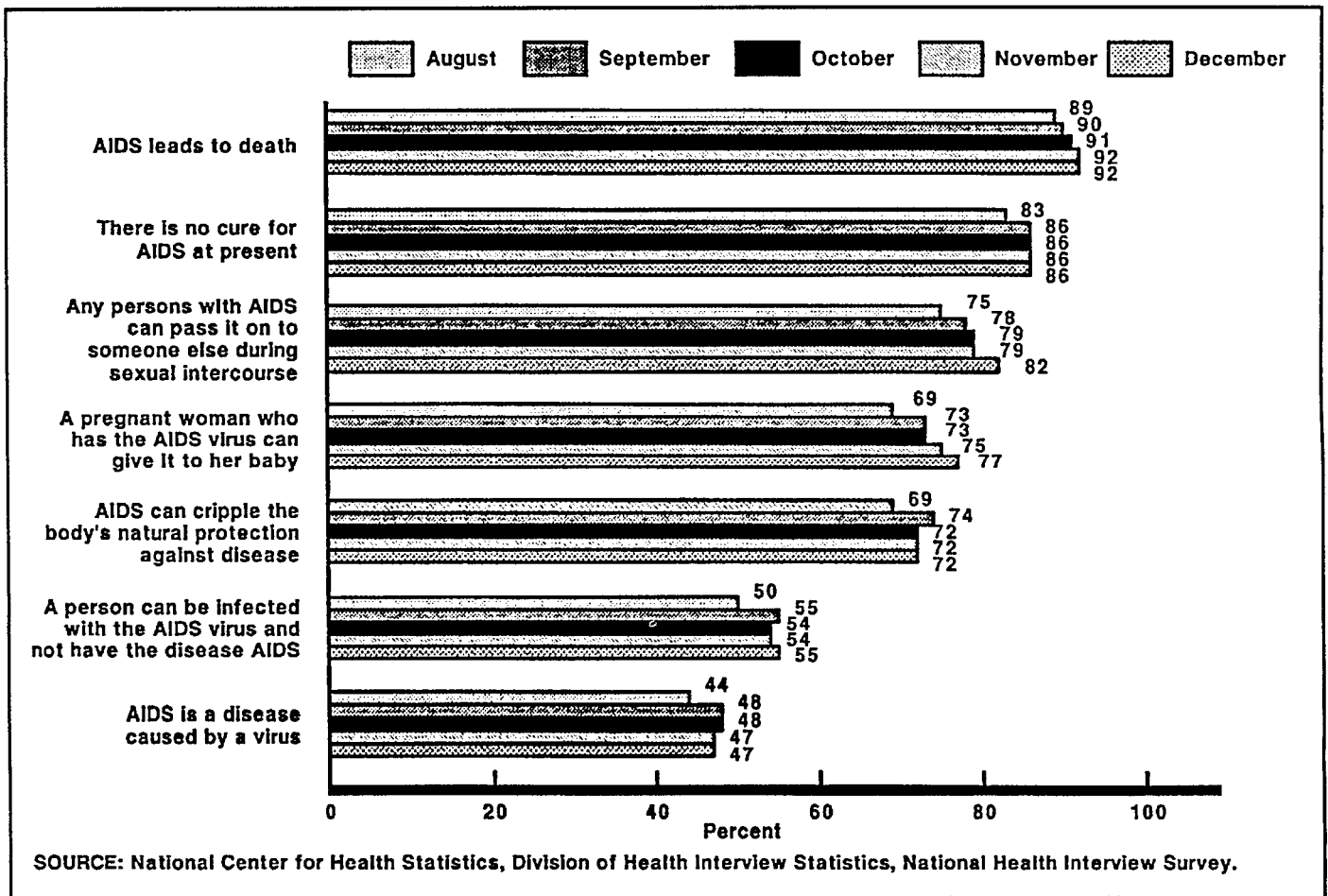


Figure 1. Estimated percent of adults 18 years of age and over who think selected statements about AIDS are definitely true: United States, August-December 1987

survey. Unless otherwise noted, all differences cited in the text are statistically significant.

**Awareness of AIDS**—More than 99 percent of the adult population has heard of AIDS, and three-quarters of all adults last saw, heard, or read something about AIDS in the 3 days preceding the NHIS interview. These figures did not change between August and December 1987.

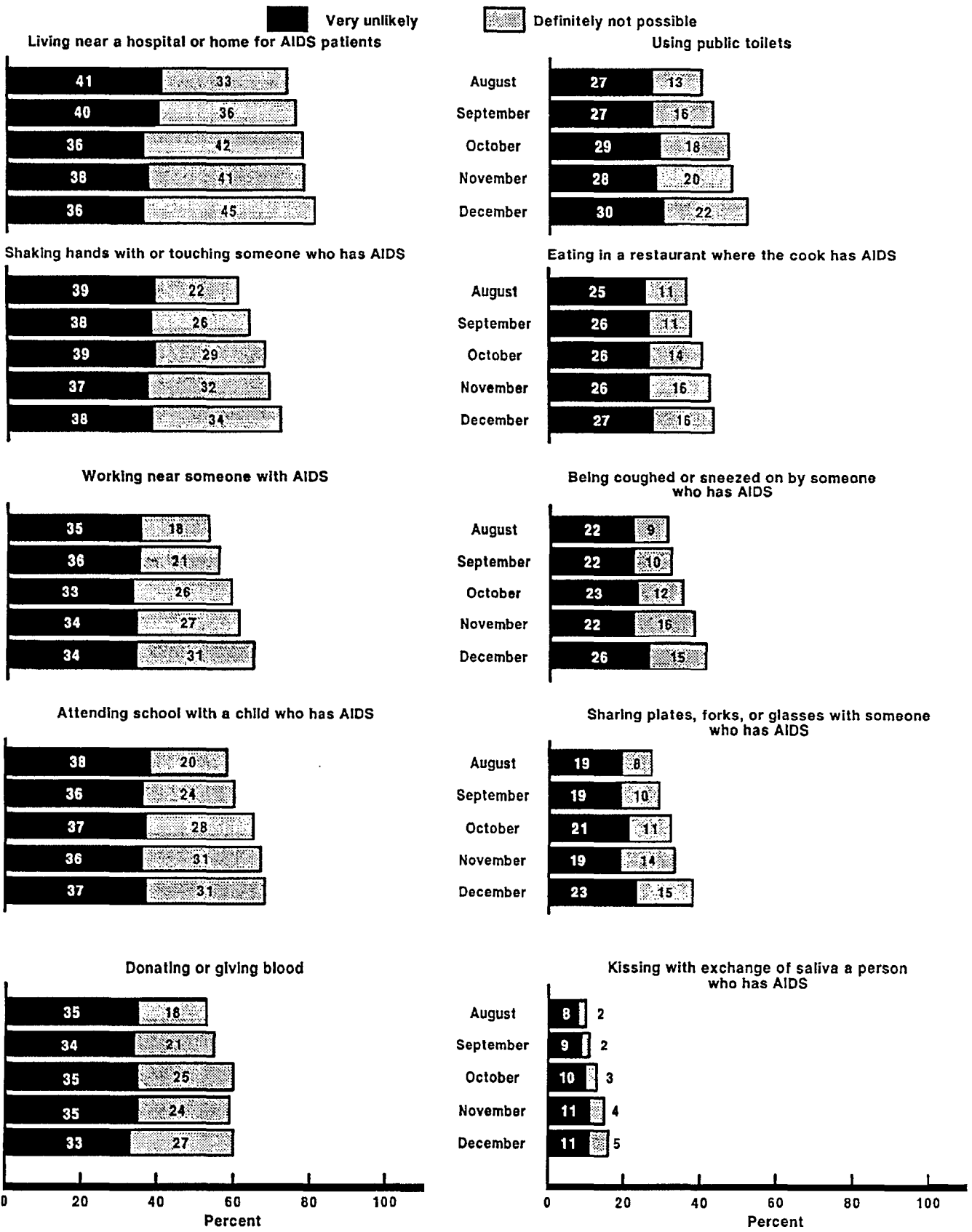
**Self-perceived knowledge**—The overall level of self-perceived knowledge about AIDS changed little between August and December. In December, 22 percent of all adults stated that they know a lot about AIDS, 40 percent stated that they know some, 27 percent felt they know a little, and 11 percent claimed to know nothing about AIDS. The racial difference in self-perceived AIDS knowledge has increased over time. In August, 20 percent of white adults stated that they know a lot about AIDS, compared to 18 percent of black adults. In December, the respective proportions were 23 percent and 14 percent. The proportions of adults who reported knowing little or nothing about AIDS were 39 percent for white adults and 49 percent for black adults in August; in December, the comparable proportions were 35 and 51 percent, respectively.

**General knowledge**—Following increases in a number of measures of general AIDS knowledge between August and September 1987 (figure 1), there were few changes during the remainder of the year. However, survey results

indicated continuous improvement in knowledge of how the AIDS virus is transmitted. The proportion of adults who thought it definitely true that the AIDS virus can be transmitted through sexual intercourse increased from 75 percent in August to 82 percent in December; for perinatal transmission, the increase was from 69 to 77 percent. Awareness of the possibility of AIDS virus transmission via shared needles for intravenous drug use was even more widespread, 93 percent, but did not increase over time.

In December, 92 percent of adults stated that it is definitely true that AIDS leads to death, and 86 percent thought it definitely true that there is no cure for AIDS at present. About three-fourths (72 percent) thought it definitely true that AIDS can cripple the immune system, and the same proportion realized that it is definitely false that an AIDS vaccine is available to the public. Seventy percent thought it definitely false that you can tell if people have AIDS just by looking at them. Only about half of all adults thought it definitely true that AIDS is caused by a virus (47 percent) and that a person can be infected with the AIDS virus without having the disease AIDS (55 percent).

**Transmission of the AIDS virus**—Although the 1987 NHIS AIDS survey revealed widespread misinformation about the risk of AIDS virus transmission through casual contact, knowledge in this area improved continuously between August and December. Figure 2 shows the percents



SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, Division of Health Interview Statistics, National Health Interview Survey.

Figure 2. Estimated percent of adults 18 years of age and over considering it very unlikely or definitely not possible to transmit the AIDS virus in selected ways: United States, August-December 1987

of adults who thought it very unlikely or definitely not possible to transmit the AIDS virus by means of various activities. For each activity shown, the percent of individuals stating that the activity could not possibly lead to AIDS virus transmission increased over time, with no reduction in the percent of adults thinking it very unlikely that the activity could transmit the virus.

The percent of adults who thought it definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus from living near a hospital or home for AIDS patients increased from 33 percent in August to 45 percent in December. Changes of similar magnitude were observed for some of the other activities: shaking hands with or touching someone with AIDS (up from 22 to 34 percent), working near someone with AIDS (from 18 to 31 percent), and attending school with a child who has AIDS (from 20 to 31 percent). Despite this trend, the NHIS AIDS data show that as of December 1987, almost two-thirds of the adults in the United States still thought that a person is very or somewhat likely to get the AIDS virus by receiving a blood transfusion (66 percent) or by kissing with exchange of saliva someone with AIDS (63 percent). People were most uncertain about AIDS virus transmission via animals and insects. In December, 20 percent of adults did not know if the AIDS virus can be transmitted by mosquitoes or other insects, and 22 percent did not know if pets or other animals can spread the virus.

*Blood test for the AIDS virus*—By December 1987, 73 percent of U.S. adults had heard of a blood test for infection with the AIDS virus, but 40 percent—over half of those who knew about the test—mistakenly stated that the blood test results tell whether a person has the disease AIDS. There was little change between August and December in any of these measures. The proportion of adults who realized that a positive blood test means that a person can spread the AIDS virus through sexual intercourse rose from 59 percent in August to 63 percent in September and remained at that level for the rest of the year.

Throughout the period from August to December 1987, 7-8 percent of U.S. adults reported that they had ever had their blood tested for the AIDS virus, including 2-3 percent who had the blood test as a routine part of blood donation or transfusion. An additional 7-8 percent of adults said that they had thought about having the AIDS virus blood test, and 3-5 percent reported plans to be tested within 12 months of being interviewed.

*Risk of getting AIDS*—As of December 1987, only 9

percent of the adults in the United States felt that there was a high chance of someone they know getting the AIDS virus. Sixteen percent said there was a medium chance, 36 percent a low chance, and 26 percent felt that there was no chance that someone they know would become infected with the AIDS virus. They assessed their own chances of becoming infected with the AIDS virus as even lower. In December, 62 percent of adults stated that there was no chance of their getting the AIDS virus, and 29 percent said that the chances were low. The proportions who assessed their chances of getting the AIDS virus as medium or high were 3 and 1 percent, respectively. As of December, 7 percent of the adults in the United States reported having personally known someone with the AIDS virus, and 7 percent stated that they have known someone with the disease AIDS.

*AIDS prevention*—There was virtually no change between August and December 1987 in the proportions of adults who considered various methods effective in preventing transmission of the AIDS virus. In December, 91 percent of all adults thought that celibacy is very effective in preventing AIDS virus transmission, and 86 percent considered it very effective to maintain a monogamous relationship with a person who does not have AIDS. Thirty-six percent of adults felt that using a condom is very effective in preventing transmission of the AIDS virus; 47 percent considered this method somewhat effective.

*AIDS discussion, education, and information*—In December 1987, two-thirds of U.S. adults reported that they had discussed AIDS with friends or relatives at some time. In August, 37 percent said that they had last discussed AIDS within the 7 days before being interviewed; by December, this proportion had declined to 29 percent. As of December, 62 percent of the adults with children between the ages of 10 and 17 stated that they had talked with their children about AIDS. Fifty-one percent reported that their children 10-17 years of age had received AIDS instruction at school, up from 36 percent in August.

Adults reported in December that their main source of AIDS information is television (59 percent), followed by newspapers (18 percent). If they wanted more specific AIDS information, the majority of adults (60 percent) said that they would go to a doctor, clinic, or HMO. Almost one-fifth (18 percent) of adults stated that they would go to a public health department for more detailed information about AIDS, and 12 percent listed a library as their preferred source.

**Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, December 1987**

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>											
Total . . . . .	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1. Have you ever heard of AIDS? When was the last time you saw, heard, or read something about AIDS?											
0-3 days ago . . . . .	72	64	73	78	75	70	74	63	68	71	76
4-7 days ago . . . . .	15	19	15	13	14	17	15	17	15	16	15
8-14 days ago . . . . .	4	6	3	2	4	3	3	5	5	3	3
15-31 days ago . . . . .	4	6	5	2	3	5	4	6	4	5	4
More than 31 days ago . . . . .	2	4	2	1	2	3	1	6	3	3	1
Never heard of AIDS . . . . .	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know . . . . .	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	3	5	2	1
2. Compared to most people, how much would you say you know about AIDS?											
A lot . . . . .	22	22	28	15	23	21	23	14	8	17	35
Some . . . . .	40	46	43	33	38	42	41	32	24	44	45
Little . . . . .	27	28	23	30	28	26	25	35	38	30	17
Nothing . . . . .	11	4	5	22	12	10	10	18	30	8	2
Don't know . . . . .	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	-	0	0
3a. AIDS is a disease caused by a virus.											
Definitely true . . . . .	47	57	54	33	51	44	48	45	34	46	56
Probably true . . . . .	27	28	26	26	26	27	26	27	25	27	27
Probably false . . . . .	4	4	3	6	4	5	5	4	5	5	3
Definitely false . . . . .	5	4	5	7	4	6	5	5	5	7	4
Don't know . . . . .	16	8	11	28	15	18	16	19	31	14	10
3b. AIDS can cripple the body's natural protection against disease.											
Definitely true . . . . .	72	77	79	60	73	71	74	57	49	72	84
Probably true . . . . .	18	17	15	23	18	19	17	24	25	20	13
Probably false . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Definitely false . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	0
Don't know . . . . .	8	5	5	14	7	9	7	16	22	6	2
3c. AIDS is especially common in older people.											
Definitely true . . . . .	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Probably true . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Probably false . . . . .	18	20	17	18	18	18	18	17	17	18	18
Definitely false . . . . .	73	71	77	70	72	74	74	67	63	75	77
Don't know . . . . .	8	7	5	11	8	7	7	13	17	6	4
3d. The AIDS virus can damage the brain.											
Definitely true . . . . .	26	22	27	27	27	25	25	32	25	25	26
Probably true . . . . .	32	33	31	32	32	32	32	32	31	33	32
Probably false . . . . .	8	9	9	6	8	8	9	6	4	8	11
Definitely false . . . . .	7	10	8	4	8	6	7	3	5	7	8
Don't know . . . . .	27	26	25	31	25	29	27	27	36	27	22
3e. AIDS usually leads to heart disease.											
Definitely true . . . . .	7	6	7	8	7	7	7	13	9	7	6
Probably true . . . . .	22	22	22	23	23	22	22	25	22	23	22
Probably false . . . . .	18	19	20	13	18	17	19	9	9	17	23
Definitely false . . . . .	14	16	18	9	16	13	15	10	9	13	18
Don't know . . . . .	38	36	33	47	36	41	38	43	50	39	31
3f. AIDS leads to death.											
Definitely true . . . . .	92	93	93	89	92	92	92	92	88	93	93
Probably true . . . . .	7	6	6	8	7	6	7	6	7	6	7
Probably false . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Definitely false . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	4	1	1
4a. Where do you get most of your information about AIDS? <sup>2</sup>											
Television . . . . .	84	85	82	85	85	83	83	87	90	87	77
Newspapers . . . . .	55	42	58	63	58	53	58	44	42	53	65
Magazines . . . . .	28	26	31	24	24	31	29	20	13	26	37
Radio . . . . .	10	9	12	9	12	9	10	10	11	10	9
Relatives and friends . . . . .	9	12	10	6	9	9	8	11	9	9	9
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets . . . . .	9	10	10	6	7	10	8	17	5	7	12
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	6	7	9	3	5	7	6	10	3	6	9
Other . . . . .	16	21	19	8	14	18	16	17	6	13	24
Don't know . . . . .	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
4b. Of the sources you just told me, from which one do you get the most information?											
Television . . . . .	59	63	55	62	59	59	58	67	76	64	45
Newspapers . . . . .	18	11	17	23	20	15	19	11	11	16	23
Magazines . . . . .	8	8	9	6	6	9	8	5	3	7	12
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets . . . . .	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	4	1	2	3
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	3	4	4	1	2	3	3	4	2	3	4
Other . . . . .	10	12	12	5	10	10	10	8	5	8	13
Don't know . . . . .	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1

See footnotes at end of table.

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[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education			
	Total	18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
5a. If you wanted more specific information about AIDS, where would you get it? <sup>2</sup>	Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>										
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	60	63	59	58	59	60	59	67	58	63	58
Public health department . . . . .	18	16	21	17	19	18	18	21	16	18	20
Library . . . . .	12	14	13	7	11	12	12	8	5	12	14
AIDS hot line . . . . .	9	12	10	5	8	9	9	12	5	9	10
Other . . . . .	27	32	28	20	26	27	26	25	20	23	33
Don't know . . . . .	11	7	8	17	11	10	11	10	20	10	5
5b. Which one source would you most likely use?											
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	48	48	47	50	48	49	49	51	51	51	45
Public health department . . . . .	13	11	15	12	13	12	13	15	11	12	14
Library . . . . .	7	9	8	4	7	7	7	4	3	7	9
AIDS hot line . . . . .	6	8	8	4	6	7	6	8	4	6	7
Other . . . . .	14	16	15	12	14	14	14	12	11	12	19
Don't know . . . . .	11	7	8	17	12	10	11	10	20	11	6
6a. A person can be infected with the AIDS virus and not have the disease AIDS.											
Definitely true . . . . .	55	58	62	45	55	55	58	43	36	54	68
Probably true . . . . .	24	22	23	27	24	24	24	24	26	27	20
Probably false . . . . .	3	5	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	3	4
Definitely false . . . . .	4	7	3	3	5	3	4	6	5	5	2
Don't know . . . . .	13	9	9	22	13	14	12	21	29	12	6
6b. You can tell if people have the AIDS virus just by looking at them.											
Definitely true . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	1	1
Probably true . . . . .	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	5	5	4	3
Probably false . . . . .	16	17	14	18	16	17	16	16	18	17	14
Definitely false . . . . .	70	74	75	62	71	70	72	63	57	70	78
Don't know . . . . .	8	4	6	15	8	8	8	14	18	7	4
6c. Any person with the AIDS virus can pass it on to someone else during sexual intercourse.											
Definitely true . . . . .	82	85	83	78	79	84	82	82	78	83	82
Probably true . . . . .	14	12	14	16	16	12	14	12	15	14	14
Probably false . . . . .	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Definitely false . . . . .	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know . . . . .	3	1	2	5	3	3	3	4	7	2	2
6d. A pregnant woman who has the AIDS virus can give AIDS to her baby.											
Definitely true . . . . .	77	79	79	74	74	80	77	78	73	77	79
Probably true . . . . .	17	17	17	18	19	16	18	15	17	17	18
Probably false . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Definitely false . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	5	3	4	8	6	4	5	6	10	5	2
6e. There is a vaccine available to the public that protects a person from getting the AIDS virus.											
Definitely true . . . . .	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1
Probably true . . . . .	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	7	5	3	2
Probably false . . . . .	10	9	10	12	10	10	10	12	12	12	8
Definitely false . . . . .	72	74	77	64	74	70	75	55	53	71	83
Don't know . . . . .	14	11	10	21	12	16	12	23	28	14	6
6f. There is no cure for AIDS at present.											
Definitely true . . . . .	86	86	88	83	86	86	87	82	77	86	90
Probably true . . . . .	8	7	7	9	8	8	8	7	10	8	6
Probably false . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Definitely false . . . . .	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1
Don't know . . . . .	4	3	3	6	4	4	3	7	9	3	2
7. How likely do you think it is that a person will get the AIDS virus from—											
7a. Receiving a blood transfusion?											
Very likely . . . . .	33	32	30	37	30	35	31	44	42	35	24
Somewhat likely . . . . .	30	30	31	30	29	31	31	33	29	32	29
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	12	13	14	10	13	12	13	6	6	11	17
Very unlikely . . . . .	19	20	21	15	22	16	20	7	9	16	27
Definitely not possible . . . . .	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2
Don't know . . . . .	4	3	3	7	4	4	3	9	11	3	1
7b. Donating or giving blood?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	9	7	9	9	8	7	17	15	8	5
Somewhat likely . . . . .	14	15	12	14	13	14	13	22	19	14	10
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	12	14	11	11	12	11	12	12	11	13	12
Very unlikely . . . . .	33	33	37	29	35	32	35	24	23	34	38
Definitely not possible . . . . .	27	25	29	27	25	29	29	13	18	26	33
Don't know . . . . .	6	4	4	10	6	6	5	12	15	5	2

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AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>											
7c. Living near a hospital or home for AIDS patients?											
Very likely . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Somewhat likely . . . . .	4	5	3	4	4	3	3	7	5	4	2
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	8	8	8	9	9	8	7	12	9	8	8
Very unlikely . . . . .	36	37	38	33	38	34	37	35	31	37	37
Definitely not possible . . . . .	45	46	46	43	42	47	47	32	35	45	50
Don't know . . . . .	6	4	4	11	6	6	5	11	17	5	2
7d. Working near someone with AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	5	4	3	2
Somewhat likely . . . . .	13	13	12	14	13	13	13	15	15	15	11
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	12	12	14	11	13	12	12	13	10	12	14
Very unlikely . . . . .	34	34	36	31	35	33	35	29	27	33	39
Definitely not possible . . . . .	31	34	30	29	29	32	31	28	27	32	31
Don't know . . . . .	7	3	5	12	7	7	6	10	16	6	3
7e. Eating in a restaurant where the cook has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	8	7	10	8	8	7	13	12	9	5
Somewhat likely . . . . .	22	24	21	23	24	20	21	25	24	24	20
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	16	16	11	14	14	15	12	10	14	17
Very unlikely . . . . .	27	26	31	23	26	27	28	19	19	24	34
Definitely not possible . . . . .	16	18	16	14	15	17	17	14	13	17	17
Don't know . . . . .	12	9	9	20	12	13	12	17	23	12	6
7f. Kissing—with exchange of saliva—a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	28	25	27	32	27	29	27	39	34	30	22
Somewhat likely . . . . .	35	35	35	34	35	34	35	30	29	35	38
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	11	13	13	7	11	11	12	8	6	11	14
Very unlikely . . . . .	11	13	12	8	11	11	12	7	9	9	14
Definitely not possible . . . . .	5	6	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	4
Don't know . . . . .	10	8	8	15	10	11	10	11	18	10	7
7g. Shaking hands with or touching someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	4	1	1
Somewhat likely . . . . .	7	7	6	8	8	6	6	10	10	7	5
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	15	15	13	16	13	14	14	12	15	14
Very unlikely . . . . .	38	37	42	35	38	38	39	36	32	37	42
Definitely not possible . . . . .	34	37	33	32	32	36	35	30	28	35	36
Don't know . . . . .	6	3	4	11	5	6	5	8	14	5	2
7h. Sharing plates, forks, or glasses with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	11	10	11	11	10	11	10	17	14	12	7
Somewhat likely . . . . .	28	28	27	29	29	27	27	31	29	28	26
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	15	14	13	15	13	14	11	10	13	17
Very unlikely . . . . .	23	24	26	19	23	23	24	16	17	22	29
Definitely not possible . . . . .	15	17	14	14	14	16	15	14	13	15	16
Don't know . . . . .	10	6	8	14	9	10	9	11	17	10	6
7i. Using public toilets?											
Very likely . . . . .	6	4	6	8	6	7	5	12	12	7	6
Somewhat likely . . . . .	19	21	15	20	19	18	17	25	23	20	21
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	15	15	11	14	13	14	12	10	14	13
Very unlikely . . . . .	30	28	34	26	30	29	31	20	18	27	29
Definitely not possible . . . . .	22	25	23	19	22	22	23	18	17	21	21
Don't know . . . . .	10	8	7	16	9	11	10	13	20	10	10
7j. Sharing needles for drug use with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	93	95	94	91	93	93	94	90	88	94	94
Somewhat likely . . . . .	5	4	4	6	5	5	5	6	7	5	4
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	0	0
Very unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Definitely not possible . . . . .	0	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	3	5	1	1
7k. Kissing on the cheek a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	4	6	2	4
Somewhat likely . . . . .	10	10	9	11	11	9	9	16	13	12	7
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	16	17	16	14	16	15	15	15	13	15	16
Very unlikely . . . . .	35	35	37	34	35	36	37	28	29	35	34
Definitely not possible . . . . .	30	33	31	26	27	32	30	25	24	29	33
Don't know . . . . .	7	3	5	11	7	7	6	11	15	6	6
7l. Being coughed or sneezed on by someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	5	8	12	8	9	8	13	14	9	7
Somewhat likely . . . . .	24	26	22	25	24	24	23	28	25	26	24
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	16	17	19	13	17	16	17	15	12	16	15
Very unlikely . . . . .	26	28	28	21	27	25	27	17	17	23	24
Definitely not possible . . . . .	15	17	15	12	14	15	15	13	12	16	17
Don't know . . . . .	11	8	8	16	11	11	10	14	21	10	12

See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, December 1987—Con.**

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education			
	Total	18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>											
7m. Attending school with a child who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	3
Somewhat likely . . . . .	8	8	8	9	8	8	7	11	11	9	9
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	13	14	15	11	14	13	13	15	12	14	11
Very unlikely . . . . .	37	36	41	33	38	36	38	30	28	35	35
Definitely not possible . . . . .	31	37	29	30	30	33	32	28	26	33	34
Don't know . . . . .	8	4	6	14	8	9	7	13	20	7	8
7n. Mosquitoes or other insects?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	9	8	9	10	7	8	12	13	9	9
Somewhat likely . . . . .	24	26	23	23	25	23	24	25	25	28	23
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	10	12	12	8	11	10	10	11	7	10	10
Very unlikely . . . . .	20	21	24	16	22	19	22	14	13	18	16
Definitely not possible . . . . .	16	17	16	16	16	17	17	13	13	16	18
Don't know . . . . .	20	15	18	27	18	23	19	26	29	19	24
7o. Pets or animals?											
Very likely . . . . .	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	5	4	2	2
Somewhat likely . . . . .	9	10	7	9	10	8	8	13	12	10	8
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	10	12	9	8	10	9	10	10	7	10	8
Very unlikely . . . . .	28	29	31	24	31	26	29	21	21	27	26
Definitely not possible . . . . .	29	28	32	27	26	32	31	21	24	29	29
Don't know . . . . .	22	19	19	30	20	24	21	31	32	22	27
7p. Having sex with a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	94	95	95	92	93	95	94	93	91	95	96
Somewhat likely . . . . .	4	4	4	5	6	3	4	4	4	4	3
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	0
Very unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Definitely not possible . . . . .	0	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	1	0	1	3	1	1	1	3	4	1	1
8. Have you ever heard of a blood test for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes . . . . .	73	78	81	59	73	73	75	58	49	74	75
No . . . . .	24	20	17	36	24	24	22	38	47	23	20
Don't know . . . . .	3	2	2	5	3	3	3	4	5	3	5
9. Does this test tell whether a person has the disease AIDS?											
Yes . . . . .	40	43	43	34	38	41	40	37	32	43	43
No . . . . .	23	26	29	15	25	22	25	12	7	20	21
Don't know . . . . .	10	9	9	10	9	10	10	9	9	11	11
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	27	22	19	41	27	27	25	42	51	26	25
10. If a person has a positive blood test for infection with the AIDS virus, does this mean that they can give someone else the AIDS virus through sexual intercourse?											
Yes . . . . .	63	70	71	49	63	63	65	49	41	63	65
No . . . . .	3	3	5	2	4	3	3	3	2	3	3
Don't know . . . . .	6	5	6	7	6	6	6	5	6	7	7
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	27	22	19	41	27	27	25	42	51	26	25
11. Have you ever had your blood tested for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes . . . . .	5	7	6	2	6	4	5	9	3	5	6
Yes, in blood donation/transfusion . . . . .	3	3	4	1	3	3	3	1	1	2	3
No . . . . .	63	67	70	53	62	64	66	46	43	65	64
Don't know . . . . .	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	27	22	19	41	27	27	25	42	51	26	25
12a. Have you ever thought about having this blood test?											
Already had test . . . . .	8	11	10	3	9	7	8	11	4	8	9
Yes . . . . .	10	14	12	4	10	10	10	13	7	10	13
No . . . . .	55	53	59	51	53	56	58	34	38	56	53
Don't know . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	28	22	19	42	27	28	25	43	52	26	25
12b. Do you plan to be tested in the next 12 months?											
Already had test . . . . .	8	11	10	3	9	7	8	11	4	8	9
Yes . . . . .	3	6	4	1	4	3	3	8	4	3	5
No . . . . .	5	5	6	2	5	5	5	2	2	4	5
Don't know . . . . .	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	3
Never heard of test or thought about having test (no/don't know to q. 8 or q. 12a) . . . . .	82	75	78	93	81	84	83	77	90	82	78

See footnotes at end of table.



**Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, December 1987—Con.**

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age				Sex		Race		Education		
	Total	18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
13. Where would you go to have a blood test for the AIDS virus infection? <sup>3</sup>											
	Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>										
Nowhere/wouldn't take test . . . . .	0	1	—	—	—	0	0	—	—	—	—
AIDS clinic . . . . .	3	3	4	2	4	2	4	—	3	3	8
Other clinic . . . . .	31	36	25	33	32	29	29	35	38	29	34
Doctor/HMO . . . . .	45	36	50	50	40	49	46	42	30	51	41
Red Cross/blood bank . . . . .	2	3	2	—	2	2	2	1	—	3	—
Other . . . . .	12	11	14	7	11	13	11	16	20	6	13
Don't know . . . . .	7	10	4	9	10	5	7	6	9	7	5
14. Where would you go to find out where to have this blood test? <sup>2,4</sup>											
AIDS hot line . . . . .	11	5	31	—	10	14	14	—	13	7	20
AIDS clinic . . . . .	3	—	10	—	—	7	3	—	—	—	—
Other clinic . . . . .	4	—	—	21	4	3	2	17	19	—	10
Doctor/HMO . . . . .	27	34	29	—	32	19	29	22	19	34	099
Friends . . . . .	2	3	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	—
Public health department . . . . .	15	8	21	32	20	7	17	10	—	18	11
Other . . . . .	13	16	5	15	6	25	6	29	—	14	20
Nowhere/wouldn't take test . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Don't know . . . . .	26	34	5	32	26	25	26	22	49	27	40
15. Have you donated blood since 1985?											
Yes . . . . .	13	19	16	5	16	10	13	10	5	12	18
No . . . . .	87	81	84	95	84	90	87	90	95	88	82
Don't know . . . . .	0	—	0	—	0	0	0	—	—	0	0
16. Have you ever personally known anyone who had the blood test for the AIDS virus infection?											
Yes . . . . .	15	19	18	8	14	16	15	11	5	13	15
No . . . . .	84	80	81	90	85	83	83	88	93	85	84
Don't know . . . . .	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
17. What are the chances of someone you know getting the AIDS virus?											
High . . . . .	9	11	12	4	8	10	9	12	6	9	9
Medium . . . . .	16	21	17	11	18	14	16	16	14	16	18
Low . . . . .	36	40	39	30	38	35	39	21	23	36	33
None . . . . .	26	19	22	36	23	29	25	29	34	27	27
Refused . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	13	8	10	19	13	12	11	22	23	12	13
18. What are your chances of getting the AIDS virus?											
High . . . . .	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Medium . . . . .	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	4
Low . . . . .	29	36	33	20	31	28	30	21	18	26	30
None . . . . .	62	55	59	72	60	63	62	65	69	65	59
Refused . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	4	4	3	5	4	4	3	8	9	4	7
19. Here are methods some people use to prevent getting the AIDS virus through sexual activity. How effective is—											
19a. Using a diaphragm?											
Very effective . . . . .	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	5	3	2	2
Somewhat effective . . . . .	11	12	10	12	11	12	11	13	11	12	9
Not at all effective . . . . .	57	58	67	46	56	58	60	44	37	57	59
Don't know how effective . . . . .	23	20	17	32	24	22	22	26	35	23	20
Don't know method . . . . .	6	7	4	9	7	6	5	12	15	5	11
19b. Using a condom?											
Very effective . . . . .	36	41	37	30	37	34	37	32	28	35	34
Somewhat effective . . . . .	47	47	50	45	47	47	48	41	39	48	47
Not at all effective . . . . .	6	5	6	7	5	7	5	10	8	6	6
Don't know how effective . . . . .	10	7	6	16	9	10	9	14	19	9	9
Don't know method . . . . .	2	1	1	4	1	2	2	4	6	1	4
19c. Using a spermicidal jelly, foam, or cream?											
Very effective . . . . .	2	3	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	2	4
Somewhat effective . . . . .	14	15	15	11	14	14	14	13	8	14	11
Not at all effective . . . . .	56	58	63	47	55	57	58	46	43	55	57
Don't know how effective . . . . .	22	18	17	32	23	22	22	27	34	23	20
Don't know method . . . . .	6	6	4	9	6	6	5	11	12	5	8
19d. Being celibate, that is, not having sex at all?											
Very effective . . . . .	91	91	94	88	91	91	92	89	84	92	89
Somewhat effective . . . . .	4	5	3	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	4
Not at all effective . . . . .	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know how effective . . . . .	3	2	2	4	3	3	3	3	7	2	3
Don't know method . . . . .	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	3	1	2

See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1987 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, December 1987—Con.**

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Age			Sex		Race		Education			
	Total	18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
	Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>										
19e. Two people who do not have the AIDS virus having a completely monogamous relationship, that is, having sex only with each other?											
Very effective . . . . .	86	86	91	82	87	85	88	78	76	88	82
Somewhat effective . . . . .	8	8	6	9	7	8	7	11	9	7	8
Not at all effective . . . . .	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	2	2
Don't know how effective . . . . .	4	3	2	7	3	4	3	6	9	3	6
Don't know method . . . . .	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	4	1	1
20. Have you ever discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?											
Yes . . . . .	65	71	74	49	61	69	65	68	44	63	65
No . . . . .	35	28	25	50	39	31	34	32	56	36	34
Don't know . . . . .	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
21. When was the last time you discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?											
0-3 days ago . . . . .	14	14	16	11	13	15	13	18	10	14	16
4-7 days ago . . . . .	15	17	18	11	15	16	15	18	10	15	16
8-14 days ago . . . . .	8	9	10	5	8	8	8	5	6	8	8
15-31 days ago . . . . .	14	17	15	10	13	15	14	13	9	14	10
More than 31 days ago . . . . .	9	11	10	6	8	10	9	9	5	8	11
Never discussed (no/don't know to q. 20) . . . . .	36	29	27	52	40	32	36	33	58	37	36
Don't know . . . . .	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
24. Have you ever discussed AIDS with [any of your children age 10-17]? <sup>5</sup>											
Yes . . . . .	62	59	63	56	50	73	64	57	49	61	66
No . . . . .	38	41	37	44	50	27	36	43	51	39	34
Don't know . . . . .	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25. Have your children had any instruction at school about AIDS? <sup>5</sup>											
Yes . . . . .	51	38	50	66	49	52	49	63	47	50	52
No . . . . .	19	44	20	10	18	21	21	13	20	20	19
Don't know . . . . .	30	17	31	25	33	27	31	24	32	29	29
26. Have you ever personally known anyone with the AIDS virus?											
Yes . . . . .	7	7	10	5	6	8	7	9	4	5	7
No . . . . .	91	92	88	94	92	90	91	87	95	93	92
Don't know . . . . .	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	4	2	1	1
27. Have you ever personally known anyone with AIDS?											
Yes . . . . .	7	6	10	5	6	8	7	10	4	5	6
No . . . . .	91	93	89	94	92	91	92	88	94	93	93
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
28. The U.S. Public Health Service has said that AIDS is one of the major health problems in the country but exactly how many people it affects is not known. The Surgeon General has proposed that a study be conducted and blood samples be taken to help find out how widespread the problem is. If you were selected in this national sample of people to have their blood tested with assurances of privacy of test results, would you have the test?											
Yes . . . . .	70	75	73	63	71	69	71	70	64	70	70
No . . . . .	21	19	18	26	21	21	21	19	24	22	21
Other . . . . .	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Don't know . . . . .	7	4	7	8	6	8	6	9	9	6	8
29. Would you want to know the results of the blood test? <sup>8</sup>											
Yes . . . . .	98	98	98	97	98	98	98	98	98	99	97
No . . . . .	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1

<sup>1</sup>Excludes persons for whom no response was recorded or who refused to respond. For question 2 through 27, total also excludes persons who never heard of AIDS.  
<sup>2</sup>Multiple responses may sum to more than 100 percent.  
<sup>3</sup>Based on persons answering yes to question 12a.  
<sup>4</sup>Based on persons answering don't know to question 13.  
<sup>5</sup>Based on persons answering yes to question 22, Do you have any children aged 10-17? Question 23 was, How many do you have?  
<sup>6</sup>Based on persons answering yes to question 28.

NOTE: Total, age, sex, and education include persons of other and unknown race not shown separately under race. Education refers to years of school completed.

## Technical notes

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a continuous, cross-sectional household interview survey. Each week, a probability sample of the civilian noninstitu-

**Table I. Sample size for the National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes and estimated adult population 18 years of age and over, by selected characteristics: United States, December 1987**

Characteristic	Sample size	Estimated population in thousands
All adults . . . . .	5,597	174,528
Age		
18-29 years. . . . .	1,433	47,725
30-49 years. . . . .	2,105	66,109
50 years and over . . . . .	2,059	60,695
Sex		
Male . . . . .	2,303	82,703
Female . . . . .	3,294	91,825
Race		
White . . . . .	4,589	151,003
Black . . . . .	791	19,107
Education		
Less than 12 years. . . . .	1,273	41,503
12 years. . . . .	2,134	66,475
More than 12 years. . . . .	2,119	62,363

tionalized population is interviewed by personnel of the U.S. Bureau of the Census to obtain information on the health and other characteristics of each member of the household. Supplemental information is collected for all or a sample of household members. The AIDS knowledge and attitudes questions were asked of a single randomly chosen adult 18 years of age or over in each family. The estimates in this report are based on completed interviews with 5,597 persons, or about 87 percent of eligible respondents.

Table I contains the estimated population size of each of the demographic subgroups included in table 1 to allow readers to derive provisional estimates of the number of people in the United States with a given characteristic, for example, the number of men who have heard of AIDS. The population figures in table I are based on first-quarter 1987 data from the NHIS; they are not official population estimates. Table II shows approximate standard errors of estimates presented in table 1. Both the estimates in table 1 and the standard errors in table II are provisional. They may differ slightly from estimates made using the final data file because they were calculated using a simplified weighting procedure that does not adjust for all the factors used in weighting the final data file. The final data file covering the entire 5-month period of data collection, August through December 1987, will be available in 1988.

**Table II. Standard errors, expressed in percentage points, of estimated percents from the National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes, by selected characteristics: United States, December 1987**

Estimated percent	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18-29 years	30-49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
5 or 95 . . . . .	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.6
10 or 90 . . . . .	0.5	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.8
15 or 85 . . . . .	0.6	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.6	1.6	1.2	0.9	0.9
20 or 80 . . . . .	0.6	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.8	1.4	1.0	1.0
25 or 75 . . . . .	0.7	1.4	1.1	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.8	1.9	1.5	1.1	1.1
30 or 70 . . . . .	0.7	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0	0.8	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2
35 or 65 . . . . .	0.8	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	2.1	1.7	1.2	1.2
40 or 60 . . . . .	0.8	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	2.1	1.7	1.3	1.3
45 or 55 . . . . .	0.8	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	0.9	2.2	1.7	1.3	1.3
50 . . . . .	0.8	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	0.9	2.2	1.7	1.3	1.3

### Symbols

- Quantity zero
- 0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.5

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