

## **AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes for November 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 November, the fourth month of data collection with the AIDS questionnaire. Data for August, September, and October 1987 have been published in *Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics* Nos. 146, 148, and 150.

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 spring 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. In summer 1988, the AIDS questionnaire will be modified again to include items designed to measure the impact of educational campaigns. Questions on risk behaviors may be included at that time.

This report presents provisional data for November 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

The most notable changes between October and November 1987 were in the proportions of adults who reported having discussed AIDS with their children and who stated that their children had received AIDS education at school. Although the level of misinformation about the risk of AIDS virus transmission through casual contact remained high, the percents of adults who thought it very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus through selected modes of casual contact continued to increase. The following highlights describe various aspects of AIDS knowledge and attitudes as observed in the November data from the NHIS AIDS 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 November 1987.

*Self-perceived knowledge*—There was virtually no change in the overall level of self-perceived knowledge about AIDS between August and November. In November, 21 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 November, the respective proportions were 22 percent and 14 percent. The proportions of adults who reported knowing nothing about AIDS were 9 percent for white adults and 17 percent for black adults in August; in November, the comparable proportions were 9 and 26 percent, respectively.

*General knowledge*—Following a number of statistically significant changes in the level of general knowledge about AIDS and the AIDS virus between August and September 1987, there were few changes between September and November. In November, 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 and 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 thinking it definitely false that an AIDS vaccine is available to the public has increased steadily over time, from 65 percent in August to 69 percent in September, 71 percent in October, and 73 percent in November.

*Transmission of the AIDS virus*—As shown in figure 1, the proportions of adults who thought it very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus

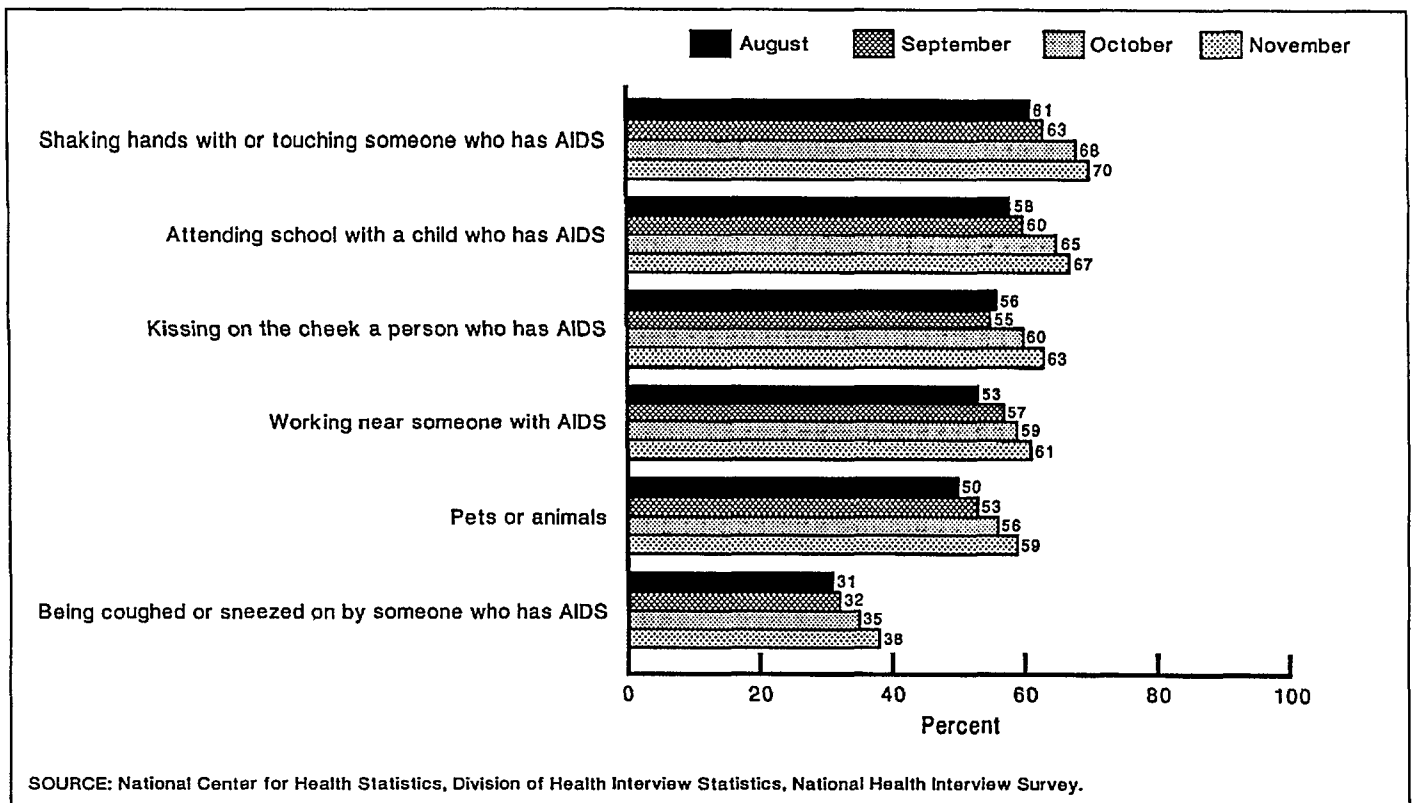


Figure 1. Provisional estimates of percent of adults who think it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus infection from various conjectured modes of transmission: United States, August-November, 1987

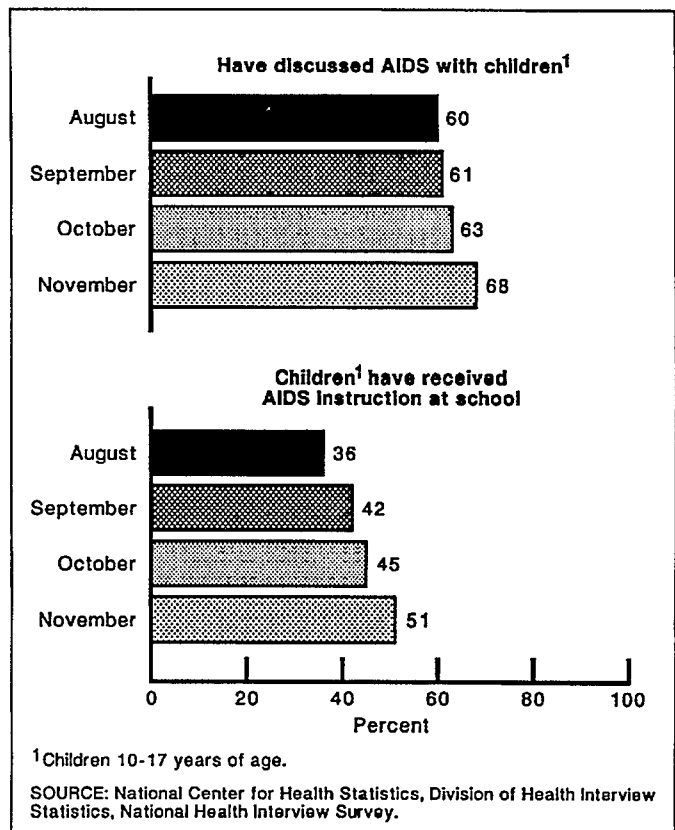
through selected modes of casual contact continued to increase between October and November 1987. For the data shown in figure 1, all changes between October and November and between September and October are statistically significant; because of the relatively small sample size in August, not all of the changes between August and September are statistically significant.

In November, 70 percent of all adults realized that it is very unlikely or definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus by shaking hands with or touching someone who has AIDS, up from 61 percent in August, 63 percent in September, and 68 percent in October. Similar levels of increase were observed for the other types of casual contact shown in figure 1. In preparing this figure, the categories "very unlikely" and "definitely not possible" were grouped for purposes of consistent presentation. Both responses are not necessarily correct for all items. For some forms of casual contact, many AIDS researchers would argue that the only correct response is "definitely not possible." The proportions of adults considering it definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus through various forms of casual contact has increased steadily over time as well.

**Blood test for the AIDS virus**—Seventy-two percent of adults have heard of a blood test for infection with the AIDS virus. Over time, there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of adults who erroneously believe that the blood test results tell whether a person has the disease AIDS—from 41 percent in August to 38 percent in November. In November, only 5 percent of all adults reported having had their blood tested for the AIDS virus. An additional 2 percent stated that their blood had been tested in connection with blood donation or transfusion. Eleven percent of adults stated that they have thought about having the blood test, and 4 percent reported plans to have the test in the next 12 months—about the same proportions that have been observed since August 1987.

**Risk of getting AIDS**—There has been a slight but statistically significant increase over time in the proportion of adults who think that there is no chance of their getting the AIDS virus, from 60 percent in August and September to 62 percent in October and 63 percent in November. The increase was greatest among the most highly educated individuals. Among adults with more than 12 years of education, the proportion thinking that there is no chance that they will get the AIDS virus increased from 51 percent in August to 62 percent in November; for individuals with less than 12 years of education, the observed change was not statistically significant.

**AIDS prevention**—There was virtually no change between August and November 1987 in the proportions of adults who consider various methods effective in preventing transmission of the AIDS virus. In November, 90 percent of all adults thought that celibacy is very effective in



**Figure 2. Provisional estimates of percent of adults with children 10-17 years of age who have discussed AIDS with their children and whose children have received AIDS instruction at school: United States, August-November, 1987**

preventing AIDS virus transmission, and 85 percent considered it very effective to maintain a monogamous relationship with a person who does not have AIDS. Thirty-three percent of adults felt that using condoms is very effective in preventing transmission of the AIDS virus; 48 percent considered this method to be somewhat effective.

**AIDS discussion and education**—The proportion of adults who have discussed AIDS with their friends and relatives has remained fairly stable over time, but the percent who have discussed AIDS with their children has increased. In August, 60 percent of adults with children 10-17 years of age had discussed AIDS with those children; by November, the proportion had risen to 68 percent (figure 2). A large portion of the increase took place since October, when the proportion was 63 percent.

In August, 36 percent of adults with children 10-17 years of age reported that their children had received AIDS instruction in school. This proportion increased to 42 percent in September, 45 percent in October, and 51 percent in November. The proportion of adults who do not know if their children have received AIDS education in school has remained fairly stable since August, about one-third of the total.

**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, November 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 . . . . .	75	66	76	79	76	74	76	69	70	73	79
4-7 days ago . . . . .	15	19	14	12	14	15	14	16	13	15	15
8-14 days ago . . . . .	3	6	3	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	2
15-31 days ago . . . . .	4	5	4	2	3	4	4	5	4	4	3
More than 31 days ago . . . . .	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	1
Never heard of AIDS . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Don't know . . . . .	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	4	5	2	1
2. Compared to most people, how much would you say you know about AIDS?											
A lot . . . . .	21	23	25	15	21	22	22	14	8	16	34
Some . . . . .	40	45	45	31	38	41	41	31	24	42	47
Little . . . . .	27	28	25	30	29	26	27	29	35	33	17
Nothing . . . . .	11	4	5	24	12	11	9	26	32	9	2
Don't know . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	0	0
3a. AIDS is a disease caused by a virus.											
Definitely true . . . . .	47	59	52	30	50	44	47	39	32	43	58
Probably true . . . . .	26	23	26	28	26	25	26	22	24	28	25
Probably false . . . . .	4	4	4	5	3	5	4	6	4	5	3
Definitely false . . . . .	5	4	5	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	4
Don't know . . . . .	18	10	13	31	16	20	17	27	34	18	10
3b. AIDS can cripple the body's natural protection against disease.											
Definitely true . . . . .	72	76	80	59	72	71	74	55	48	72	85
Probably true . . . . .	17	15	13	23	16	19	16	24	25	19	11
Probably false . . . . .	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Definitely false . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know . . . . .	9	7	6	15	10	9	8	19	25	7	2
3c. AIDS is especially common in older people.											
Definitely true . . . . .	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0
Probably true . . . . .	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Probably false . . . . .	20	22	19	19	21	19	20	14	16	20	22
Definitely false . . . . .	69	66	75	65	67	71	70	66	59	72	72
Don't know . . . . .	9	10	5	14	11	8	8	16	22	7	5
3d. The AIDS virus can damage the brain.											
Definitely true . . . . .	25	21	26	28	26	25	25	26	25	24	27
Probably true . . . . .	31	33	30	31	30	32	31	36	27	34	30
Probably false . . . . .	8	10	10	5	9	8	9	4	4	8	11
Definitely false . . . . .	6	8	8	3	7	6	6	7	5	5	8
Don't know . . . . .	29	28	26	33	29	29	29	27	39	29	24
3e. AIDS usually leads to heart disease.											
Definitely true . . . . .	8	5	8	10	7	9	8	10	9	8	7
Probably true . . . . .	22	22	21	22	22	21	21	23	19	23	21
Probably false . . . . .	17	20	19	12	19	15	18	12	9	16	21
Definitely false . . . . .	15	16	18	9	17	13	15	14	11	13	18
Don't know . . . . .	39	36	34	47	36	42	39	41	52	40	32
3f. AIDS leads to death.											
Definitely true . . . . .	92	92	94	88	90	94	92	88	88	93	93
Probably true . . . . .	6	7	5	7	8	4	6	7	6	5	7
Probably false . . . . .	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	—	—	0	0
Definitely false . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	2	1	1	4	2	2	2	4	5	1	1
4a. Where do you get most of your information about AIDS? <sup>2</sup>											
Television . . . . .	84	85	82	85	82	85	84	86	88	87	79
Newspapers . . . . .	57	48	61	59	61	53	59	42	41	55	67
Magazines . . . . .	30	28	34	26	26	33	32	17	16	26	41
Radio . . . . .	9	7	10	9	11	7	9	7	8	8	10
Relatives and friends . . . . .	8	12	8	6	8	8	8	10	9	7	9
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets . . . . .	8	10	9	4	6	9	7	9	5	7	10
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	6	7	6	5	5	6	5	11	5	4	7
Other . . . . .	15	20	19	7	14	16	14	18	8	9	24
Don't know . . . . .	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
4b. Of the sources you just told me, from which one do you get the most information?											
Television . . . . .	57	62	51	60	55	59	56	66	71	62	44
Newspapers . . . . .	19	12	21	22	23	15	20	12	12	18	23
Magazines . . . . .	9	9	12	7	7	11	10	3	5	7	14
Brochures/fliers/pamphlets . . . . .	2	3	2	1	1	3	2	2	1	2	2
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	5	3	2	2
Other . . . . .	10	12	12	6	10	9	10	12	7	7	14
Don't know . . . . .	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	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, November 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	56	56	58	58	56	57	56	56	58	56
Public health department . . . . .	18	17	21	15	18	18	18	19	12	15	25
Library . . . . .	12	15	14	7	10	13	12	12	6	13	15
AIDS hot line . . . . .	8	9	9	5	8	8	8	8	6	8	9
Other . . . . .	26	29	31	19	27	25	26	27	22	25	30
Don't know . . . . .	13	8	10	21	13	13	13	12	22	14	8
5b. Which one source would you most likely use?											
Doctor/HMO/clinic . . . . .	46	46	43	50	47	46	46	48	48	48	42
Public health department . . . . .	13	14	15	11	13	13	13	14	8	11	18
Library . . . . .	7	9	9	4	6	8	7	6	4	7	9
AIDS hot line . . . . .	6	7	7	4	6	6	6	6	5	6	6
Other . . . . .	14	16	16	10	15	14	14	14	12	13	17
Don't know . . . . .	13	8	10	21	13	13	13	12	22	14	8
6a. A person can be infected with the AIDS virus and not have the disease AIDS.											
Definitely true . . . . .	54	57	61	44	53	55	57	40	34	54	66
Probably true . . . . .	24	22	23	27	26	23	24	26	23	26	22
Probably false . . . . .	4	6	3	3	5	3	3	6	5	4	3
Definitely false . . . . .	3	5	2	2	3	3	2	5	3	3	3
Don't know . . . . .	15	10	10	24	14	16	14	23	34	13	7
6b. You can tell if people have the AIDS virus just by looking at them.											
Definitely true . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	1	1
Probably true . . . . .	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	7	7	4	2
Probably false . . . . .	15	18	14	15	18	13	15	14	16	16	14
Definitely false . . . . .	69	71	77	60	67	71	71	57	51	70	79
Don't know . . . . .	10	6	5	19	9	11	9	18	24	8	4
6c. Any person with the AIDS virus can pass it on to someone else during sexual intercourse.											
Definitely true . . . . .	79	83	81	75	76	82	79	79	73	83	80
Probably true . . . . .	15	13	16	17	18	13	16	14	17	13	16
Probably false . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	—	1	0	1
Definitely false . . . . .	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	—	0	0	1
Don't know . . . . .	4	2	2	7	4	4	4	8	9	3	2
6d. A pregnant woman who has the AIDS virus can give AIDS to her baby.											
Definitely true . . . . .	75	77	77	70	71	79	75	75	66	75	80
Probably true . . . . .	19	19	18	20	21	16	19	18	21	19	17
Probably false . . . . .	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	—	0	0	1
Definitely false . . . . .	0	0	—	—	—	0	0	—	—	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	6	3	4	10	7	5	6	8	12	6	2
6e. There is a vaccine available to the public that protects a person from getting the AIDS virus.											
Definitely true . . . . .	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	4	3	1	0
Probably true . . . . .	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	7	5	3	1
Probably false . . . . .	9	11	8	10	11	8	9	9	9	11	8
Definitely false . . . . .	73	74	80	62	75	71	75	56	54	71	84
Don't know . . . . .	14	11	9	23	11	16	12	25	28	14	6
6f. There is no cure for AIDS at present.											
Definitely true . . . . .	86	88	89	80	84	87	87	77	75	85	93
Probably true . . . . .	7	6	7	9	8	6	7	10	10	8	5
Probably false . . . . .	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0
Definitely false . . . . .	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	1
Don't know . . . . .	5	4	2	8	5	4	4	10	11	4	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	33	32	36	31	36	31	47	41	34	29
Somewhat likely . . . . .	32	30	32	33	30	33	32	33	30	35	29
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	12	14	14	8	13	11	13	3	5	11	16
Very unlikely . . . . .	17	19	18	13	19	14	18	5	9	14	23
Definitely not possible . . . . .	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1
Don't know . . . . .	5	3	2	8	5	5	4	9	12	4	1
7b. Donating or giving blood?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	8	8	9	9	8	7	19	16	7	5
Somewhat likely . . . . .	14	15	11	16	14	14	12	26	19	15	10
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	12	13	12	10	12	11	12	12	10	11	12
Very unlikely . . . . .	35	35	38	30	36	34	37	23	21	37	40
Definitely not possible . . . . .	24	25	27	21	23	25	27	10	16	24	30
Don't know . . . . .	7	4	3	13	6	8	6	11	18	5	2

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		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	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	0
Somewhat likely . . . . .	4	4	4	5	3	5	4	7	7	4	3
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	8	11	7	8	8	8	7	13	8	8	8
Very unlikely . . . . .	38	41	39	35	42	35	39	30	30	40	41
Definitely not possible . . . . .	41	39	45	37	38	43	42	31	32	40	46
Don't know . . . . .	8	3	4	15	7	8	7	16	20	6	2
7d. Working near someone with AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	6	5	5	1
Somewhat likely . . . . .	14	16	13	14	12	15	14	12	15	16	12
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	15	15	11	15	12	13	17	10	14	16
Very unlikely . . . . .	34	36	35	32	36	33	35	27	27	34	39
Definitely not possible . . . . .	27	26	29	24	26	27	27	23	24	26	29
Don't know . . . . .	8	4	4	15	8	9	7	15	20	7	3
7e. Eating in a restaurant where the cook has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	7	7	9	8	8	7	13	10	9	5
Somewhat likely . . . . .	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	20
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	16	21	17	12	17	15	16	14	15	14	19
Very unlikely . . . . .	26	24	29	23	28	24	27	17	15	25	32
Definitely not possible . . . . .	16	18	16	14	14	17	16	13	13	17	16
Don't know . . . . .	13	9	9	20	11	14	12	20	23	12	7
7f. Kissing—with exchange of saliva—a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	29	25	29	32	27	30	27	35	29	32	25
Somewhat likely . . . . .	34	33	37	33	35	33	35	35	33	34	36
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	11	15	11	9	12	11	12	7	6	10	16
Very unlikely . . . . .	11	14	12	7	10	11	11	6	6	11	13
Definitely not possible . . . . .	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	5
Don't know . . . . .	10	8	7	16	11	10	10	13	22	9	6
7g. Shaking hands with or touching someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	4	3	1	1
Somewhat likely . . . . .	7	6	6	7	7	7	6	10	9	7	5
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	15	15	17	14	16	15	15	17	12	16	17
Very unlikely . . . . .	37	39	39	35	39	36	39	30	29	39	41
Definitely not possible . . . . .	32	36	32	30	31	34	33	28	30	32	35
Don't know . . . . .	7	3	4	13	6	7	6	11	17	5	2
7h. Sharing plates, forks, or glasses with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	19	13	13	9
Somewhat likely . . . . .	31	29	32	32	32	30	30	35	34	33	27
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	14	16	15	11	14	14	14	8	8	13	18
Very unlikely . . . . .	19	21	21	16	20	19	21	11	13	17	25
Definitely not possible . . . . .	14	16	15	13	14	15	15	11	12	15	15
Don't know . . . . .	10	7	6	18	9	11	10	14	21	10	5
7i. Using public toilets?											
Very likely . . . . .	7	7	6	9	6	8	6	15	12	7	5
Somewhat likely . . . . .	19	19	18	22	19	20	19	26	24	22	21
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	15	16	17	12	15	15	15	13	10	14	20
Very unlikely . . . . .	28	31	29	23	31	25	29	19	17	27	28
Definitely not possible . . . . .	20	21	22	17	19	21	21	14	15	20	18
Don't know . . . . .	11	7	8	16	10	11	10	14	22	11	9
7j. Sharing needles for drug use with someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	93	95	96	87	93	93	93	90	83	95	93
Somewhat likely . . . . .	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	6	8	3	5
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very unlikely . . . . .	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	—	0	0	—
Definitely not possible . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Don't know . . . . .	2	1	0	6	3	2	2	4	8	2	2
7k. Kissing on the cheek a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	7	4	3	2
Somewhat likely . . . . .	10	9	8	13	11	9	10	12	14	11	9
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	17	18	18	14	17	17	16	21	16	16	19
Very unlikely . . . . .	35	34	37	32	36	33	36	25	24	34	37
Definitely not possible . . . . .	28	32	30	24	26	30	29	22	23	29	28
Don't know . . . . .	7	4	4	14	8	7	7	12	19	6	5
7l. Being coughed or sneezed on by someone who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	8	7	10	7	9	7	14	12	9	8
Somewhat likely . . . . .	25	22	25	28	25	26	25	29	28	27	29
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	17	22	17	14	19	16	18	12	12	17	21
Very unlikely . . . . .	22	23	27	17	24	21	24	13	12	21	20
Definitely not possible . . . . .	16	18	17	12	15	16	16	14	14	16	13
Don't know . . . . .	11	7	8	19	10	12	10	19	23	10	9

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, November 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	3	1	2	2	2	1	5	4	2	3
Somewhat likely . . . . .	8	8	9	8	8	8	8	11	11	8	9
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	13	14	13	13	13	13	13	17	11	13	14
Very unlikely . . . . .	36	39	39	32	39	34	38	26	26	36	40
Definitely not possible . . . . .	31	32	32	28	29	32	31	27	26	31	27
Don't know . . . . .	10	4	6	18	9	11	9	14	22	9	7
7n. Mosquitoes or other insects?											
Very likely . . . . .	8	9	8	8	9	7	7	13	12	9	12
Somewhat likely . . . . .	24	29	25	20	25	24	23	31	27	26	23
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	11	14	11	9	13	10	12	12	6	11	11
Very unlikely . . . . .	19	17	23	17	19	19	20	10	13	17	22
Definitely not possible . . . . .	17	17	18	16	17	17	17	13	11	17	17
Don't know . . . . .	20	15	16	30	18	23	20	22	31	20	16
7o. Pets or animals?											
Very likely . . . . .	2	3	1	3	3	2	2	7	5	2	2
Somewhat likely . . . . .	9	10	8	7	10	7	8	14	11	8	8
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	9	13	9	7	11	8	9	10	7	9	14
Very unlikely . . . . .	29	30	32	25	30	28	31	18	20	29	33
Definitely not possible . . . . .	29	28	32	27	28	31	30	23	23	30	28
Don't know . . . . .	22	16	17	30	18	24	21	29	35	22	14
7p. Having sex with a person who has AIDS?											
Very likely . . . . .	93	94	94	90	92	94	93	89	87	95	93
Somewhat likely . . . . .	5	5	5	5	6	4	5	8	7	4	5
Somewhat unlikely . . . . .	0	0	0	0	—	0	0	—	0	0	—
Very unlikely . . . . .	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	0	1
Definitely not possible . . . . .	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	2	0	0	4	2	2	1	2	5	1	1
8. Have you ever heard of a blood test for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes . . . . .	72	81	81	55	74	71	74	60	54	71	77
No . . . . .	25	18	17	39	24	26	23	35	40	27	21
Don't know . . . . .	3	1	1	6	2	3	3	5	5	3	2
9. Does this test tell whether a person has the disease AIDS?											
Yes . . . . .	38	40	42	31	36	39	38	38	34	38	39
No . . . . .	23	28	29	14	25	22	25	12	9	21	23
Don't know . . . . .	11	13	11	11	13	10	11	10	12	12	14
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	28	19	19	45	26	29	26	40	46	29	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 . . . . .	63	70	71	48	64	62	65	53	46	61	70
No . . . . .	3	4	3	1	3	3	3	1	2	2	3
Don't know . . . . .	6	6	7	6	7	6	7	5	7	8	4
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	28	19	19	45	26	29	26	40	46	29	23
11. Have you ever had your blood tested for infection with the AIDS virus?											
Yes . . . . .	5	8	6	1	6	4	5	8	3	4	5
Yes, in blood donation/transfusion . . . . .	2	3	3	1	3	2	2	2	1	2	2
No . . . . .	64	69	71	51	62	64	65	49	47	63	69
Don't know . . . . .	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	0
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	28	19	19	45	26	29	26	40	46	29	23
12a. Have you ever thought about having this blood test?											
Already had test . . . . .	7	11	9	3	9	5	7	10	5	7	8
Yes . . . . .	11	16	14	4	12	11	11	14	9	10	16
No . . . . .	53	54	58	48	52	55	56	36	40	54	52
Don't know . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Never heard of test (no/don't know to q. 8) . . . . .	28	20	19	45	26	30	26	41	46	30	24
12b. Do you plan to be tested in the next 12 months?											
Already had test . . . . .	7	11	9	3	9	5	7	10	5	7	8
Yes . . . . .	4	6	4	2	4	3	3	8	5	3	7
No . . . . .	6	8	8	1	6	5	6	3	2	4	7
Don't know . . . . .	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	3	2
Never heard of test or thought about having test (no/don't know to q. 8 or q. 12a) . . . . .	82	73	77	93	79	84	82	77	87	84	76

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, November 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 . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
AIDS clinic . . . . .	4	4	4	7	7	2	5	2	1	5	2
Other clinic . . . . .	29	35	28	18	32	27	27	44	40	34	33
Doctor/HMO . . . . .	47	36	51	64	44	50	49	33	35	48	53
Red Cross/blood bank . . . . .	3	4	3	1	2	5	3	6	—	5	—
Other . . . . .	10	12	9	6	8	12	10	11	13	6	8
Don't know . . . . .	6	9	4	5	7	5	6	5	11	2	4
14. Where would you go to find out where to have this blood test? <sup>2,4</sup>											
AIDS hot line . . . . .	19	22	18	—	19	18	17	—	—	—	—
AIDS clinic . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other clinic . . . . .	7	5	13	—	5	12	9	—	—	12	—
Doctor/HMO . . . . .	39	52	17	55	33	49	43	30	67	27	58
Friends . . . . .	2	—	5	—	—	5	2	—	—	—	—
Public health department . . . . .	17	11	19	45	18	16	21	—	15	29	—
Other . . . . .	3	—	8	—	5	—	4	—	—	—	—
Nowhere/wouldn't take test . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Don't know . . . . .	15	10	25	—	21	5	6	70	18	32	42
15. Have you donated blood since 1985?											
Yes . . . . .	11	16	14	5	15	8	12	10	7	11	13
No . . . . .	88	84	86	94	85	91	88	90	92	89	86
Don't know . . . . .	0	—	0	1	0	0	0	—	0	0	1
16. Have you ever personally known anyone who had the blood test for the AIDS virus infection?											
Yes . . . . .	14	18	18	6	13	15	14	13	5	12	20
No . . . . .	85	81	80	92	86	84	84	85	94	86	78
Don't know . . . . .	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2
17. What are the chances of someone you know getting the AIDS virus?											
High . . . . .	9	13	10	4	8	9	9	8	5	9	8
Medium . . . . .	16	22	19	9	16	16	16	20	12	15	19
Low . . . . .	35	37	39	28	39	31	36	23	21	36	40
None . . . . .	28	19	22	41	24	31	27	28	37	30	23
Refused . . . . .	0	—	0	0	—	0	0	—	0	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	13	9	10	19	12	13	12	21	25	10	10
18. What are your chances of getting the AIDS virus?											
High . . . . .	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Medium . . . . .	4	5	4	2	4	3	3	8	5	3	3
Low . . . . .	28	36	32	19	31	26	29	23	19	25	31
None . . . . .	63	54	60	73	59	66	63	59	67	66	62
Refused . . . . .	0	—	0	—	—	0	0	—	—	0	—
Don't know . . . . .	4	4	3	6	5	4	4	9	9	4	3
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	2	2	3	2	5	3	3	2
Somewhat effective . . . . .	11	12	10	10	10	11	10	12	11	10	15
Not at all effective . . . . .	58	65	65	45	59	58	61	43	40	57	61
Don't know how effective . . . . .	23	14	19	33	23	22	22	25	33	24	17
Don't know method . . . . .	6	6	4	9	6	6	5	15	13	6	6
19b. Using a condom?											
Very effective . . . . .	33	38	35	27	35	31	34	28	23	34	36
Somewhat effective . . . . .	48	49	51	44	48	48	49	41	40	47	48
Not at all effective . . . . .	6	7	5	6	4	7	6	7	8	7	5
Don't know how effective . . . . .	10	4	8	18	10	11	9	17	21	10	9
Don't know method . . . . .	3	2	1	5	2	3	2	7	7	2	2
19c. Using a spermicidal jelly, foam, or cream?											
Very effective . . . . .	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	4	3	1	3
Somewhat effective . . . . .	13	14	13	12	14	12	13	11	9	13	13
Not at all effective . . . . .	56	64	64	41	55	57	58	46	41	57	62
Don't know how effective . . . . .	24	16	19	35	24	23	23	26	35	23	19
Don't know method . . . . .	6	5	3	9	6	6	5	13	12	5	3
19d. Being celibate, that is, not having sex at all?											
Very effective . . . . .	90	91	94	85	89	91	91	85	79	91	90
Somewhat effective . . . . .	5	6	3	6	5	5	5	7	8	4	4
Not at all effective . . . . .	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	3	2	1	1
Don't know how effective . . . . .	3	1	1	6	3	2	3	3	8	2	4
Don't know method . . . . .	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	2	3	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, November 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
19a. Two people who do not have the AIDS virus having a completely monogamous relationship, that is, having sex only with each other?	Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>										
Very effective . . . . .	85	85	91	79	85	86	87	78	72	87	90
Somewhat effective . . . . .	8	10	6	9	8	8	8	12	12	8	6
Not at all effective . . . . .	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	3	3	2	1
Don't know how effective . . . . .	4	2	1	8	4	3	3	5	10	3	3
Don't know method . . . . .	1	1	0	3	1	1	1	2	3	1	0
20. Have you ever discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?	65	72	77	45	60	69	65	62	45	62	67
Yes . . . . .	35	28	23	53	39	30	34	36	54	36	32
No . . . . .	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0
Don't know . . . . .											
21. When was the last time you discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?											
0-3 days ago . . . . .	17	19	19	12	15	18	17	17	13	14	24
4-7 days ago . . . . .	18	18	21	14	16	19	18	16	13	16	17
8-14 days ago . . . . .	7	9	8	4	6	7	7	6	3	8	5
15-31 days ago . . . . .	12	13	15	7	11	12	12	11	8	12	12
More than 31 days ago . . . . .	8	10	8	5	6	8	7	8	4	9	7
Never discussed (no/don't know to q. 20) . . . . .	36	29	24	55	41	32	36	38	56	38	33
Don't know . . . . .	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	1
24. Have you ever discussed AIDS with [any of your children age 10-17]? <sup>6</sup>	68	56	69	60	59	75	70	57	55	64	76
Yes . . . . .	32	44	30	38	40	25	30	40	45	36	24
No . . . . .	0	-	0	1	1	-	-	3	-	0	-
Don't know . . . . .											
25. Have your children had any instruction at school about AIDS? <sup>5</sup>	51	51	51	56	50	52	51	52	54	47	50
Yes . . . . .	19	25	19	14	15	22	19	20	18	20	18
No . . . . .	30	23	30	30	35	26	30	28	28	33	32
Don't know . . . . .											
26. Have you ever personally known anyone with the AIDS virus?	6	5	9	4	6	6	6	7	3	5	7
Yes . . . . .	92	93	88	94	91	92	92	90	95	93	91
No . . . . .	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Don't know . . . . .											
27. Have you ever personally known anyone with AIDS?	6	5	9	4	7	6	6	9	4	5	7
Yes . . . . .	92	94	89	94	91	92	92	89	95	94	92
No . . . . .	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1
Don't know . . . . .											
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?	69	74	72	62	69	69	69	71	63	70	71
Yes . . . . .	22	18	19	27	22	21	22	20	23	22	22
No . . . . .	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Other . . . . .	7	6	6	9	6	8	7	7	11	6	4
Don't know . . . . .											
29. Would you want to know the results of the blood test? <sup>6</sup>	97	98	97	97	97	97	98	96	99	96	96
Yes . . . . .	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	3
No . . . . .											

<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 family. The estimates in this report are based on completed interviews with 3,333 persons, or about 88 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, November 1987**

Characteristic	Sample size	Estimated population in thousands
All adults . . . . .	3,333	174,528
Age		
18-29 years. . . . .	799	47,725
30-49 years. . . . .	1,291	66,109
50 years and over . . . . .	1,243	60,695
Sex		
Male . . . . .	1,345	82,703
Female . . . . .	1,988	91,825
Race		
White . . . . .	2,794	151,003
Black . . . . .	448	19,107
Education		
Less than 12 years . . . . .	745	41,503
12 years. . . . .	1,254	66,475
More than 12 years. . . . .	1,299	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, November 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	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	1.2	1.0	0.7	0.7
10 or 90 . . . . .	0.6	1.3	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	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.1	0.9	2.3	1.8	1.4	1.4
25 or 75 . . . . .	0.9	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.0	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.5
30 or 70 . . . . .	1.0	1.9	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.2	1.0	2.6	2.1	1.6	1.6
35 or 65 . . . . .	1.0	2.0	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.2	1.6	1.6
40 or 60 . . . . .	1.0	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.1	2.8	2.2	1.7	1.7
45 or 55 . . . . .	1.0	2.1	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	1.7	1.4	1.1	2.9	2.3	1.7	1.7

### Symbols

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

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