

## AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes for October 1987 Provisional Data From the National Health Interview Survey

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### Introduction

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

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.

This report presents provisional data for October 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 denominator in the calculation of estimates, but responses of "don't know" are included.

### Selected findings

#### Changes in knowledge

The most notable changes in knowledge between September and October 1987 were in the proportions of adults

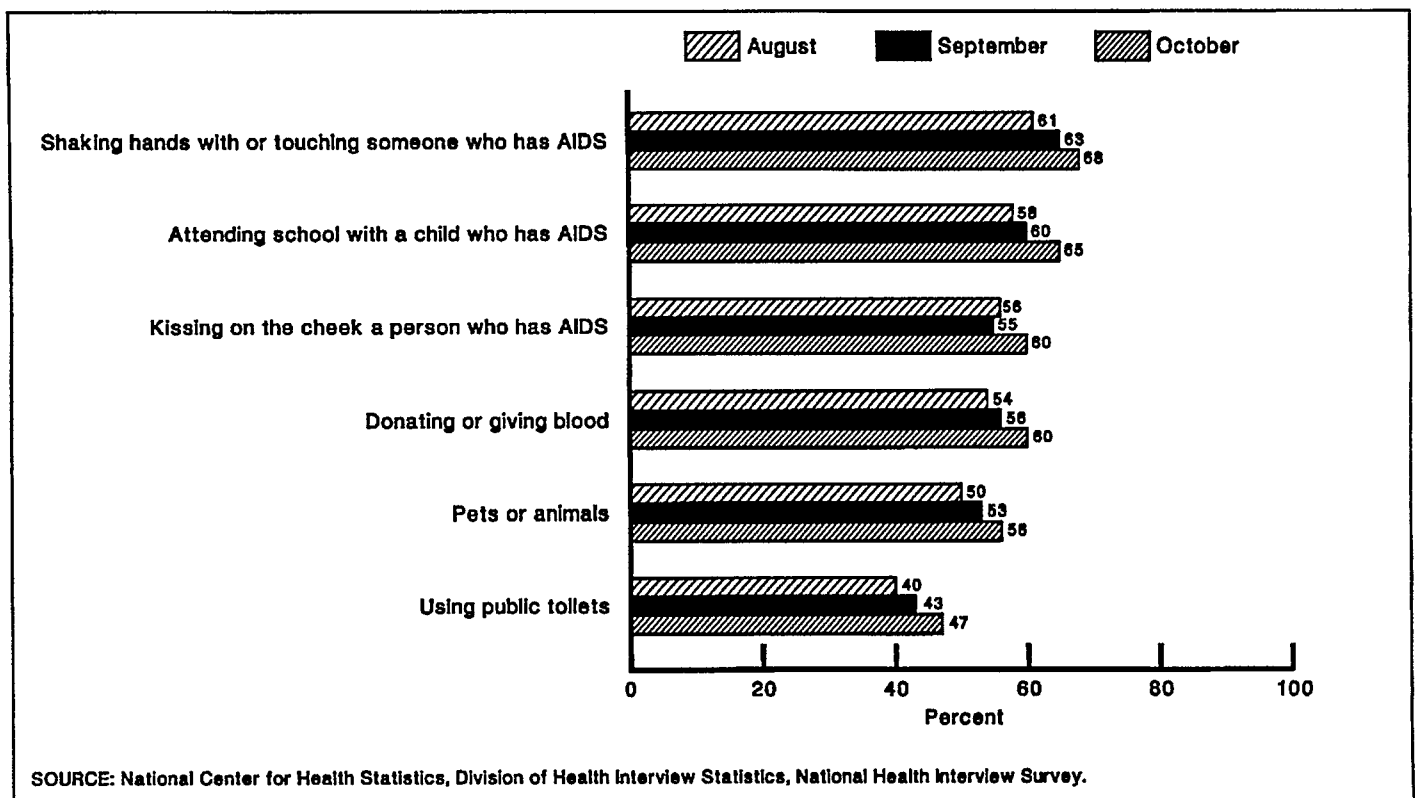


Figure 1. Provisional estimates of percent of adults who think it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus infection from various conjectured modes of transmission: United States, August-October, 1987

who thought that it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus through various modes of casual contact. As shown in figure 1, these changes represent the continuation of a trend that began with the August AIDS data. While all of these differences between September and October are statistically significant, some of the differences in proportions between August and September are not.

In October, 68 percent of Americans 18 years of age and over realized that it is very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS by shaking hands with someone who has AIDS, compared to 63 percent in September and 61 percent in August. The proportion of adults thinking it very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS by attending school with a child who has AIDS increased from 58 percent in August to 60 percent in September and 65 percent in October.

There were also increases in the proportions of adults thinking it very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus by kissing on the cheek a person with AIDS (60 percent in October compared to 56 percent in August and 55 percent in September), donating or giving blood (54 percent in August, 56 percent in September, and 60 percent in October), and using public toilets (40, 43, and 47 percent, respectively). Smaller but statistically significant changes were observed for a number of the other forms of casual contact as well.

Following a number of statistically significant changes in the level of knowledge about other aspects of AIDS and the AIDS virus between the months of August and September 1987, there were few changes between September and

October. In October, more than 90 percent of all adults 18 years of age and over thought that it is definitely or probably true that AIDS leads to death, that there is no cure for AIDS at present, and that the AIDS virus can be transmitted via sexual intercourse, shared needles, and from a pregnant woman to her baby. Almost as many adults, 89 percent, realized that AIDS cripples the body's natural protection against disease. Approximately three-fourths of all adults thought that it is definitely or probably true that AIDS is caused by a virus and that a person can be infected with the virus without having the disease AIDS. The proportion of adults who thought it definitely false that an AIDS vaccine is available to the public increased slightly from 69 percent in September to 71 percent in October.

#### Differences by education

There are striking differences in AIDS knowledge according to level of education. Data from the National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes show that adults who have completed 12 or more years of school know more about virtually all aspects of AIDS than do individuals with less than 12 years of school completed. For many items, there also is a statistically significant difference in knowledge between persons with 12 years of school completed and those who have completed more than 12 years of school. The following highlights describe some of the differences by education as observed in the October data from the NHIS AIDS survey. All differences cited in the subsequent text are statistically significant.

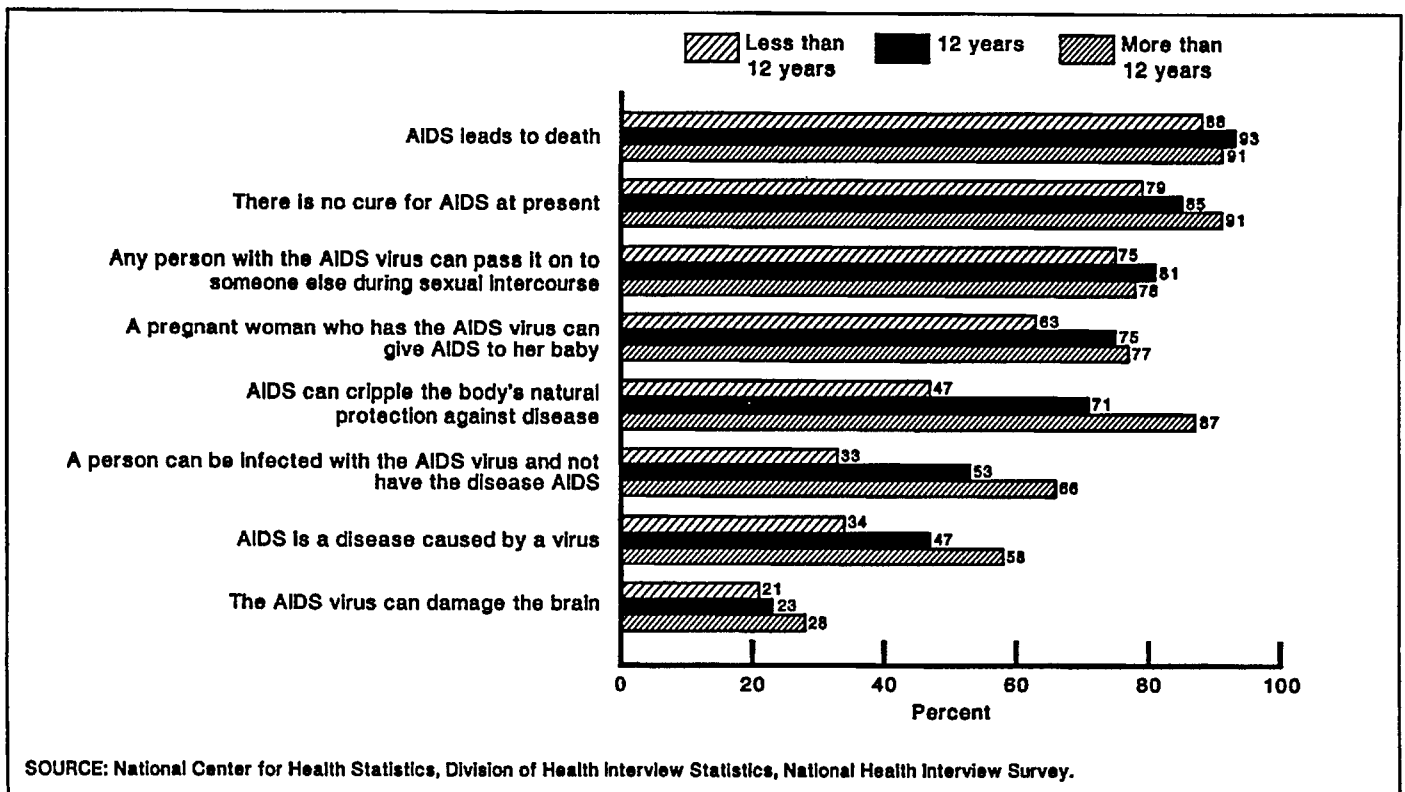


Figure 2. Provisional estimates of percent of persons 18 years of age and over who think selected statements about AIDS are definitely true, by education: United States, October 1987

**Awareness of AIDS**—While virtually everyone, regardless of education, has heard of AIDS, the more highly educated adults reported having last heard about the disease more recently than those with less education. Sixty-eight percent of adults with less than 12 years of school completed last saw, heard, or read about AIDS in the 3 days preceding the NHIS interview, compared to 75 percent of those with 12 years and 79 percent of those with more than 12 years of school completed.

**Self-perceived knowledge**—Nine percent of adults with less than 12 years of education felt that they know a lot about AIDS, compared to 16 and 33 percent, respectively, of persons with 12 and more than 12 years of education. The proportion of individuals who stated that they know “some” about AIDS increases with education as well, from 26 percent for those with less than 12 years of school completed to 48 percent for those with more than 12 years. More than one-fourth (26 percent) of adults with less than 12 years of education said that they know nothing about AIDS, compared to 7 percent of those with 12 years and 2 percent of those with more than 12 years of education.

**General knowledge**—Figure 2 shows the percents of adults answering “definitely true” to selected knowledge questions. In most cases, these proportions increase directly with education.

The largest differences by education are on statements that describe the cause of AIDS and the ways in which the disease affects the immune system. Thirty-four percent of adults with less than 12 years of school completed thought that it is definitely true that AIDS is caused by a virus,

compared to 47 percent of those with 12 years and 58 percent of those with more than 12 years of school completed. Likewise, the proportion of adults who thought that it is definitely true that AIDS can cripple the body’s natural protection against disease varies from 47 percent (less than 12 years of school) to 87 percent (more than 12 years of school), and the proportion who thought it definitely true that a person can be infected with the AIDS virus and not have the disease AIDS varies from 33 to 66 percent, respectively. The percent of adults who stated that it is definitely false that “you can tell if people have the AIDS virus just by looking at them” also increases sharply with education, from 56 percent of persons with less than 12 years of education to 69 and 81 percent, respectively, of those with 12 and more than 12 years.

**Transmission of the AIDS virus**—As shown in figure 3, the probability of thinking that it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus through casual contact with someone who has AIDS increases with education. Even among adults with more than 12 years of education, though, the level of accurate information about the risk of AIDS virus transmission is low. For instance, less than half (47 percent) of adults with more than 12 years of schooling realized that it is very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS from public toilets, and only 16 percent thought that it is very unlikely or impossible to get AIDS from kissing with exchange of saliva a person who has AIDS. Among persons with less education, the comparable proportions are even smaller.

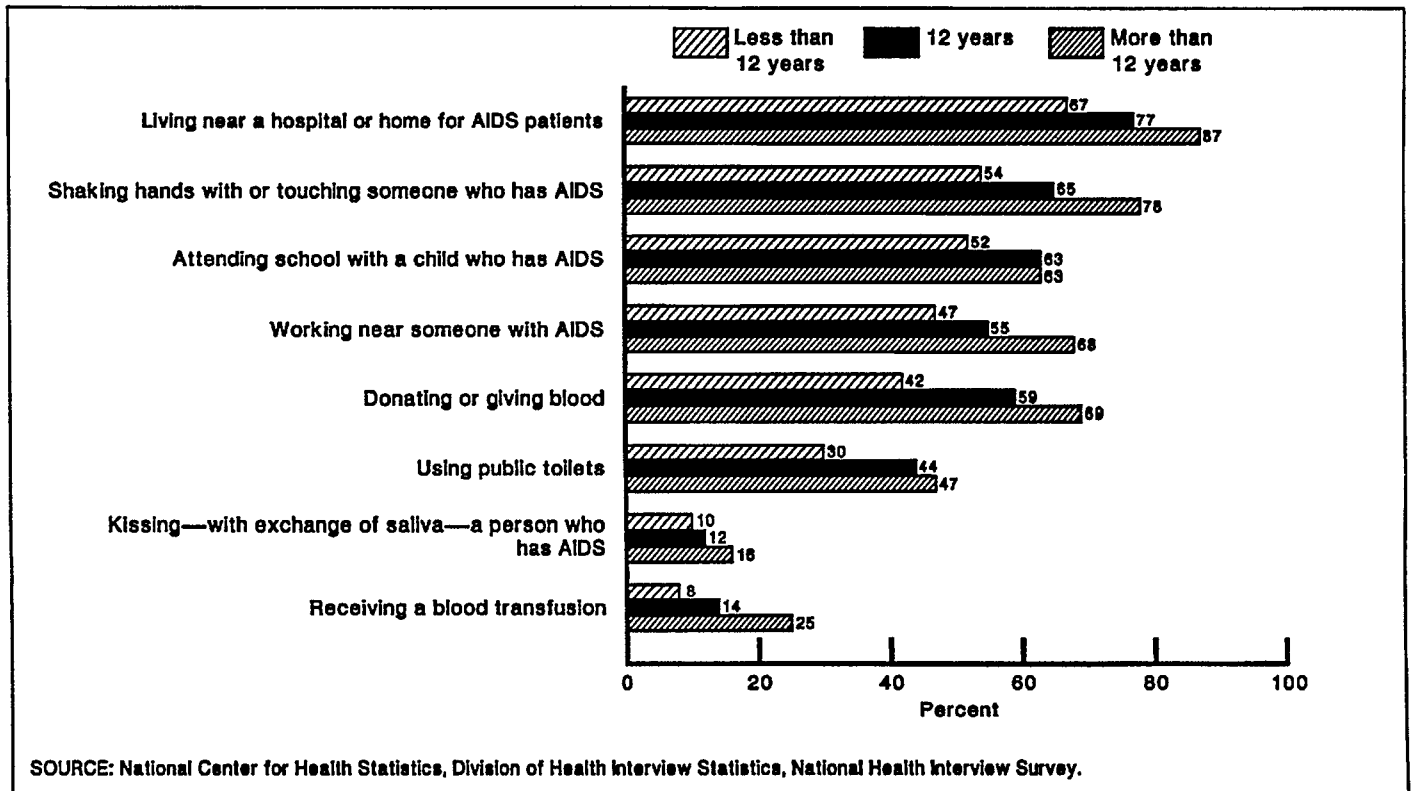


Figure 3. Provisional estimates of percent of persons 18 years of age and over who think it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus infection from various conjectured modes of transmission, by education: United States, October 1987

In preparing figure 3, the categories “very unlikely” and “definitely not possible” were grouped for purposes of consistent presentation. Both responses are not necessarily correct for all items shown in figure 3. For some items, many AIDS researchers would argue that the only correct answer is “definitely not possible.” As is evident in table 1, the proportions of adults who thought it definitely not possible to transmit AIDS via casual contact also increase with education.

**Blood test for the AIDS virus**—Fifty percent of all adults with less than 12 years of school completed have heard of a blood test for the AIDS virus. For persons with more education, the proportion is higher: 72 percent for individuals with 12 years of school completed and 77 percent for those with more than 12 years. The proportion of adults who realized that a positive blood test means that a person can spread the AIDS virus through sexual intercourse is 44 percent for persons with less than 12 years of education and 63 and 67 percent, respectively, for those with 12 and more than 12 years.

Regardless of education, few people have had an AIDS blood test: 4 percent of those with less than 12 years of school completed, 6 percent of those with 12 years, and 7 percent of those with more than 12 years of school completed. The proportion of adults who have thought about having the AIDS blood test increases with education, from 8 percent to 14 percent.

**Risk of getting AIDS**—Adults who have completed less than 12 years of school are less likely than their more well-educated peers to acknowledge the possibility that they or someone they know might get the AIDS virus. The

proportion of adults who stated that there is no chance that someone they know will get the AIDS virus decreases from 36 percent of individuals with less than 12 years of education to 26 percent of those with more than 12 years, and the proportion stating that there is no chance of getting the AIDS virus themselves decreases from 70 percent (less than 12 years) to 62 percent (more than 12 years).

**AIDS prevention**—Adults who have completed 12 years of school were more likely than either those with more or less education to state that the following methods are very effective in preventing transmission of the AIDS virus: using a condom (considered very effective by 34 percent of persons with 12 years of school completed), being celibate (93 percent), and maintaining a monogamous relationship with a person who does not have the AIDS virus (86 percent). For adults with less than 12 years of school completed, the respective proportions considering these methods very effective are 24, 84, and 77 percent; for those with more than 12 years of education, the proportions are 29, 89, and 84 percent.

**AIDS discussion and education**—The likelihood of having discussed AIDS with friends, relatives, or children increases with education. Less than half (49 percent) of all individuals with less than 12 years of school reported having discussed AIDS with a friend or relative, compared to two-thirds (66 percent) of those with 12 years of school and nearly three-fourths (72 percent) of those with more than 12 years of school. Similarly, the proportion of adults who have discussed AIDS with their children 10-17 years old increases from 50 percent of those with less than 12 years of education to 66 percent of those with more than 12 years.

**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, October 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	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>											
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 . . . . .	75	68	76	79	79	71	76	71	68	75	79
4-7 days ago . . . . .	14	18	15	11	12	16	15	13	15	14	14
8-14 days ago . . . . .	3	5	4	2	2	4	3	3	2	4	3
15-31 days ago . . . . .	3	6	2	2	3	3	3	5	4	3	3
More than 31 days ago . . . . .	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	4	2	1	1
Never heard of AIDS . . . . .	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	-
Don't know . . . . .	2	1	1	5	2	2	2	3	7	2	1
2. Compared to most people, how much would you say you know about AIDS?											
A lot . . . . .	21	22	27	14	22	21	22	13	9	16	33
Some . . . . .	42	49	46	33	41	44	43	37	26	45	48
Little . . . . .	27	25	23	34	27	27	26	33	39	31	17
Nothing . . . . .	9	4	4	20	10	9	8	16	26	7	2
Don't know . . . . .	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
3a. AIDS is a disease caused by a virus.											
Definitely true . . . . .	48	58	55	34	53	44	49	46	34	47	58
Probably true . . . . .	26	26	27	24	25	27	26	22	21	27	27
Probably false . . . . .	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3
Definitely false . . . . .	4	4	4	6	3	5	4	6	6	5	3
Don't know . . . . .	18	9	12	32	16	20	17	22	36	17	10
3b. AIDS can cripple the body's natural protection against disease.											
Definitely true . . . . .	72	78	78	61	73	71	75	57	47	71	87
Probably true . . . . .	17	13	15	21	17	17	16	23	26	18	10
Probably false . . . . .	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
Definitely false . . . . .	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
Don't know . . . . .	9	7	4	16	8	10	8	17	24	8	2
3c. AIDS is especially common in older people.											
Definitely true . . . . .	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Probably true . . . . .	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	3	1	1
Probably false . . . . .	20	24	17	19	22	17	20	15	17	19	21
Definitely false . . . . .	70	67	76	66	67	73	71	67	59	72	74
Don't know . . . . .	9	7	6	13	10	8	7	15	21	7	4
3d. The AIDS virus can damage the brain.											
Definitely true . . . . .	24	24	27	21	25	24	23	31	21	23	28
Probably true . . . . .	31	31	29	34	32	31	31	31	32	32	30
Probably false . . . . .	9	12	11	4	9	9	10	6	4	8	12
Definitely false . . . . .	6	7	7	3	5	6	6	3	3	6	8
Don't know . . . . .	30	26	26	37	29	31	30	29	40	31	23
3e. AIDS usually leads to heart disease.											
Definitely true . . . . .	7	7	6	8	7	7	6	12	8	7	6
Probably true . . . . .	21	20	21	22	19	22	20	26	23	21	20
Probably false . . . . .	18	22	21	11	20	16	19	9	9	16	24
Definitely false . . . . .	14	15	18	10	15	13	14	11	7	14	18
Don't know . . . . .	40	36	35	50	39	42	40	43	53	43	31
3f. AIDS leads to death.											
Definitely true . . . . .	91	91	93	90	89	93	91	90	88	93	91
Probably true . . . . .	7	8	7	7	9	6	7	9	8	6	8
Probably false . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0
Definitely false . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	1	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	1	0
4a. Where do you get most of your information about AIDS? <sup>2</sup>											
Television . . . . .	82	82	81	84	81	83	82	86	88	83	78
Newspapers . . . . .	61	53	64	64	66	56	63	51	49	61	68
Magazines . . . . .	29	30	32	26	26	32	31	22	18	28	37
Radio . . . . .	10	8	11	9	11	8	10	9	10	8	11
Relatives and friends . . . . .	8	12	9	5	8	8	8	9	8	9	8
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets . . . . .	7	7	8	4	7	7	6	9	4	6	9
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	5	5	6	4	5	5	5	6	4	4	7
Other . . . . .	15	17	20	9	13	18	15	18	9	11	24
Don't know . . . . .	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
4b. Of the sources you just told me, from which one do you get the most information?											
Television . . . . .	56	59	51	58	55	56	55	66	71	59	45
Newspapers . . . . .	21	16	21	25	24	19	22	14	15	23	23
Magazines . . . . .	9	10	11	7	9	10	9	7	4	8	14
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets . . . . .	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2
Other . . . . .	10	11	12	6	9	11	10	9	6	8	14
Don't know . . . . .	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	1

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, October 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
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 . . . . .	57	58	56	57	54	59	58	51	55	60	55
Public health department . . . . .	18	17	21	17	19	17	18	20	11	19	21
Library . . . . .	11	14	13	6	11	11	11	9	5	11	14
AIDS hot line . . . . .	8	10	10	5	7	10	8	11	7	7	10
Other . . . . .	28	32	31	20	29	27	27	31	16	24	37
Don't know . . . . .	12	9	9	18	12	11	12	12	21	13	6
5b. Which one source would you most likely use?											
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	46	42	46	50	44	48	47	41	50	48	42
Public health department . . . . .	13	13	15	12	15	12	13	15	9	15	14
Library . . . . .	8	11	8	5	7	8	7	8	5	8	9
AIDS hot line . . . . .	6	7	7	4	5	7	6	8	5	5	7
Other . . . . .	15	18	15	11	16	13	14	16	11	11	21
Don't know . . . . .	12	9	9	18	13	12	12	12	21	13	6
6a. A person can be infected with the AIDS virus and not have the disease AIDS.											
Definitely true . . . . .	54	56	62	44	52	56	56	41	33	53	66
Probably true . . . . .	26	25	24	30	29	23	26	26	29	28	23
Probably false . . . . .	3	4	3	2	4	3	3	6	4	3	3
Definitely false . . . . .	4	6	3	2	4	4	3	7	5	4	3
Don't know . . . . .	13	8	8	22	12	15	12	22	30	13	5
6b. You can tell if people have the AIDS virus just by looking at them.											
Definitely true . . . . .	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	1
Probably true . . . . .	4	5	3	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	3
Probably false . . . . .	15	16	14	16	17	14	16	16	17	17	13
Definitely false . . . . .	71	73	77	63	69	73	72	63	56	69	81
Don't know . . . . .	9	4	5	16	9	9	8	14	20	8	3
6c. Any person with the AIDS virus can pass it on to someone else during sexual intercourse.											
Definitely true . . . . .	79	81	80	75	75	82	78	83	75	81	78
Probably true . . . . .	16	15	15	16	18	14	16	12	17	14	16
Probably false . . . . .	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	2
Definitely false . . . . .	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Don't know . . . . .	4	3	3	7	5	4	4	5	7	4	2
6d. A pregnant woman who has the AIDS virus can give AIDS to her baby.											
Definitely true . . . . .	73	77	75	69	69	77	74	70	63	75	77
Probably true . . . . .	19	19	19	20	22	17	19	22	24	18	18
Probably false . . . . .	0	—	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Definitely false . . . . .	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	7	5	5	10	8	5	7	8	12	6	4
6e. There is a vaccine available to the public that protects a person from getting the AIDS virus.											
Definitely true . . . . .	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	1	1	2
Probably true . . . . .	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	7	6	2	2
Probably false . . . . .	10	12	7	10	11	8	10	8	8	11	8
Definitely false . . . . .	71	73	78	61	71	70	73	61	51	70	82
Don't know . . . . .	15	10	11	25	13	18	14	22	33	15	7
6f. There is no cure for AIDS at present.											
Definitely true . . . . .	86	85	88	84	84	87	87	81	79	85	91
Probably true . . . . .	8	8	6	9	9	6	7	10	10	8	6
Probably false . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Definitely false . . . . .	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	1
Don't know . . . . .	4	3	2	6	4	4	3	6	9	3	1
7. How likely do you think it is that a person will get the AIDS virus from—											
7a. Receiving a blood transfusion?											
Very likely . . . . .	34	34	31	37	31	36	32	45	45	35	27
Somewhat likely . . . . .	31	31	31	32	29	34	31	32	29	35	29
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	13	16	16	8	16	11	14	8	7	12	17
Very unlikely . . . . .	16	15	18	14	19	13	17	6	6	13	24
Definitely not possible . . . . .	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Don't know . . . . .	4	3	2	8	4	4	4	7	9	4	1
7b. Donating or giving blood?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	8	6	10	8	8	7	16	14	8	5
Somewhat likely . . . . .	14	15	13	14	13	15	12	25	19	15	10
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	12	12	13	12	12	13	13	11	11	12	14
Very unlikely . . . . .	35	39	36	30	38	32	37	22	24	34	40
Definitely not possible . . . . .	25	22	28	24	25	25	26	16	18	25	29
Don't know . . . . .	6	4	3	11	5	7	5	10	14	5	2

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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>											
7c. Living near a hospital or home for AIDS patients?											
Very likely . . . . .	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1
Somewhat likely . . . . .	4	6	3	3	5	4	3	8	5	4	3
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	9	8	11	9	10	9	9	14	10	11	8
Very unlikely . . . . .	36	40	35	35	38	35	37	32	33	36	39
Definitely not possible . . . . .	42	40	46	41	40	44	44	31	34	41	48
Don't know . . . . .	6	4	5	10	6	7	5	12	16	6	2
7d. Working near someone with AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	7	4	4	3
Somewhat likely . . . . .	14	16	13	15	13	15	13	22	16	16	12
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	15	15	17	15	16	15	16	13	14	17	15
Very unlikely . . . . .	33	35	33	31	33	32	34	26	27	29	39
Definitely not possible . . . . .	26	26	28	24	26	26	27	20	21	26	29
Don't know . . . . .	8	4	7	13	8	8	8	12	19	8	3
7e. Eating in a restaurant where the cook has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	9	10	9	10	9	10	8	17	11	12	6
Somewhat likely . . . . .	24	23	24	25	25	22	23	26	27	24	21
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	16	18	14	16	16	16	16	12	12	16	18
Very unlikely . . . . .	26	25	29	22	26	25	27	19	19	22	33
Definitely not possible . . . . .	14	16	14	11	12	15	14	12	12	14	14
Don't know . . . . .	12	8	10	16	11	12	12	13	19	13	7
7f. Kissing—with exchange of saliva—a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	30	27	30	32	28	31	29	36	32	32	26
Somewhat likely . . . . .	38	38	39	36	39	37	38	40	36	38	39
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	10	13	9	10	10	11	11	3	7	10	14
Very unlikely . . . . .	10	11	12	7	12	9	11	7	8	9	13
Definitely not possible . . . . .	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Don't know . . . . .	9	6	8	12	9	9	8	10	15	8	6
7g. Shaking hands with or touching someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	1
Somewhat likely . . . . .	8	8	8	8	7	8	7	12	9	9	6
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	16	14	15	16	17	14	15	20	18	17	13
Very unlikely . . . . .	39	39	40	37	41	37	41	32	29	38	46
Definitely not possible . . . . .	29	33	30	25	27	31	29	23	25	28	32
Don't know . . . . .	7	2	5	11	6	7	6	10	16	6	2
7h. Sharing plates, forks, or glasses with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	13	13	12	14	12	14	12	19	16	14	10
Somewhat likely . . . . .	31	30	33	31	32	31	31	33	32	33	29
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	15	16	14	14	14	16	16	10	11	14	18
Very unlikely . . . . .	21	21	23	18	24	18	22	15	15	18	27
Definitely not possible . . . . .	11	13	10	9	10	11	11	9	9	11	11
Don't know . . . . .	10	6	8	14	8	11	9	13	17	10	6
7i. Using public toilets?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	8	7	8	6	9	7	13	11	9	9
Somewhat likely . . . . .	20	19	19	22	20	20	19	25	28	22	16
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	15	15	13	14	14	15	13	10	14	16
Very unlikely . . . . .	29	30	33	24	32	26	31	19	16	28	29
Definitely not possible . . . . .	18	20	18	17	18	18	19	12	13	16	17
Don't know . . . . .	11	8	8	17	10	12	10	16	21	11	12
7j. Sharing needles for drug use with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	93	94	95	89	92	93	93	90	86	93	92
Somewhat likely . . . . .	4	3	4	6	5	4	4	6	8	4	4
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
Definitely not possible . . . . .	0	0	—	0	—	0	0	—	0	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	2	1	1	4	2	2	2	3	5	2	3
7k. Kissing on the cheek a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	7	4	3	3
Somewhat likely . . . . .	11	11	10	11	12	10	10	17	15	13	12
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	18	18	18	18	19	17	17	22	17	19	18
Very unlikely . . . . .	35	33	37	33	37	33	37	23	24	33	31
Definitely not possible . . . . .	25	30	27	21	23	28	26	22	23	24	28
Don't know . . . . .	8	5	5	13	7	8	7	9	17	8	7
7l. Being coughed or sneezed on by someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	9	9	9	10	9	10	9	14	13	10	13
Somewhat likely . . . . .	29	24	29	32	28	29	28	35	35	30	25
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	17	19	18	14	17	17	18	13	11	17	19
Very unlikely . . . . .	23	25	26	18	25	21	24	14	14	20	16
Definitely not possible . . . . .	12	16	11	8	11	12	12	11	7	12	14
Don't know . . . . .	11	7	8	17	10	11	10	14	19	11	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, October 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	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Somewhat likely . . . . .	9	10	9	10	10	9	9	10	10	11	11
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	14	16	13	15	14	14	19	16	14	17
Very unlikely . . . . .	37	39	38	33	41	33	38	33	29	35	30
Definitely not possible . . . . .	28	31	28	25	25	31	29	23	23	28	32
Don't know . . . . .	9	4	7	17	8	10	9	13	20	10	7
7n. Mosquitoes or other insects?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	9	8	8	8	8	7	15	11	10	10
Somewhat likely . . . . .	26	27	25	25	26	25	26	25	32	25	31
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	10	13	10	7	11	9	10	7	6	11	11
Very unlikely . . . . .	21	21	22	19	22	20	22	16	13	19	15
Definitely not possible . . . . .	14	14	16	13	14	15	15	12	8	14	14
Don't know . . . . .	21	16	19	28	19	23	21	25	29	21	20
7o. Pets or animals?											
Very likely . . . . .	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	8	5	2	2
Somewhat likely . . . . .	10	11	9	8	9	10	8	16	12	11	11
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	8	11	8	8	9	8	8	8	8	8	13
Very unlikely . . . . .	30	32	32	26	33	27	31	22	22	29	24
Definitely not possible . . . . .	27	27	27	25	25	28	27	20	19	26	26
Don't know . . . . .	23	17	22	30	21	25	23	26	34	23	24
7p. Having sex with a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	93	94	94	91	91	95	93	92	91	95	90
Somewhat likely . . . . .	5	5	5	6	7	4	5	6	5	4	6
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	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	—	1	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	3	1	3
8. Have you ever heard of a blood test for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes . . . . .	73	81	81	58	74	72	75	58	50	72	77
No . . . . .	24	18	18	36	23	25	22	40	45	24	18
Don't know . . . . .	3	2	2	6	3	3	3	1	4	4	4
9. Does this test tell whether a person has the disease AIDS?											
Yes . . . . .	39	45	41	32	38	41	40	37	31	43	43
No . . . . .	23	25	29	16	27	20	25	11	8	18	25
Don't know . . . . .	10	10	10	10	9	11	10	10	11	11	9
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	27	19	19	42	26	28	25	42	50	28	23
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 . . . . .	64	72	71	48	65	62	66	51	44	63	67
No . . . . .	3	4	4	2	4	3	4	2	2	3	5
Don't know . . . . .	6	5	5	8	5	6	6	6	4	6	6
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	27	19	19	42	26	28	25	42	50	28	23
11. Have you ever had your blood tested for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes . . . . .	6	8	6	3	7	4	5	9	4	6	7
Yes, in blood donation/transfusion . . . . .	3	3	3	1	3	2	3	1	1	1	5
No . . . . .	63	67	69	52	63	63	65	48	43	63	64
Don't know . . . . .	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	27	19	19	42	26	28	25	42	50	28	23
12a. Have you ever thought about having this blood test?											
Already had test . . . . .	8	12	10	4	10	7	8	10	5	7	12
Yes . . . . .	11	16	13	4	10	11	10	15	8	10	14
No . . . . .	53	53	58	49	53	54	56	33	38	54	51
Don't know . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	27	20	20	42	26	29	25	42	50	28	23
12b. Do you plan to be tested in the next 12 months?											
Already had test . . . . .	8	12	10	4	11	7	8	10	5	7	12
Yes . . . . .	4	6	5	1	3	4	3	9	3	4	4
No . . . . .	5	7	6	2	5	5	5	4	2	4	7
Don't know . . . . .	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Never heard of test or thought about having test (no/don't know to q. 8 or q. 12a) . . . . .	81	73	77	92	79	82	82	76	88	83	74

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, October 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	30-49	50 years	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than	12 years	More than
		years	years	and over					12 years	12 years	
Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>											
13. Where would you go to have a blood test for the AIDS virus infection? <sup>3</sup>											
Nowhere/wouldn't take test . . . . .	0	—	—	1	—	0	0	—	—	—	—
AIDS clinic . . . . .	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	4	3
Other clinic . . . . .	25	28	25	19	24	26	24	37	22	30	29
Doctor/HMO . . . . .	46	46	47	44	41	50	47	36	46	43	43
Red Cross/blood bank . . . . .	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	—	2	3	—
Other . . . . .	16	15	16	19	20	13	15	21	18	13	19
Don't know . . . . .	7	6	6	11	9	5	8	3	9	8	6
14. Where would you go to find out where to have this blood test? <sup>2,4</sup>											
AIDS hot line . . . . .	2	—	5	—	—	8	3	—	—	—	—
AIDS clinic . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other clinic . . . . .	16	43	—	—	20	8	18	—	—	31	—
Doctor/HMO . . . . .	37	36	31	56	22	70	32	100	43	39	21
Friends . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Public health department	12	10	18	—	12	12	12	25	7	19	—
Other . . . . .	12	14	16	—	11	15	13	—	12	11	24
Nowhere/wouldn't take test . . . . .	5	7	5	—	8	—	6	—	12	—	099
Don't know . . . . .	18	—	24	44	27	—	20	—	32	—	55
15. Have you donated blood since 1985?											
Yes . . . . .	12	18	15	5	16	9	13	9	4	12	14
No . . . . .	87	82	84	95	84	91	87	91	96	88	86
Don't know . . . . .	0	—	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 . . . . .	14	18	19	6	13	15	15	9	7	10	17
No . . . . .	85	81	81	93	86	84	84	89	91	89	83
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
17. What are the chances of someone you know getting the AIDS virus?											
High . . . . .	9	13	11	5	9	9	9	10	7	8	9
Medium . . . . .	15	21	18	8	17	14	15	15	10	16	18
Low . . . . .	38	40	41	33	41	35	40	24	24	38	35
None . . . . .	27	21	22	37	23	29	25	32	36	28	26
Refused . . . . .	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	—	—	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	11	5	9	18	10	12	10	19	22	10	11
18. What are your chances of getting the AIDS virus?											
High . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	—
Medium . . . . .	3	5	3	1	4	2	3	3	2	3	4
Low . . . . .	30	37	34	19	32	28	31	25	18	30	30
None . . . . .	62	54	58	73	60	64	62	65	70	63	62
Refused . . . . .	0	0	—	—	0	—	0	—	—	—	0
Don't know . . . . .	4	3	3	6	4	4	3	7	9	4	4
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	2	2	1	2	2	2	5	2	2	3
Somewhat effective . . . . .	13	14	11	13	12	13	12	16	14	12	10
Not at all effective . . . . .	58	61	65	47	57	59	61	41	40	57	59
Don't know how effective . . . . .	21	18	17	28	21	21	21	26	30	23	19
Don't know method . . . . .	6	5	4	10	8	5	5	12	14	6	9
19b. Using a condom?											
Very effective . . . . .	33	41	34	26	35	31	33	33	24	34	29
Somewhat effective . . . . .	51	49	54	50	51	51	52	46	46	50	53
Not at all effective . . . . .	5	4	5	5	4	6	5	6	6	6	7
Don't know how effective . . . . .	9	5	6	15	8	10	8	11	18	9	8
Don't know method . . . . .	2	1	1	5	2	2	2	4	7	1	3
19c. Using a spermicidal jelly, foam, or cream?											
Very effective . . . . .	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	2	2
Somewhat effective . . . . .	14	15	14	13	14	14	14	16	11	14	14
Not at all effective . . . . .	56	61	62	46	53	59	58	46	43	56	57
Don't know how effective . . . . .	22	17	18	30	23	20	21	27	31	22	18
Don't know method . . . . .	7	5	4	10	8	5	6	8	14	6	9
19d. Being celibate, that is, not having sex at all?											
Very effective . . . . .	92	94	94	88	91	93	93	90	84	93	89
Somewhat effective . . . . .	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3
Not at all effective . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Don't know how effective . . . . .	3	2	1	5	3	2	2	3	6	2	6
Don't know method . . . . .	1	0	1	3	2	1	1	2	5	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, October 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	30-49	50 years	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than	12 years	More than	
		years	years	and over					12 years		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	88	89	82	87	86	88	79	77	86	84	84
Somewhat effective . . . . .	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	13	9	9	8	8
Not at all effective . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know how effective . . . . .	3	2	1	6	3	3	3	4	7	3	5	5
Don't know method . . . . .	2	0	1	3	2	2	1	3	6	1	3	3
20. Have you ever discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?												
Yes . . . . .	67	75	75	51	63	70	67	65	49	66	72	72
No . . . . .	33	24	25	48	37	29	32	35	50	34	27	27
Don't know . . . . .	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
21. When was the last time you discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?												
0-3 days ago . . . . .	16	17	18	13	13	19	15	22	13	16	13	13
4-7 days ago . . . . .	18	19	21	14	19	17	19	14	14	18	19	19
8-14 days ago . . . . .	8	9	10	5	7	9	8	7	6	8	10	10
15-31 days ago . . . . .	13	16	14	8	13	13	13	11	7	13	13	13
More than 31 days ago . . . . .	8	10	8	5	6	9	8	7	4	7	11	11
Never discussed (no/don't know to q. 20) . . . . .	35	26	26	51	38	31	34	36	53	35	31	31
Don't know . . . . .	3	2	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4
24. Have you ever discussed AIDS with [any of your children age 10-17]? <sup>2</sup>												
Yes . . . . .	63	31	65	57	50	74	64	60	50	62	66	66
No . . . . .	37	69	35	43	50	26	36	40	50	38	34	34
Don't know . . . . .	0	-	0	-	1	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
25. Have your children had any instruction at school about AIDS? <sup>3</sup>												
Yes . . . . .	45	23	46	47	42	48	46	44	43	41	50	50
No . . . . .	22	41	21	26	20	23	22	19	20	23	18	18
Don't know . . . . .	33	36	33	27	38	28	32	37	38	36	31	31
26. Have you ever personally known anyone with the AIDS virus?												
Yes . . . . .	7	7	10	5	8	7	8	6	4	4	7	7
No . . . . .	91	92	89	94	91	92	91	92	94	95	91	91
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2
27. Have you ever personally known anyone with AIDS?												
Yes . . . . .	8	7	10	5	8	7	8	6	4	5	6	6
No . . . . .	91	92	88	94	91	92	91	92	94	95	93	93
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	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	72	75	63	72	68	71	69	62	70	70	70
No . . . . .	21	19	18	24	19	22	20	21	25	20	22	22
Other . . . . .	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2
Don't know . . . . .	7	7	5	10	6	8	7	9	11	7	6	6
29. Would you want to know the results of the blood test? <sup>4</sup>												
Yes . . . . .	97	98	97	97	97	98	97	97	97	98	96	96
No . . . . .	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Don't know . . . . .	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	2	2

<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-

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 household. The estimates in this report are based on completed interviews with 3,350 persons, or about 86 percent of eligible respondents.

**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, October 1987**

Characteristic	Sample size	Estimated population in thousands
All adults . . . . .	3,350	174,528
<b>Age</b>		
18-29 years . . . . .	877	47,725
30-49 years . . . . .	1,235	66,109
50 years and over . . . . .	1,238	60,695
<b>Sex</b>		
Male . . . . .	1,385	82,703
Female . . . . .	1,965	91,825
<b>Race</b>		
White . . . . .	2,754	151,003
Black . . . . .	495	19,107
<b>Education</b>		
Less than 12 years . . . . .	750	41,503
12 years . . . . .	1,292	66,475
More than 12 years . . . . .	1,276	62,363

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, October 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 . . . . .	0.5	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	1.2	1.0	0.7	0.7
10 or 90 . . . . .	0.6	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.7	1.4	1.0	1.0
15 or 85 . . . . .	0.7	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0	0.8	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2
20 or 80 . . . . .	0.8	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.1	0.9	2.2	1.8	1.4	1.4
25 or 75 . . . . .	0.9	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.0	2.4	2.0	1.5	1.5
30 or 70 . . . . .	1.0	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.1	2.5	2.1	1.6	1.6
35 or 65 . . . . .	1.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.1	2.6	2.2	1.6	1.6
40 or 60 . . . . .	1.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.2	1.7	1.7
45 or 55 . . . . .	1.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.1	2.8	2.3	1.7	1.7
50 . . . . .	1.0	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.2	2.8	2.3	1.7	1.7

### Symbols

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

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