

NATIONAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION EXAMINATION SURVEY (NHANES)

Years Survey Included Sexual and Gender Minority (SGM)-Related Questions

1999–Present

Survey Description

The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) is one of a series of health-related programs conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). It is designed to assess the health and nutritional status of adults and children in the United States. The survey is unique in that it combines interviews and physical examinations and administers tests of physical activity and fitness that include children and adolescents.

Survey Sample Population

The NHANES sample population is the noninstitutionalized U.S. civilian population of all ages residing in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The survey examines a nationally representative sample of about 5,000 persons each year in counties across the country. A mobile exam center (MEC) visits 15 counties each year. To produce reliable statistics, NHANES oversamples persons 60 years of age and older, African Americans, and Hispanics.

Survey Mode

NHANES mode comprises two parts. The first is conducted using a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) and is administered by a MEC interviewer. The second is conducted using an audio computer-assisted self-interviewing system (ACASI). Sample participants are given a set of headphones and respond to questions using a touch screen. The survey consists of questionnaires administered in the home, followed by a standardized physical examination in specially equipped MECs.

SGM-Related Survey Questions

Screener (Module 2)

The questions below are asked of NHANES respondents.

Category	Question	Question History
Sexual Identity	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Sexual Attraction	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Sexual Behavior	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Gender Identity	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Household Relationships	(SFQ.006) What is {PERSON's} relationship to {REFERENCE PERSON}? RELATED – 1. Husband 2. Partner 3. Son (Biological, Son-In-Law, Adoptive, Foster, Step) 4. Son of Partner 5. Grandson 6. Father 7. Brother 8. Grandfather 9. Uncle 10. Nephew 11. Other Relative NOT RELATED – 12. Housemate/Roommate 13. Roomer/Boarder 14. Other/Non-Related 15. Legal Guardian 16. Ward 77. Refused 99. Don't Know	This question was added to the survey in 2013 and is the current version used.

Category	Question	Question History
	<p>(SFQ.007) What is {PERSON'S} RELATIONSHIP TO {reference person}?</p> <p>RELATED –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wife 2. Partner 3. Daughter (Biological, Son-In-Law, Adoptive, Foster, Step) 4. Daughter of Partner 5. Granddaughter 6. Mother 7. Sister 8. Grandmother 9. Aunt 10. Niece 11. Other Relative <p>NOT RELATED –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Housemate/Roommate 13. Roomer/Boarder 14. Other/Non-Related 15. Legal Guardian 16. Ward 77. Refused 99. Don't Know 	<p>This question was added to the survey in 2013 and is the current version used.</p>
	<p>(SFQ.10) What is {PERSON'S} relationship to {REFERENCE PERSON}?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SPOUSE 2. UNMARRIED PARTNER 3. CHILD (BIOLOGICAL/ADOPTIVE/IN-LAW/ STEP/FOSTER) 4. CHILD OF PARTNER 5. GRANDCHILD 6. PARENT (BIOLOGICAL/ADOPTIVE/ IN-LAW/STEP/FOSTER) 7. BROTHER/SISTER (BIOLOGICAL/ ADOPTIVE/IN-LAW/STEP/FOSTER) 8.GRANDMOTHER/GRANDFATHER 9. AUNT/UNCLE 10. NIECE/NEPHEW 11. OTHER RELATIVE 12. HOUSEMATE/ROOMMATE 13. ROOMER/BOARDER 14.OTHER NONRELATIVE 15. LEGAL GUARDIAN 16. WARD 77. REFUSED 99. DON'T KNOW 	<p>This question was asked from 1999–2012.</p>

Category	Question	Question History
	<p>(SFQ.180) Is {PRESON'S NAME} now married, widowed, divorced, separated, never married, or living with partner?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Married 2. Widowed 3. Divorced 4. Separated 5. Never Married 6. Living with Partner 7. Refused 9. Don't know 	<p>This is the only version of the question that has been used.</p>
	<p>(SFQ.190) Is {PERSON'S}{spouse/partner} living in the household?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No 7. Refused 9. Don't know 	<p>This is the only version of the question that has been used.</p>
	<p>(SFQ.070) What is {PERSON'S} relationship to {HEAD OF FAMILY}.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SPOUSE 2. UNMARRIED PARTNER 3. CHILD (BIOLOGICAL/ADOP-TIVE/IN-LAW/ STEP/FOSTER) 4. CHILD OF PARTNER 5. GRANDCHILD 6. PARENT (BIOLOGICAL/ADOP-TIVE/ IN-LAW/STEP/FOSTER) 7. BROTHER/SISTER (BIOLOGICAL/ ADOPTIVE/IN-LAW/STEP/FOSTER) 8.GRANDMOTHER/GRANDFATHER 9. AUNT/UNCLE 10. NIECE/NEPHEW 11. OTHER RELATIVE 12. HOUSE-MATE/ROOMMATE 13. ROOMER/BOARDER 14.OTHER NONRELATIVE 15. LEGAL GUARDIAN 16. WARD 77. REFUSED 99. DON'T KNOW 	<p>This question was asked from 1999–2012.</p>

Sample Person Questionnaire: Demographic

The questions below are asked of NHANES respondents who meet screening requirements.

Category	Question	Question History
Sexual Identity	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Sexual Attraction	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Sexual Behavior	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Gender Identity	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Household Relationships	(DMQ.380) {Are you/Is SP} now married, widowed, divorced, separated, never married or living with a partner? 1. MARRIED 2. WIDOWED 3. DIVORCED 4. SEPARATED 5. NEVER MARRIED 6. LIVING WITH PARTNER 77. REFUSED 99. DON'T KNOW	This is the only version of the question that has been used. From 1999–2004, this question was labeled as SQF180.

ACASI: Sexual Behavior Questionnaire

The questions below are asked of either male or female NHANES respondents who meet screening requirements.

Category	Question	Question History
Sexual Identity	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Sexual Attraction	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Sexual Behavior	<p>(SXQ.709) Have you ever had any kind of sex with a woman? By sex, we mean sexual contact with another woman's vagina or genitals.</p> <p>1. Yes 2. No 7. Refuse 9. Don't Know</p>	<p>Asked of female respondents only.</p> <p>This is the current version of the question.</p> <p>From 2007–2008, the following version of the question was used:</p> <p>(SXQ.130) In your lifetime, with how many women have you had sex? {_ _ _ _} Refused77777 Don't Know99999</p> <p>From 2005–2006 the following version of the question was used:</p> <p>(SXQ.130) In your lifetime, with how many females have you had sex? {_ _ _ _} Refused77777 Don't Know99999</p> <p>From 1999–2004, the following version of the question was used:</p> <p>(SXQ.130) In your lifetime, with how many women have you had sex? {_ _ _ _} Refused77777 Don't Know99999</p>

Category	Question	Question History
	<p>(SXQ.809) Have you ever had any kind of sex with a man, including oral or anal?</p> <p>1. Yes 2. No 7. Refuse 9. Don't Know</p>	<p>Asked of male respondents only.</p> <p>This is the current version of the question.</p> <p>From 2007–2008, the following version of the question was used: (SXQ.410) In your lifetime, with how many men have you had anal or oral sex? { _ _ _ _ } Refused77777 Don't Know99999</p> <p>From 2005–2006 the following version of the question was used: (SXQ.410) In your lifetime, with how many males have you had anal or oral sex? { _ _ _ _ } Refused77777 Don't Know99999</p> <p>From 1999–2004 the following version of the question was used: (SXQ.410) In your lifetime, with how many men have you had anal or oral sex? { _ _ _ _ } Refused77777 Don't Know99999</p> <p>From 1999–2002 this question was labeled as SXQ200.</p>
Gender Identity	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Household Relationships	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.

CAPI: Sexual Behavior Questionnaire

The questions below are asked of either male or female NHANES respondents who meet screening requirements.

Category	Question	Question History
Sexual Identity	<p>(SXQ.295) Which of the following best represents how you think of yourself?</p> <p>Lesbian or Gay1</p> <p>Straight, that is, not lesbian or gay2</p> <p>Bisexual3</p> <p>Something else4</p> <p>I don't know the answer9</p> <p>REFUSED77</p> <p>DON'T KNOW99</p>	<p>Female participants were asked this version of this question. This question was asked from 2015–present.</p> <p>Prior to 2015, this question was asked in the ACASI portion of the survey.</p> <p>From 2007–2014, the following version of the question was asked of female participants:</p> <p>(SXQ.294) Do you think of yourself as...</p> <p>Heterosexual or straight (attracted to men) ...1</p> <p>Homosexual or lesbian (attracted to women) ...2</p> <p>Bisexual (attracted to men and women) ...3</p> <p>Something else ...4</p> <p>Not sure? ...5</p> <p>REFUSED ...7</p> <p>DON'T KNOW ...9</p> <p>From 2005–2006, the following version of the question was asked of female participants:</p> <p>(SXQ.294) Do you think of yourself as...</p> <p>Heterosexual or straight (attracted to men) ...1</p> <p>Homosexual or gay (attracted to women) ...2</p> <p>Bisexual (attracted to men and women) ...3</p> <p>Something else ...4</p> <p>Not sure? ...5</p> <p>REFUSED ...7</p> <p>DON'T KNOW ...9</p> <p>From 2001–2004, the following version of the question was asked of female participants:</p> <p>(SXQ.292) Do you think of yourself as ...</p> <p>Heterosexual or straight (attracted to men) ...1</p> <p>Homosexual or lesbian (attracted to women) ...2</p> <p>Bisexual (attracted to men and women) ...3</p> <p>Something else ...4</p> <p>Not sure? ...5</p> <p>REFUSED ...7</p> <p>DON'T KNOW ...9</p>

Category	Question	Question History
	<p>(SXQ.296) Which of the following best represents how you think of yourself?</p> <p>Gay1 Straight, that is, not gay2 Bisexual3 Something else4 I don't know the answer9 REFUSED77 DON'T KNOW99</p>	<p>Male participants were asked this version of this question. This question was asked from 2015–present.</p> <p>Prior to 2015, this question was asked in the ACASI portion of the survey.</p> <p>From 2005–2014, the following version of the question was asked of male participants:</p> <p>(SXQ.292) Do you think of yourself as... Heterosexual or straight (attracted to women) ...1 Homosexual or gay (attracted to men) ...2 Bisexual (attracted to men and women) ...3 Something else ...4 Not sure? ...5 REFUSED ...7 DON'T KNOW ...9</p> <p>From 2001–2004, the following version of the question was asked of male participants:</p> <p>(SXQ.292) Do you think of yourself as... Heterosexual or straight (attracted to women) ...1 Homosexual or gay (attracted to men) ...2 Bisexual (attracted to men and women) ...3 Something else, or ...4 Not sure? ...5</p>
Sexual Attraction	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Sexual Behavior	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Gender Identity	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.
Household Relationships	Currently no questions are asked in this category.	Not applicable.

Response Rates

For the 2015–2016 version of NHANES, 15,327 individuals were screened. Of these, 9,971 were interviewed, making the unweighted response rate 61.3%. Of the interviews, 9,544 were analyzed, making the unweighted response rate 58.7%. Additional information about response rates can be found here: <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/ResponseRates.aspx>

Response rates can be accessed on the NHANES main page under “Questionnaires, Datasets, and Related Documentation.” Response rates are organized by year and are provided in both excel and pdf formats. Use the following link to access the most recent response rate results: <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/ResponseRates.aspx>

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

In 1999, NHANES became a continuous, ongoing annual survey of the noninstitutionalized civilian resident population of the U.S. NHANES excluded all persons in supervised care or in custody in institutional settings, all active-duty military personnel and active-duty family members living overseas, and any other U.S. citizen residing outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia. A continuous survey allowed content to change to meet emerging needs. The goals of the continuous NHANES are:

1. Estimate the number and percent of persons in the U.S. population and designated, subgroups with selected disease and risk factors,
2. monitor trends in the prevalence, awareness, treatment and control of selected diseases,
3. Monitor trends in risk behaviors and environmental exposures,
4. Analyze risk factors for selected diseases,
5. Study the relationship between diet, nutrition and health,
6. Explore emerging public health issues and new technologies,
7. Establish a national probability sample of genetic materials for future genetic research and,
8. Establish and maintain a national probability sample of baseline information on health and nutritional status.

Although all of the goals are important and related, goals 1–4 and number 8 are considered the most fundamental to the mission and operation of NHANES.

Organizations Involved

The survey is created and administered by the CDC through its NCHS.



Survey Links

Questionnaires

Survey questionnaires can be accessed on the NHANES main website, organized by year. Use the following link to access the most recent questionnaires: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/Default.aspx>

Data

Data can be accessed on the NHANES main page under “Other NHANES Data.” Use the following link to access the most recent data: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/OtherNhanesData.aspx>

General Information

All information on the NHANES can be found on CDC’s NHANES website: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/index.htm>

References

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