

Additional information regarding discrimination and vigilance measures

In 2023, five questions from the Everyday Discrimination Scale (EDS)—Short Version (Sternthal et al., 2011) and the abbreviated 4-item Heightened Vigilance Scale (HVS) (Hicken et al., 2023, 2014, 2018) were asked of Sample Adult respondents to the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). The EDS items ask how often adults experience unfair treatment, while the HVS items ask how often adults anticipate and prepare for discrimination. These items were added to the Sample Adult interview to better understand how discrimination relates to health outcomes, and how heightened vigilance may mediate those associations.

Rigorous, mixed-methods evaluations are in progress to understand (1) how the discrimination and heightened vigilance scales items are interpreted and (2) the comparability of scale scores across population subgroups defined by characteristics such as age, sex, sexual orientation, race and Hispanic origin, education, and disability status. Preliminary results suggest that responses to the EDS and HVS scale items may not have consistent meaning across different population subgroups. As a result, NCHS recommends that data users avoid direct comparisons of EDS and HVS responses and scale scores across population subgroups (that is, avoid comparing men with women, or White adults with Black adults). Instead, NCHS recommends that data users focus on the associations between discrimination and heightened vigilance and various health outcomes collected with the NHIS. A report detailing the findings of these mixed-methods evaluations and providing additional recommendations for analysis is forthcoming and will appear on the NCHS website.