

1995

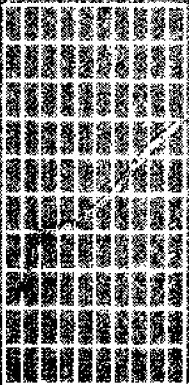
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National Health Survey

First Results

Australia

Statistics



NOTES

INTRODUCTION

This publication contains the first preliminary results from the National Health Survey (NHS) conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 1995. Details of further publications and other releases of statistics from the NHS are contained in the Explanatory Notes.

The statistics shown in this publication represent a selection of the statistics available, chosen to provide an overview of the main topics covered in the survey. They are subject to change as further processing of the data is undertaken.

Tables in this publication have been arranged into three broad groups, reflecting the main topic areas covered by the survey:

- indicators of health status, both self-assessed and through reported recent and long-term conditions;
- actions people have taken in relation to their health, either as a result of illness or for other reasons; and
- lifestyle behaviours and other factors which may influence health.

A brief description of the survey, its concepts, methodology and procedures is contained in the Explanatory Notes. More detailed information on the nature of the NHS, its objectives, content and the concepts, methods and procedures used in the collection of data are provided in *1995 National Health Survey, Users' Guide* (4363.0). The *1995 NHS Data Reference Package* contains a set of the questionnaires used for the survey, a list of output data items and other material designed to assist users in making best use of the survey data.

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SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

- n.a. not available
- n.e.c. not elsewhere classified
- nos not otherwise specified
- * relative standard error between 25% and 50%
- ** nil or subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses
- .. not applicable

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INQUIRIES

For information about other ABS statistics and services, please refer to the back of this publication.

For further information about these statistics, contact Brian Richings on Canberra (06) 252 5786.

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

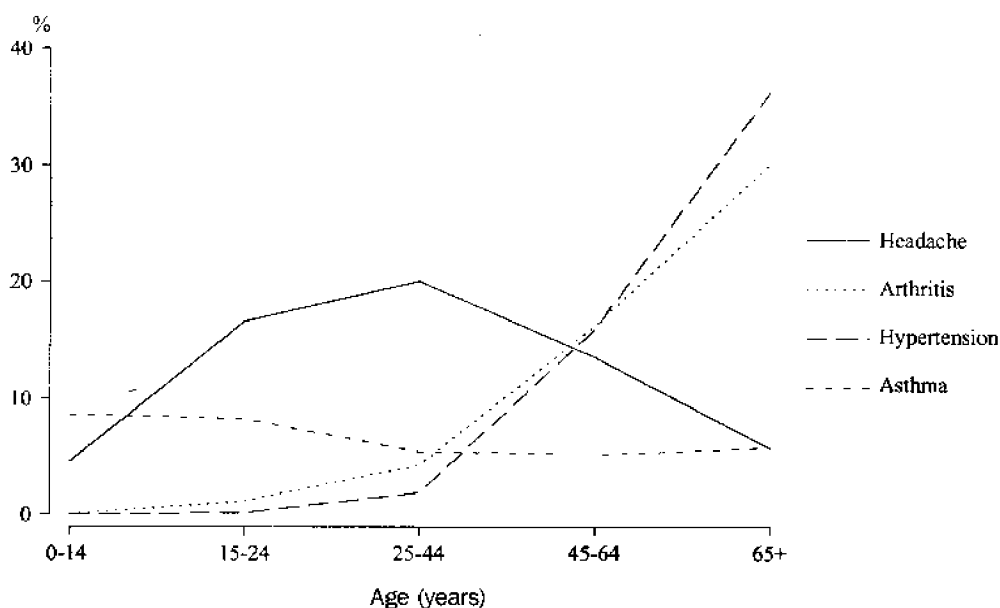
SELF-REPORTED HEALTH STATUS

Some 83% of persons aged 15 years and over reported that their health was either good, very good or excellent. This proportion was similar for both males and females. As might be expected, the proportion of people stating their health as good or better declined with age. However, even among those aged 75 or more, over half (59%) reported their health as good, very good or excellent (table 1). A higher proportion of females than males in younger age groups (15-34) assessed their health as fair or poor, while the reverse was the case in older age groups (45 and over).

RECENT ILLNESS

Headaches were the most commonly reported recent illness condition, experienced by an estimated 11% of males and 15% of females (table 2). Other frequently reported recent illness conditions were arthritis (8.5%), hypertension (8.3%) and asthma (6.5%).

RECENT ILLNESS



LONG-TERM CONDITIONS

Sight disorders of refraction and accommodation were the most commonly reported long-term conditions: an estimated 21% of the population were far-sighted, a further 20% short-sighted and 14% experienced other long-term disorders of refraction and accommodation (table 3). Other more frequently reported long-term conditions were arthritis (15%), hayfever (14%) and asthma (11%). Asthma was the most frequently reported long-term condition among children, with 16% of children aged less than 15 years having the condition.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

GENERAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The NHS measured general health and well-being through the SF-36 Health Survey. The SF-36 produces a score from 0–100 for each of eight dimensions of health, with higher scores indicating a better state of health or well-being (see Glossary, page 26). The mean scores for most dimensions of health described by the SF-36 showed a marked fall with age, particularly in those dimensions reflecting physical health. For example, the mean score for physical functioning fell from 90 for 18–24 year olds to 53 for those persons aged 75 and over. However, mean scores for the mental health dimension were fairly constant at around 75, increasing slightly in older age groups (table 4).

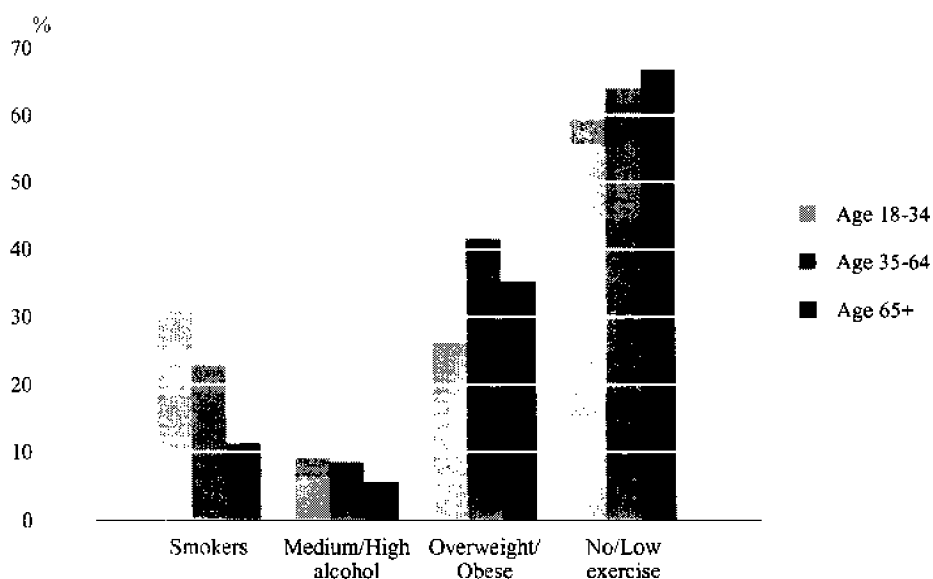
HEALTH-RELATED ACTIONS

Three-quarters of the population took one or more health-related action during the two weeks prior to the survey (table 5). Use of medications was the most common action taken. An estimated 30% used vitamins/minerals or natural/herbal remedies, and 59% used other medications. Some 20% of males and 26% of females had consulted a doctor during the two weeks prior to the survey.

HEALTH RISK FACTORS

Compared with results from a previous survey in 1989–90, the recent survey indicates an increase in healthier lifestyles by adult Australians (table 8). The proportions of adults who smoked (24%), did little or no regular exercise (63%) or who drank alcohol at medium or high risk levels (8%) were lower in 1995 than in 1989–90. Similarly, the proportion of the population who were overweight or obese also showed a slight decline. Of those who reported their weight and height in the 1995 survey, 35% were overweight or obese, down from 38% in 1989–90.

HEALTH RISK FACTORS (a)



(a) Percentage of persons in each age group.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

ACCIDENTS

Some 14% of persons reported recent and/or long-term conditions resulting from an accident or incident (table 9). Dislocations, sprains, strains and fractures were the injuries most commonly reported. Slightly over one in four injury accidents (as defined for this survey) involved a fall, and accidents were more likely to occur at work (39%), while travelling (15%), or outside own home or some-one else's home (13%).

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Proportionately more women reported in the 1995 survey that they used breast and cervical cancer screening techniques/services than reported in the 1989-90 survey. Some 28% of women aged 18-64 years reported having a mammogram in the last three years, and 73% reported having had a pap smear test in that period. This compared with 13% and 71% in 1989-90.

**TABLE 1. PERSONS AGED 15 YEARS OR MORE: SELF-ASSESSED HEALTH STATUS BY AGE BY SEX,
AUSTRALIA, 1995**
(Rate per 1,000 population of same age and sex)

Self-assessed health status	Age group (years)						Total
	15 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over	
Males							
Excellent	280.6	209.3	193.7	180.7	113.0	97.4	199.0
Very good	399.1	417.5	406.6	306.4	220.8	182.7	353.7
Good	237.4	277.4	285.1	309.0	321.6	283.8	283.7
Fair	75.7	82.7	90.1	150.2	231.5	283.8	123.2
Poor	7.2	13.2	24.5	53.7	113.1	152.4	40.3
Total	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0
Females							
Excellent	213.8	220.2	230.4	188.7	94.7	105.6	192.3
Very good	401.0	415.1	393.7	323.7	262.7	217.0	355.9
Good	290.2	264.9	270.0	292.2	324.1	282.5	284.8
Fair	83.0	84.0	85.5	152.0	219.6	271.1	128.1
Poor	11.9	15.8	20.4	43.4	98.8	123.9	38.9
Total	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0
Persons							
Excellent	247.9	214.7	212.1	184.7	103.2	102.3	195.6
Very good	400.0	416.3	400.1	314.9	243.4	203.5	354.8
Good	263.2	271.1	277.5	300.7	322.9	283.0	284.3
Fair	79.3	83.3	87.8	151.1	225.1	276.0	125.7
Poor	9.5	14.5	22.5	48.6	105.4	135.0	39.6
Total	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0

TABLE 2. PERSONS: WHETHER REPORTED A RECENT CONDITION BY TYPE OF CONDITION BY AGE AND SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1995 AND 1989-90

Type of condition(b)	1995							1989-90(a)			
	Age group (years)							Males	Females	Persons	
	Under 5	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75 and over				
	('000)										
Headache	11.4	167.4	449.0	1,118.9	503.1	88.0	34.3	973.9	1,398.2	2,372.1	2,617.7
Arthritis	**	* 3.2	31.8	239.1	607.3	388.5	258.6	605.4	924.3	1,529.7	802.7
Hypertension	**	**	* 6.5	108.2	593.4	478.7	301.8	643.9	845.4	1,489.3	1,346.0
Asthma	71.7	260.2	221.3	300.3	196.3	83.5	41.1	556.4	618.2	1,174.5	732.7
Common cold	178.7	199.6	171.0	282.2	126.4	28.9	22.6	474.0	535.3	1,009.4	1,624.5
Back problems(c)	**	10.6	69.1	251.4	219.4	56.1	29.0	324.6	311.2	635.7	631.7
Influenza	33.7	75.5	100.6	212.2	107.4	23.6	8.5	282.6	278.9	561.5	513.1
Cough or sore throat	81.2	104.1	78.0	149.7	67.1	22.2	10.1	227.5	285.0	512.4	406.8
Hayfever	* 4.5	47.2	100.7	204.1	106.0	27.9	8.6	231.9	267.1	499.1	439.0
Eczema, dermatitis	70.0	54.1	73.5	147.9	70.2	16.0	12.1	176.9	267.0	443.8	938.6
Sinusitis	* 7.8	22.9	52.5	159.3	114.6	30.1	10.2	162.3	235.0	397.4	371.1
Disorders of menstruation(d)	**	13.9	73.5	130.1	152.1	* 4.2	**	**	375.0	375.0	399.7
Nerves, tension, nervousness(e)	* 3.6	19.8	27.9	115.6	116.3	57.8	27.0	143.4	224.6	367.9	447.6
Heart disease	**	**	**	12.3	89.7	113.1	115.4	193.7	139.6	333.3	343.7
High cholesterol	**	**	**	21.5	161.8	106.7	26.0	169.9	146.7	316.6	121.8
Dislocations, sprains and strains	**	35.8	72.3	103.3	48.7	11.7	* 5.1	166.7	110.8	277.6	(f)
Insomnia	* 4.9	**	10.6	45.7	79.6	60.8	62.0	92.5	173.4	265.9	517.2
Ulcer	**	**	* 7.4	42.2	89.4	60.4	38.8	139.1	98.9	238.1	207.4
Fluid problems, nos	**	**	**	16.1	65.8	71.0	83.7	59.7	177.5	237.2	254.0
Migraine	**	11.7	33.9	96.9	71.7	13.8	* 4.3	55.6	176.7	232.3	278.8
All other illness conditions	480.7	791.8	987.2	2,172.6	1,836.0	830.7	525.5	3,502.3	4,122.1	7,624.5	10,628.5
Total reporting recent conditions	754.7	1,397.3	1,725.7	3,823.1	2,940.8	1,208.2	743.5	5,905.3	6,688.0	12,593.3	12,026.1
Total reporting no recent conditions	542.7	1,177.9	984.6	1,759.6	798.9	141.1	62.9	3,088.4	2,379.3	5,467.7	4,962.7
Total	1,297.4	2,575.1	2,710.2	5,582.8	3,739.7	1,349.3	806.4	8,993.7	9,067.3	18,061.0	16,988.8
	(Rate per 1,000 population of same age or sex)										
Headache	8.8	65.0	165.7	200.4	134.5	65.2	42.5	108.3	154.2	131.3	154.1
Arthritis	**	* 1.2	11.7	42.8	162.4	287.9	320.7	67.3	101.9	84.7	47.3
Hypertension	**	**	* 2.4	19.4	158.7	354.8	374.2	71.6	93.2	82.5	79.2
Asthma	55.2	101.0	81.7	53.8	52.5	61.9	51.0	61.9	68.2	65.0	43.1
Common cold	137.8	77.5	63.1	50.5	33.8	21.4	28.0	52.7	59.0	55.9	95.6
Back problems(c)	**	4.1	25.5	45.0	58.7	41.5	35.9	36.1	34.3	35.2	37.2
Influenza	25.9	29.3	37.1	38.0	28.7	17.5	10.6	31.4	30.8	31.1	30.2
Cough or sore throat	62.6	40.4	28.8	26.8	17.9	16.5	12.5	25.3	31.4	28.4	23.9
Hayfever	* 3.4	18.3	37.2	36.6	28.4	20.7	10.7	25.8	29.5	27.6	25.8
Eczema, dermatitis	54.0	21.0	27.1	26.5	18.8	11.8	15.0	19.7	29.4	24.6	55.3
Sinusitis	* 6.0	8.9	19.4	28.5	30.6	22.3	12.6	18.0	25.9	22.0	21.8
Disorders of menstruation(d)	**	5.4	27.1	23.3	40.7	* 3.1	**	**	41.4	20.8	23.5
Nerves, tension, nervousness(e)	* 2.8	7.7	10.3	20.7	31.1	42.8	33.5	15.9	24.8	20.4	26.3
Heart disease	**	**	**	2.2	24.0	83.8	143.1	21.5	15.4	18.5	20.2
High cholesterol	**	**	**	3.8	43.3	79.1	32.3	18.9	16.2	17.5	7.2
Dislocations, sprains and strains	**	13.9	26.7	18.5	13.0	8.7	* 6.3	18.5	12.2	15.4	(f)
Insomnia	* 3.8	**	3.9	8.2	21.3	45.1	76.9	10.3	19.1	14.7	30.4
Ulcer	**	**	* 2.7	7.6	23.9	44.8	48.1	15.5	10.9	13.2	12.2
Fluid problems, nos	**	**	**	2.9	17.6	52.6	103.8	6.6	19.6	13.1	14.9
Migraine	**	4.6	12.5	17.4	19.2	10.2	* 5.3	6.2	19.5	12.9	16.4
All other illness conditions	370.5	307.5	364.2	389.2	490.9	615.6	651.7	389.4	454.6	422.2	625.6
Total reporting recent conditions	581.7	542.6	636.7	684.8	786.4	895.4	922.0	656.6	737.6	697.3	707.9
Total reporting no recent conditions	418.3	457.4	363.3	315.2	213.6	104.6	78.0	343.4	262.4	302.7	292.1
Total	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0

(a) Due to differences in the way conditions were identified and classified, care should be taken in comparing results of the 1989-90 and 1995 surveys; see paragraph 13 of Explanatory Notes. (b) Only the twenty most commonly reported conditions are shown. (c) Includes sciatica, disorders of the intervertebral disc, curvature of the spine and back problems (unspecified) in 1995 but excludes curvature of the spine in 1989-90. (d) Includes symptoms of menopause and related hormone disorders. (e) Includes emotional problems. (f) Injuries were not categorised in 1989-90.

TABLE 3. PERSONS: WHETHER REPORTED A LONG TERM CONDITION BY TYPE OF CONDITION BY AGE AND SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1995 AND 1989-90

Type of condition(b)	1995							1989-90(a)			
	Age group (years)							Males	Females	Persons	
	Under 5	5 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over				
	('000)										
Hypermetropia / far-sighted(c)	* 3.3	128.9	239.0	590.2	1,814.9	658.5	322.9	1,668.8	2,089.0	3,757.8	} 5,351.9
Myopia / short-sighted(c)	* 2.4	116.9	448.3	1,203.9	1,246.1	433.3	225.5	1,606.4	2,069.8	3,676.3	
Other disorders of refraction and accommodation(c)	8.2	90.9	163.0	514.6	885.0	523.2	383.9	1,141.7	1,427.2	2,568.9	
Arthritis	**	* 6.7	56.6	455.3	1,047.2	643.9	422.4	1,039.5	1,593.8	2,633.3	1,803.4
Hayfever	24.7	225.5	497.8	963.4	514.1	157.0	88.3	1,159.3	1,311.5	2,470.8	1,658.2
Asthma	134.5	486.9	403.2	498.4	304.1	114.6	58.0	964.3	1,035.4	1,999.7	1,364.8
Hypertension	**	**	32.1	241.8	735.5	506.3	318.2	849.7	985.6	1,835.3	1,210.2
Sinusitis	12.8	123.2	243.7	721.0	481.2	147.2	70.5	724.8	1,074.8	1,799.5	548.7
Deafness (complete or partial)	9.5	43.2	75.9	369.8	575.3	345.9	284.4	1,083.9	620.0	1,703.8	685.8
Allergy (unspecified)	47.1	160.7	177.6	339.3	216.7	58.7	26.2	417.7	608.5	1,026.2	363.4
Varicose veins	**	**	33.9	301.5	369.6	180.0	95.2	231.2	750.0	981.1	414.8
Back problems(d)	**	9.3	83.0	385.4	315.6	68.1	33.1	517.9	377.3	895.2	1,895.1
High cholesterol	**	* 2.4	12.9	193.7	428.0	182.0	60.1	456.2	424.3	880.6	383.3
Bronchitis/ emphysema	32.6	66.5	88.4	173.8	174.0	115.8	81.4	359.5	372.9	732.4	500.5
Ulcer	**	**	19.0	133.6	176.8	102.8	62.5	273.4	221.6	495.1	230.7
Haemorrhoids	**	* 2.4	12.7	188.5	176.4	60.0	27.5	207.7	260.3	468.0	197.4
Hernia	13.3	11.3	10.3	91.8	154.8	112.4	79.2	271.7	201.4	473.1	261.4
Heart disease	* 4.5	* 6.2	* 6.1	27.5	133.6	152.4	115.9	256.0	190.2	446.2	317.4
Diabetes	**	* 3.4	12.0	51.5	149.8	112.8	72.0	205.4	196.1	401.5	193.7
Eczema, dermatitis	58.9	76.3	61.2	116.9	48.1	14.2	10.4	158.0	227.9	385.9	627.3
All other illness conditions	170.6	476.6	692.1	1,893.5	1,678.4	795.1	543.2	3,023.0	3,226.6	6,249.6	7,452.3
Total reporting long-term conditions	396.9	1,282.9	1,785.3	4,258.3	3,599.5	1,340.2	801.9	6,540.7	6,924.4	13,465.1	11,229.9
Total reporting no long-term conditions	900.5	1,292.2	924.9	1,324.5	140.2	9.1	* 4.5	2,453.1	2,142.9	4,596.0	5,758.9
Total	1,297.4	2,575.1	2,710.2	5,582.8	3,739.7	1,349.3	806.4	8,993.7	9,067.3	18,061.0	16,988.8
	(Rate per 1,000 population of same age or sex)										
Hypermetropia / far-sighted(c)	* 2.6	50.1	88.2	105.7	485.3	488.0	400.4	185.6	230.4	208.1	} 315.0
Myopia / short-sighted(c)	* 1.8	45.4	165.4	215.6	333.2	321.1	279.7	178.6	228.3	203.5	
Other disorders of refraction and accommodation(c)	6.3	35.3	60.1	92.2	236.7	387.7	476.1	126.9	157.4	142.2	
Arthritis	**	* 2.6	20.9	81.6	280.0	477.2	523.8	115.6	175.8	145.8	106.2
Hayfever	19.0	87.6	183.7	172.6	137.5	116.3	109.5	128.9	144.6	136.8	97.6
Asthma	103.7	189.1	148.8	89.3	81.3	84.9	72.0	107.2	114.2	110.7	80.3
Hypertension	**	**	11.9	43.3	196.7	375.3	394.6	94.5	108.7	101.6	71.2
Sinusitis	9.8	47.8	89.9	129.1	128.7	109.1	87.5	80.6	118.5	99.6	32.3
Deafness (complete or partial)	7.3	16.8	28.0	66.2	153.8	256.3	352.6	120.5	68.4	94.3	40.4
Allergy (unspecified)	36.3	62.4	65.5	60.8	58.0	43.5	32.4	46.4	67.1	56.8	21.4
Varicose veins	**	**	12.5	54.0	98.8	133.4	118.1	25.7	82.7	54.3	24.4
Back problems(d)	**	3.6	30.6	69.0	84.4	50.5	41.0	57.6	41.6	49.6	111.5
High cholesterol	**	* 0.9	4.8	34.7	114.5	134.9	74.5	50.7	46.8	48.8	22.6
Bronchitis/ emphysema	25.1	25.8	32.6	31.1	46.5	85.8	100.9	40.0	41.1	40.6	29.5
Ulcer	**	**	7.0	23.9	47.3	76.2	77.5	30.4	24.4	27.4	13.6
Haemorrhoids	**	* 0.9	4.7	33.8	47.2	44.4	34.1	23.1	28.7	25.9	11.6
Hernia	10.3	4.4	3.8	16.4	41.4	83.3	98.2	30.2	22.2	26.2	15.4
Heart disease	* 3.5	* 2.4	* 2.3	4.9	35.7	113.0	143.7	28.5	21.0	24.7	18.7
Diabetes	**	* 1.3	4.4	9.2	40.1	83.6	89.3	22.8	21.6	22.2	11.4
Eczema, dermatitis	45.4	29.6	22.6	20.9	12.9	10.5	12.9	17.6	25.1	21.4	36.9
All other illness conditions	131.5	185.1	255.4	339.2	448.8	589.3	673.6	336.1	355.9	346.0	438.7
Total reporting long-term conditions	305.9	498.2	658.7	762.8	962.5	993.3	994.4	727.2	763.7	745.5	661.0
Total reporting no long-term conditions	694.1	501.8	341.3	237.2	37.5	6.7	* 5.6	272.8	236.3	254.5	339.0
Total	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0

(a) Due to differences in the way conditions were identified and classified, care should be taken in comparing results of the 1989-90 and 1995 surveys; see paragraph 13 of Explanatory Notes. (b) Only the twenty most commonly reported conditions are shown. (c) An estimated 7,131.3 persons reported one or more of these sight conditions. (d) Includes sciatica, disorders of the intervertebral disc, curvature of the spine and back problems (unspecified) in 1995 but excludes curvature of the spine in 1989-90.

TABLE 4. PERSONS AGED 18 YEARS OR MORE: GENERAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING MEAN SCORES(a) BY HEALTH DIMENSION BY AGE BY SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1995

Dimension	Age group (years)					Total
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over	
Males						
Physical functioning	91.2	90.1	81.5	67.5	55.9	84.1
Role limitations: physical	88.9	87.3	79.2	59.2	50.4	80.9
Bodily pain	79.6	79.4	75.6	73.1	70.8	77.3
General health	75.7	75.0	68.6	61.1	59.3	71.2
Vitality	70.3	68.1	65.8	61.9	56.8	66.7
Social functioning	87.9	87.3	85.8	82.0	75.7	85.9
Role limitations: emotional	87.6	86.8	83.6	77.1	69.0	84.3
Mental health	77.6	77.2	76.8	78.5	77.8	77.3
Females						
Physical functioning	88.7	88.7	79.1	65.0	51.5	81.0
Role limitations: physical	85.6	84.1	77.6	65.5	56.7	78.7
Bodily pain	78.8	78.4	74.3	71.9	70.4	76.1
General health	71.6	75.9	70.9	63.9	63.3	71.8
Vitality	62.9	62.7	63.8	59.8	57.6	62.4
Social functioning	83.7	85.2	85.3	82.2	77.4	84.1
Role limitations: emotional	79.9	83.9	82.5	75.8	74.5	81.5
Mental health	72.9	74.2	75.2	75.4	76.7	74.6
Persons						
Physical functioning	89.9	89.4	80.3	66.2	53.1	82.5
Role limitations: physical	87.2	85.6	78.4	62.6	54.3	79.7
Bodily pain	79.2	78.9	74.9	72.5	70.6	76.7
General health	73.6	75.5	69.7	62.6	61.8	71.5
Vitality	66.5	65.4	64.8	60.8	57.3	64.5
Social functioning	85.8	86.2	85.6	82.1	76.8	85.0
Role limitations: emotional	83.7	85.4	83.1	76.4	72.4	82.9
Mental health	75.2	75.7	76.0	76.8	77.1	75.9

(a) Mean scores on a scale of 0-100. Scores for a healthy population are typically skewed towards the top end of the distribution: see Glossary, page 26.

TABLE 5. PERSONS: WHETHER TOOK ACTION IN LAST TWO WEEKS BY TYPE OF ACTION BY AGE AND SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1995

Type of action	Age group (years)							Males	Females	Persons	
	Under 5	5 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over			(000)	%
Hospital inpatient episode	15.1	9.1	12.3	39.9	26.7	20.5	18.6	64.9	77.2	142.2	0.8
Visit to hospital outpatients/ emergency	35.3	48.0	75.6	145.8	97.0	56.4	37.4	252.6	242.8	495.4	2.7
Visit to day clinic	8.5	10.2	34.3	75.3	73.4	29.0	15.0	106.4	139.1	245.5	1.4
Doctor consultation	376.0	355.6	508.4	1,187.9	949.3	488.9	339.5	1,834.9	2,370.8	4,205.7	23.3
Dental consultation	15.5	237.0	138.0	265.0	235.1	78.1	39.3	474.0	533.9	1,007.9	5.6
Consultation with other health professional —											
Chiropractor	* 4.9	13.4	30.3	124.0	85.5	16.5	8.9	124.5	158.8	283.4	1.6
Chemist	51.9	45.9	84.8	146.7	62.5	14.5	* 6.0	155.7	256.6	412.3	2.3
Chiropodist /podiatrist	**	* 4.0	* 5.0	11.4	23.2	25.4	29.1	29.7	68.9	98.6	0.5
Nurse	67.8	16.9	22.8	41.8	17.3	14.1	24.7	89.9	115.5	205.4	1.1
Optician /optometrist	* 2.4	15.8	13.3	35.2	33.8	21.4	11.7	63.8	69.7	133.5	0.7
Physiotherapist /hydrotherapist	* 4.2	10.6	39.3	85.5	63.2	20.8	10.6	122.0	112.3	234.3	1.3
Other health professional(a)	30.6	48.9	57.3	163.4	83.6	29.7	13.5	167.2	259.8	427.0	2.4
Seen or talked to anyone else	70.1	91.9	189.4	281.2	154.1	38.4	28.1	376.9	476.3	853.2	4.7
Used medication —											
Vitamins/ minerals, natural/ herbal medicines	200.8	504.8	754.2	1,841.6	1,376.8	437.2	258.0	2,205.9	3,167.3	5,373.2	29.8
Other medications	607.9	1,006.7	1,406.1	3,203.5	2,601.9	1,149.1	703.8	4,875.9	5,803.0	10,678.9	59.1
Total medications	699.6	1,263.1	1,689.2	3,862.1	2,960.9	1,216.0	739.1	5,711.3	6,718.7	12,430.0	68.8
Days away from work/ school	31.8	408.4	292.5	431.7	192.0	* 5.3	**	685.6	677.1	1,362.7	7.5
Other days of reduced activity	31.4	407.6	284.7	406.3	175.1	* 4.5	**	654.8	655.9	1,310.7	7.3
Total persons taking action	834.3	1,540.6	1,909.2	4,211.8	3,100.0	1,242.8	753.7	6,325.9	7,266.5	13,592.4	75.3
Total persons who took no action	463.1	1,034.5	801.0	1,371.0	639.7	106.5	52.7	2,667.9	1,800.7	4,468.6	24.7
Total(b)	1,297.4	2,575.1	2,710.2	5,582.8	3,739.7	1,349.3	806.4	8,993.7	9,067.3	18,061.0	100.0

(a) Includes audiologist/ audiometrist, dietician/ nutritionist, herbalist, hypnotherapist, naturopath, osteopath, occupational therapist, psychologist, social worker or welfare officer and speech therapist/ pathologist. (b) Persons may report more than one type of action, and therefore components do not add to the totals shown.

**TABLE 6. PERSONS: WHETHER TOOK ACTION IN LAST TWO WEEKS BY TYPE OF ACTION BY SEX,
AUSTRALIA, 1995 AND 1989-90**
(Rate per 1,000 population of same sex)

Type of action	1995			1989-90		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Hospital inpatient episode	7.2	8.5	7.9	7.6	10.8	9.2
Visit to hospital outpatients/ emergency	28.1	26.8	27.4	25.3	24.8	25.1
Visit to day clinic	11.8	15.3	13.6	(a)	(a)	(a)
Doctor consultation	204.0	261.5	232.9	168.4	231.8	200.1
Dental consultation	52.7	58.9	55.8	46.5	56.6	51.6
Consultation with other health professional ---						
Chiropractor	13.8	17.5	15.7	12.0	13.8	12.9
Chemist	17.3	28.3	22.8	24.7	34.9	29.8
Chiropodist /podiatrist	3.3	7.6	5.5	3.5	7.3	5.4
Nurse	10.0	12.7	11.4	11.0	12.8	11.9
Optician /optometrist	7.1	7.7	7.4	13.8	18.4	16.1
Physiotherapist /hydrotherapist	13.6	12.4	13.0	11.8	15.1	13.4
Other health professional(b)	18.6	28.6	23.6	10.4	15.7	13.0
Seen or talked to anyone else	41.9	52.5	47.2	(a)	(a)	(a)
Used medication ---						
Vitamins/ minerals, natural/ herbal medicines(c)	245.3	349.3	297.5	190.7	275.3	233.1
Other medications	542.1	640.0	591.3	585.0	697.9	641.6
Total medications	635.0	741.0	688.2	644.9	761.9	703.6
Days away from work/ school	76.2	74.7	75.4	70.5	67.1	68.8
Other days of reduced activity	72.8	72.3	72.6	108.1	131.2	119.7
Total persons taking action	703.4	801.4	752.6	699.8	810.0	755.0
Total persons who took no action	296.6	198.6	247.4	300.2	190.0	245.0
Total	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0

(a) Not separately enumerated in 1989-90. (b) Includes audiologist/ audiometrist, dietician/ nutritionist, herbalist, hypnotherapist, naturopath, osteopath, occupational therapist, psychologist, social worker or welfare officer and speech therapist/ pathologist. (c) Natural/ herbal medications were not separately identified in 1989-90.

TABLE 7. PERSONS AGED 18 YEARS OR MORE: SELECTED HEALTH RISK FACTORS BY AGE AND SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1995

Health risk factor(a)	Age group (years)					Males	Females	Persons	%	
	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 64	65 - 74					75 and over
	('000)					('000)				
Body mass —										
Underweight	343.6	308.2	201.1	168.4	81.4	93.7	285.3	911.1	1,196.4	8.9
Acceptable weight	1,013.0	1,479.0	1,439.8	1,697.4	673.8	392.7	3,349.4	3,346.3	6,695.7	50.0
Overweight	255.3	587.5	676.7	1,143.5	359.8	154.2	1,994.1	1,182.9	3,177.0	23.7
Obese	67.9	211.8	227.9	439.6	118.5	37.7	531.9	571.6	1,103.4	8.2
Not stated/ not known	237.1	253.7	197.2	290.6	115.8	128.2	431.9	790.8	1,222.7	9.1
Smoker status —										
Smoker	578.4	880.4	698.0	773.0	179.9	62.0	1,792.8	1,378.9	3,171.6	23.7
Ex-smoker	223.5	642.0	770.5	1,205.4	541.8	283.1	2,135.4	1,531.0	3,666.3	27.4
Never smoked	1,115.2	1,317.8	1,274.1	1,761.3	627.6	461.3	2,664.5	3,892.8	6,557.3	49.0
Alcohol risk level —										
Did not consume alcohol	867.8	1,164.5	1,102.7	1,631.3	684.9	488.0	2,240.7	3,698.5	5,939.2	44.3
Low	869.3	1,419.8	1,415.1	1,784.0	569.4	292.4	3,660.8	2,689.3	6,350.1	47.4
Medium	101.1	144.7	143.0	213.4	70.9	15.3	360.0	328.4	688.4	5.1
High	78.8	111.2	81.8	111.0	24.1	10.7	331.4	86.3	417.6	3.1
Total persons who consumed alcohol	1,049.2	1,675.7	1,639.9	2,108.4	664.4	318.4	4,352.1	3,104.0	7,456.1	55.7
Exercise level —										
Did not exercise	664.0	1,014.3	1,076.2	1,538.4	610.6	433.1	2,758.6	2,578.0	5,336.6	39.8
Low exercise level	437.4	709.5	698.0	836.3	246.7	147.3	1,276.3	1,798.8	3,075.1	23.0
Medium exercise level	338.9	481.6	480.1	663.4	235.2	113.3	1,097.5	1,215.1	2,312.6	17.3
High exercise level	476.8	634.8	488.2	701.6	256.8	112.7	1,460.2	1,210.8	2,671.0	19.9
Sun protection measures taken —										
Yes	1,596.1	2,380.3	2,299.2	2,992.5	1,043.0	587.9	5,317.5	5,581.5	10,899.0	81.4
No	287.4	412.0	384.2	641.3	253.0	145.6	1,129.3	994.2	2,123.4	15.9
Not exposed to sun	33.6	47.9	59.2	105.9	53.3	72.9	145.9	227.0	372.9	2.8
Total	1,917.1	2,840.2	2,742.6	3,739.7	1,349.3	806.4	6,592.6	6,802.7	13,395.3	100.0

(a) See Glossary (pp.27-28) for details of the risk factors shown.

**TABLE 8. PERSONS AGED 18 YEARS OR MORE: SELECTED HEALTH RISK FACTORS BY SEX,
AUSTRALIA, 1995 AND 1989-90**
(Rate per 1,000 population of same sex)

Health risk factor(a)	1995			1989-90		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Body mass —						
Underweight	43.3	133.9	89.3	62.4	172.1	118.0
Acceptable weight	508.0	491.9	499.9	477.4	486.7	482.1
Overweight	302.5	173.9	237.2	353.4	205.0	278.3
Obese	80.7	84.0	82.4	82.1	90.9	86.6
Not stated/ not known	65.5	116.2	91.3	24.7	45.3	35.1
Smoker status —						
Smoker	271.9	202.7	236.8	321.0	247.4	283.7
Ex-smoker	323.9	225.1	273.7	287.9	178.1	232.3
Never smoked	404.2	572.2	489.5	391.1	574.5	483.9
Alcohol risk level —						
Did not consume alcohol	339.9	543.7	443.4	264.9	482.4	375.0
Low	555.3	395.3	474.1	586.3	442.9	513.7
Medium	54.6	48.3	51.4	78.2	58.5	68.2
High	50.3	12.7	31.2	70.7	16.1	43.1
Total persons who consumed alcohol	660.1	456.3	556.6	735.1	517.6	625.0
Exercise level —						
Did not exercise	418.4	379.0	398.4	353.7	362.0	357.9
Low exercise level	193.6	264.4	229.6	279.5	363.4	322.0
Medium exercise level	166.5	178.6	172.6	169.6	162.6	166.1
High exercise level	221.5	178.0	199.4	197.2	111.9	154.0
Sun protection measures taken —						
Yes	806.6	820.5	813.6	432.0	585.5	509.7
No	171.3	146.1	158.5	487.5	308.9	397.1
Not exposed to sun	22.1	33.4	27.8	80.5	105.7	93.3
Total	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0

(a) See Glossary (pp.27-28) for details of the risk factors shown.

TABLE 9. PERSONS WHO REPORTED A CONDITION AS A RESULT OF AN ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT: TYPE OF INJURY(IES) SUSTAINED AT MOST RECENT ACCIDENT, CIRCUMSTANCES AND PLACE OF MOST RECENT ACCIDENT BY AGE AND SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1995

	Age group (years)							Males	Females	Persons	
	Under 5	5 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over				
<i>Injury/ illness circumstances and location</i>	('000)							('000)		%	
Type of illness/ injury(a) —											
Fractures	**	21.4	58.4	174.8	137.2	44.2	40.0	284.0	194.0	478.1	19.0
Dislocations, sprains, strains	**	41.8	118.8	349.4	212.8	51.6	20.0	460.3	335.4	795.7	31.7
Internal injuries	**	* 6.7	19.7	63.3	43.0	17.5	* 7.7	109.8	48.7	158.5	6.3
Open wounds	17.5	49.8	57.9	109.7	66.2	21.6	16.1	221.4	117.4	338.8	13.5
Bruising and crushing	9.9	39.0	55.5	160.8	122.3	35.7	23.9	275.0	172.1	447.1	17.8
Foreign bodies	**	* 2.7	* 5.9	26.8	16.6	* 5.3	* 3.5	45.4	16.4	61.8	2.5
Burns and scalds	* 4.6	* 5.7	14.1	26.0	12.2	* 2.6	**	36.9	29.1	66.0	2.6
Poisoning	**	**	* 6.4	19.6	13.4	* 3.3	**	26.7	18.5	45.2	1.8
Complications of surgical and medical care	**	**	* 2.9	17.4	10.7	* 4.6	* 2.4	21.7	18.0	39.7	1.6
Mental stress	**	* 4.9	8.6	42.9	25.0	* 7.8	* 5.5	50.8	44.2	95.0	3.8
Other	10.9	30.8	51.0	174.6	191.6	80.8	29.2	401.9	167.0	569.0	22.6
Circumstances of illness/ injury —											
Vehicle accident	**	13.8	49.5	187.1	116.2	30.6	12.4	225.1	186.1	411.2	16.4
Fall	21.4	74.8	94.7	197.5	160.7	63.5	49.4	331.1	331.0	662.0	26.3
Hitting something or being hit by something	* 6.1	34.0	69.1	150.4	87.4	26.1	15.7	289.6	99.1	388.7	15.5
Attack by another person	**	* 7.9	18.6	33.9	12.0	* 4.5	**	54.5	24.5	79.0	3.1
Bite or sting	9.1	20.3	13.3	21.1	12.5	**	**	32.4	46.5	79.0	3.1
Single or long-term exposure to harmful factor	* 3.9	11.9	43.4	181.3	201.1	75.8	23.9	409.7	131.7	541.4	21.5
Other	* 3.5	14.0	46.2	140.9	106.0	24.4	16.3	225.9	125.4	351.3	14.0
Place of occurrence —											
At work	**	**	64.3	381.0	382.6	102.0	36.5	768.4	198.0	966.4	38.5
School/college/university	**	44.6	44.8	20.6	11.0	**	**	77.2	46.6	123.8	4.9
Inside own/someone else's home	23.0	24.7	30.3	68.9	55.4	24.3	19.2	97.4	148.4	245.8	9.8
Outside own/someone else's home	17.4	59.6	40.7	86.2	71.3	28.4	24.9	162.8	165.8	328.6	13.1
While travelling	**	8.2	48.7	169.9	95.8	30.2	13.1	179.1	187.6	366.7	14.6
Other	* 3.8	39.7	106.2	185.5	79.8	41.1	25.3	283.4	197.9	481.3	19.2
Total	46.6	176.7	334.9	912.1	696.0	226.7	119.6	1,568.3	944.2	2,512.5	100.0

(a) Persons may report more than one type of injury sustained at most recent accident, and therefore components do not add to the totals shown.

TABLE 10. WOMEN AGED 18 YEARS OR MORE: USE OF BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING BY AGE, AUSTRALIA, 1995 AND 1989-90
(Rate per 1,000 population of same age)

	1995							1989-90(a)	
	Age group (years)								
	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over	18 and over	18 - 64	
Breast examinations —									
Had examination by doctor / medical assistant	370.6	695.2	803.9	839.4	760.7	555.5	708.5	713.2	708.8
Regularly examines own breasts	521.2	637.0	709.1	725.1	624.8	511.1	650.3	663.5	628.5
Period since last mammogram —									
Less than one year ago	9.4	27.4	114.9	332.7	239.3	121.6	153.2	144.9	69.8
1 year to less than 2 years ago	11.9	23.7	88.2	198.8	176.2	62.4	100.8	94.4	} 61.6
2 years to less than 3 years ago	* 6.2	17.6	46.4	65.7	63.8	25.0	40.2	38.4	
3 years to less than 4 years ago	* 3.8	10.4	20.4	24.7	18.9	* 15.2	16.6	16.4	
4 years to less than 5 years ago	**	7.2	11.8	11.8	* 10.5	* 9.0	9.0	8.8	19.2
5 or more years ago	* 3.2	22.9	36.3	32.6	41.4	61.5	29.7	26.0	27.0
Has not had a mammogram	919.2	856.7	639.3	285.7	407.8	668.5	608.3	628.5	822.4
Not stated	34.7	23.7	29.5	30.7	31.9	21.8	29.1	29.3	**
Ever diagnosed with breast cancer	**	* 3.4	12.9	17.4	17.8	43.9	12.7	9.8	(b)
Period since last pap smear test ---									
Less than one year ago	369.8	471.7	442.6	347.2	159.0	39.8	359.0	406.7	425.4
1 year to less than 2 years ago	153.8	276.2	261.1	217.6	143.8	56.5	212.7	232.5	} 281.5
2 years to less than 3 years ago	48.7	92.9	100.4	88.6	82.8	68.8	84.5	85.8	
3 years to less than 4 years ago	* 7.0	12.4	36.0	41.1	49.6	35.8	29.5	26.6	
4 years to less than 5 years ago	* 2.9	12.9	15.8	24.0	22.6	* 7.2	15.7	15.5	60.7
5 or more years ago	* 3.5	16.7	56.3	173.0	273.0	252.6	106.1	74.9	87.7
Has not had a pap smear test	374.3	80.7	48.5	62.6	223.3	473.0	149.6	117.1	144.6
Not stated	32.7	29.4	32.4	27.4	16.0	21.7	28.1	30.1	**
Has had hysterectomy	9.0	20.7	112.3	275.3	307.4	333.1	155.4	123.9	117.0
Total(c)	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	1,000.0

(a) Aged 18 to 64 years. (b) Not separately enumerated in 1989-90. (c) Estimates are based on the 97.1% and 92.5% of eligible women who responded to this section of the survey in 1989-90 and 1995, respectively.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

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INTRODUCTION

1 The 1995 NHS is the second in a series of regular five-yearly population surveys designed to obtain national benchmark information on a range of health-related issues and to enable the monitoring of trends in health over time. Surveys in this series comprise a core data set which is repeated in successive surveys and a supplementary data set which can be varied from survey to survey to address key health issues of the day. The aim of the 1995 survey was to obtain information about the health status of Australians, their use of health services and facilities and about health-related aspects of their lifestyle such as smoking, alcohol consumption and exercise. The survey was conducted throughout the 12-month period February 1995 to January 1996.

SCOPE

2 The estimates contained in this publication are based on information obtained from residents of a sample of 23,800 private dwellings (houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, boarding houses, caravan parks, etc.).

3 Households were selected at random using a stratified multi-stage area sample which ensured that persons within each State and Territory had a known and, in the main, an equal chance of selection in the survey.

4 At the request of the health authorities in Victoria, South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, the survey sample in those areas was increased to enhance the reliability of estimates.

5 Certain groups of persons such as non-Australian diplomatic personnel, persons from overseas holidaying in Australia, members of non-Australian defence forces and their dependents stationed in Australia, students at boarding schools, and institutionalised persons (including inpatients of hospitals, nursing homes, etc.) were excluded from the survey.

METHODOLOGY

6 Trained ABS interviewers conducted personal interviews with residents of selected dwellings. Each person aged 18 years or more was interviewed personally, with the exception of persons too old or sick. Persons aged 15-17 years were interviewed with the consent of a parent or guardian; otherwise, a parent or guardian was interviewed on their behalf. For persons aged less than 15 years, information was obtained from a person responsible for the child (usually the mother).

7 In order to maximise the capacity of the survey, some sections were administered to half of the sample only. The General Health and Well-Being form (SF-36) was administered to adults in one half of the sample, while questions on post-school educational qualifications, private health insurance, alcohol consumption and the Supplementary Women's Health questionnaire were administered (appropriate to sex and age) to respondents in the other half of the sample. Other sections of the survey were administered across the full sample. For output, weighted estimates for all items, regardless of the particular sample in which they were included, relate to the total population of appropriate age and/or sex. Details of the estimation procedures are contained in the Technical Note.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

8 Topics covered in the survey were:

- recent illness;
- long-term conditions;
- self-assessed health status;
- general health and well-being;
- inpatient episodes in hospital;
- visits to casualty/emergency;
- visits to outpatients units at hospitals;
- visits to day clinics;
- doctor consultations;
- dental consultations;
- consultations with other health professionals;
- other persons/organisations consulted;
- use of natural/herbal medications;
- use of vitamins/minerals;
- use of other medications;
- days away from work/school;
- other days of reduced activity;
- smoking;
- alcohol consumption;
- exercise;
- height and weight;
- sun protection;
- breastfeeding;
- supplementary women's health issues; and
- injury accidents.

9 An extensive range of demographic and socio-economic information was also obtained.

10 The approaches used to collect this information varied as appropriate to the topic, and where possible, were the same as in previous surveys in order to provide comparability. The design of the survey enables linkages to be established between medical conditions, actions taken as a consequence of those conditions and lifestyle behaviours. For example, information about recent illness was obtained by asking whether a range of health-related actions had been taken in the two weeks prior to interview and by recording the various reasons for those actions, including the specific illness or injury involved, and other reasons such as preventive health measures. This 'actions-based' approach is similar to that used in the 1983 Australian Health Survey and the 1989-90 NHS.

11 Definitions for those items covered in this publication are provided in the Glossary. Comprehensive details of all the concepts, methodologies and procedures used in this survey are provided in *1995 National Health Survey: Users' Guide* (4363.0).

CLASSIFICATION OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS

12 All medical conditions (and other reasons for taking health-related actions) reported were classified to a list of selected conditions, symptoms, treatments, etc. developed for this survey. This classification is based on the *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD), 9th Revision (WHO, 1975) but was modified to take account of the types and quality of information likely to be reported in the survey. In general, broad classification groups have been used. Special codes were created for some non-illness reasons for action (e.g. check-up, preventive measures) and for some frequently reported conditions which could not be

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

.....

reliably coded to ICD categories because insufficient detail was provided (e.g. back problems, virus, infection).

13 While the classification of conditions and the methodologies used for identifying conditions were generally similar to those used in the 1989–90 NHS, they are not identical. Changes introduced for the 1995 survey included the re-ordering of questions on illness within the questionnaire, additional actions used to prompt respondents for recent illness, expansion of the classification categories (which may have affected the counts of illness conditions) and inclusion of new questions on specific conditions. As a result of these changes, data for diabetes, eyesight, ear and hearing problems, back problems and arthritis, rheumatism and gout are considered not directly comparable between surveys. Other factors which may have contributed to increased reporting in the 1995 survey include increased testing and preventative measures and a higher public awareness of particular conditions (e.g. high cholesterol, hypertension and allergic conditions). For all these reasons care should be taken in interpreting differences between the two surveys in the prevalence of conditions. Details of changes made between surveys, and a discussion of their implications for comparability, are contained in *National Health Survey: Users' Guide* (4363.0).

ESTIMATION PROCEDURES

14 Estimates from the survey are derived using a procedure which combines response information collected in the course of the survey with independently available information concerning the underlying populations. As a result, survey estimates conform to the published population estimates at age-sex-area level. The survey was conducted over a 12-month period and estimates were made to conform to the population distribution for each quarter of the year.

15 The estimation procedure developed for the 1995 survey uses information on the patterns of response to counter known biases in target variables resulting from partial response. This information, in the form of models, was used to adjust data for differential response by class, and also to specify weighting classes for applying benchmarks. Full details of the estimation procedures used are contained in *National Health Survey, Users Guide* (4363.0).

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

16 Since the estimates are based on a sample they are subject to sampling variability (see Technical Note for further details). In this publication, only estimates with relative standard errors less than 25% are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates with relative standard errors between 25% and 50% (underlined in table A on page 25) have been included and are preceded by an asterisk (e.g. *4.3) to indicate they are subject to high standard errors and should be used with caution. Estimates with relative standard errors greater than 50% have not been shown as they are considered too unreliable for general use. These estimates have been replaced by two asterisks (**).

17 In addition to sampling errors, the estimates are subject to non-sampling errors. These may be caused by errors in reporting (e.g. because some answers were based on memory, or because of misunderstanding or unwillingness of respondents to reveal all details) or errors arising during processing (e.g. coding, data recording). Such errors may occur in any statistical collection whether it is a full census count or a sample survey. Every effort is made to reduce non-sampling errors in the survey to a minimum by careful design and

testing of questionnaires, by intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and by efficient operating procedures.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

18 The following factors should be considered in interpreting the estimates in this publication. Information recorded in this survey is essentially 'as reported' by respondents, and hence may differ from that which might be obtained from other sources or via other methodologies. In particular:

- reported information on medical conditions was not medically verified, and was not necessarily based on diagnoses by a medical practitioner. Conditions which have a considerable effect on people are likely to be better reported than those which have little effect. Some people may be unaware of minor conditions, and occasionally may have serious conditions which have not been diagnosed. There may also be some instances of under-reporting as a consequence of respondents being unwilling to talk about a particular condition at an interview; and
- results of previous surveys of alcohol and tobacco consumption suggest a tendency for respondents to under-report actual consumption levels.

19 The exclusion from the survey of people currently in hospitals, nursing homes and other institutions will have affected the results.

20 In terms of the methodologies used, data from this survey are broadly comparable with data from the 1989-90 NHS, and from previous ABS national health and related surveys as shown below:

- Recent illness—1983 Australian Health Survey;
- Chronic illness—1977-78 Australian Health Survey;
- Health-related actions—1983 Australian Health Survey; and
- Alcohol consumption/Smoking—1977 Alcohol and Tobacco Consumption Patterns Survey.

21 A number of surveys relating to topics covered in both this survey and the 1989-90 NHS and using similar methodologies have been conducted by the ABS in individual States and Territories. However, in all cases comparisons should be made with care since minor changes to the approaches used, together with changes in community awareness and attitudes to health issues may have influenced the responses provided; see also paragraph 13.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

22 Final results from the survey will become available in April 1997 with release of the publication *National Health Survey, Summary of Results* (4364.0). Information about all the publications and other products planned for release from the 1995 NHS is contained in the brochure *National Health Survey: Guide to Products and Services* which is available free of charge from any office of the ABS. Other ABS publications which may be of interest include:

Australian Health Survey, 1983 Health-Related Actions Taken by Australians (4358.0)

Australian Health Survey, 1983 Illness Conditions Experienced (4356.0)

Australian Health Survey, Australia, 1983 (4311.0)

Disability and Handicap, Australia, 1988 (4120.0)

Health Insurance Survey, Australia, June 1992 (4335.0)

National Health Survey: Health Related Actions, 1989-90 (4375.0)

National Health Survey: Health Risk Factors, 1989-90 (4380.0)

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

National Health Survey: Health Status Indicators, 1989-90 (4370.0)

National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 1989-90 (4364.0)

23 Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.

UNPUBLISHED STATISTICS

24 Tables similar to those contained in this publication, but compiled for each State and Territory are available. Other relevant unpublished data may also be available. Inquiries should be made to the contact shown at the front of this publication.

APPENDIX Population estimates for calculation of rates

TABLE 1: FOR USE IN CALCULATING RATES FOR CORE ITEMS, 1995
(*000)

<i>Age group (years)</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Under 5	665.5	631.9	1,297.4
5 - 14	1,320.9	1,254.2	2,575.1
15 — 24	1,386.1	1,324.1	2,710.2
25 — 34	1,421.3	1,418.9	2,840.2
35 — 44	1,368.8	1,373.8	2,742.6
45 — 64	1,894.2	1,845.5	3,739.7
65 - 74	621.0	728.3	1,349.3
75 and over	315.8	490.6	806.4
15 and over	7,007.3	7,181.2	14,188.5
18 and over	6,592.6	6,802.7	13,395.3
Total	8,993.7	9,067.3	18,061.0

TABLE 2: FOR USE IN CALCULATING RATES FOR SUB-SAMPLED ITEMS, 1995(a)
(*000)

<i>Age group (years)</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
18 - 24	971.5	945.6	1,917.1
25 — 34	1,421.5	1,418.7	2,840.2
35 — 44	1,368.8	1,373.8	2,742.6
45 - 64	1,894.2	1,845.5	3,739.7
65 — 74	621.0	728.3	1,349.3
75 and over	315.8	490.6	806.4
18 and over	6,592.9	6,802.5	13,395.3
Total	6,592.9	6,802.5	13,395.3

(a) General health and well-being (SF36), educational qualifications, private health insurance, alcohol consumption and supplementary Women's Health items.

TECHNICAL NOTE SAMPLING VARIABILITY

ESTIMATION PROCEDURE

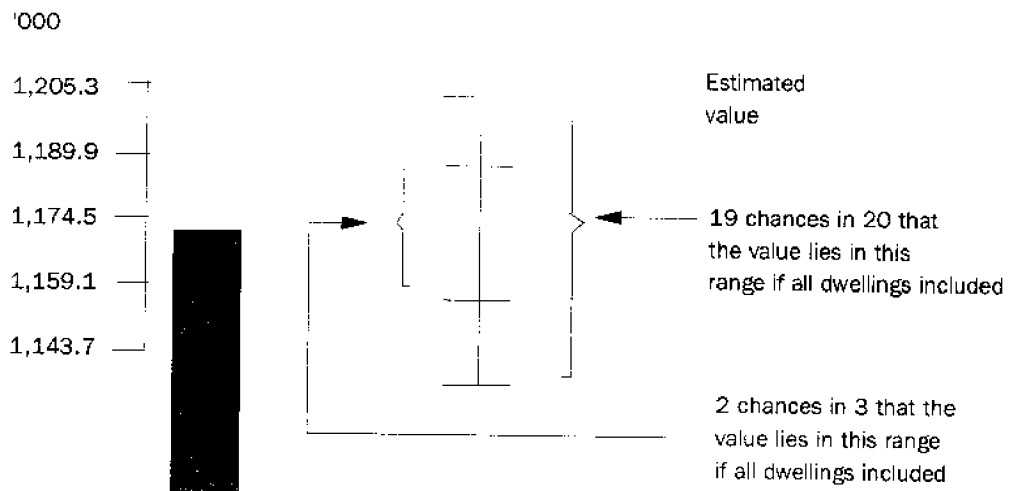
Estimates derived from the survey are obtained using a complex ratio estimation procedure which ensures that the estimates conform to an independently estimated distribution of the population by age and sex rather than to the age and sex distribution within the sample itself.

RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability; that is they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of dwellings was included. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included, and about 19 chances in 20 that the difference will be less than two standard errors. Another measure of the likely difference is the relative standard error, which is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate.

Space does not allow for the separate indication of the standard errors of all estimates in this publication. A table of standard errors and relative standard errors for estimates of numbers of persons is given in table A. These figures will not give a precise measure of the standard error for a particular estimate but will provide an indication of its magnitude. An example of the calculation and use of standard errors follows.

Table 2 shows that the estimated number of persons who reported experiencing asthma as a recent illness was 1,174,500. Since this estimate is between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 the standard error for Australia will be between 14,630 and 18,840 (taken from the Australia column of table A on page 25) and can be approximated to 15,400 (rounded to the nearest 100). Therefore, there are about two chances in three that the value that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey will fall in the range of 1,159,100 to 1,189,900 and about 19 chances in 20 that the value will fall within the range 1,143,700 to 1,205,300. This example is illustrated in the following diagram.





As can be seen from the standard error table, the smaller the estimate the higher the relative standard error. Very small estimates are thus subject to such high standard errors (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. In the tables in this publication, estimates less than the lowest levels shown in the standard error table have not been published. Although figures for these small components can, in some cases, be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable.

STANDARD ERRORS OF RATES AND PERCENTAGES

The standard error of an estimated percentage or rate computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator, depends upon both the size of the numerator and the size of the denominator. However, the relative standard error of the estimated percentage or rate will generally be lower than the relative standard error of the estimate of the numerator.

Approximate standard errors of rates or percentages may be derived by first obtaining the relative standard error of the number of persons corresponding to the numerator of this rate or percentage and then applying this figure to the estimated rate or percentage. An example of this calculation follows.

The rate of asthma as a long-term condition is 110.7 per 1,000 persons and the numerator of this rate is 1,999,700 which has a relative standard error of 0.9%. By interpolation from table A, the standard error of this rate of 110.7 can then be approximated by:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Rate} \times \text{Relative standard error} \\ &= 110.7 \times \frac{0.9}{100} \\ &= 1.0 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore there are two chances in three that the rate that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey is in the range 109.7 to 111.7 per 1,000 persons and about 19 chances in 20 that it is in the range 108.7 to 112.7 per 1,000 persons.

Published figures may also be used to estimate the difference between survey estimates (of numbers or percentages). Such a figure is itself an estimate and is subject to sampling error. The sampling error of the difference between two estimates depends on their standard errors and the relationship (correlation) between them. An approximate standard error (SE) of the difference between two estimates (x-y) may be calculated by the following formula:

$$RSE (x-y) = \sqrt{[SE(x)]^2 + [SE(y)]^2}$$

While this formula will only be exact for differences between separate and uncorrelated characteristics or sub-populations it is likely to be of interest in this publication. The imprecision due to sampling variability, which is measured by the standard error, should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by interviewers and respondents and errors made in coding and processing of data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as the non-sampling error, and they may occur in any enumeration, whether it be in a full count or only a sample.

TECHNICAL NOTE SAMPLING VARIABILITY *continued*

A STANDARD ERRORS AND RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS FOR ESTIMATES OF PERSONS(a)

Size of estimate	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.....	
									SE	RSE(b)
200							100	<u>110</u>		
250							110	120		
300							120	130		
400							140	150		
500							160	160		
600							180	180		
700						<u>360</u>	190	190		
800				<u>400</u>		<u>380</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>200</u>		
900				420		400	220	210		
1 000				440		420	230	220		
1 100				460		430	240	230		
1 200				480		450	250	240		
1 300				490		460	270	250		
1 400				510		480	280	260		
1 500		<u>780</u>		520	<u>750</u>	490	290	270		
1 600		810		530	770	500	300	270		
1 700		830		550	790	510	300	280		
1 800		850		560	810	530	310	290		
1 900		860		570	820	540	320	290		
2 000		880		590	840	550	330	300		
2 100		900	<u>1 090</u>	600	860	560	340	310		
2 200		920	1 110	610	870	570	350	310		
2 300		940	1 130	620	890	<u>580</u>	360	320	<u>1 160</u>	50.4
2 400		950	1 150	630	900	590	360	330	1 180	49.3
2 500		970	1 160	<u>640</u>	920	600	370	330	1 210	48.2
3 000	<u>1 550</u>	1 040	1 250	690	990	640	410	360	1 310	43.7
3 500	1 660	1 110	1 330	730	1 050	690	440	380	1 410	40.2
4 000	1 760	1 170	1 400	770	1 100	720	470	410	1 500	37.4
4 500	1 850	1 230	1 470	810	<u>1 150</u>	760	500	430	1 580	35.1
5 000	1 940	<u>1 280</u>	1 530	840	1 200	790	530	450	1 660	33.1
6 000	2 100	1 380	<u>1 640</u>	910	1 290	850	580	480	1 800	29.9
8 000	2 380	1 550	1 840	1 020	1 440	960	670	550	<u>2 040</u>	<u>25.5</u>
10 000	<u>2 610</u>	1 690	2 010	1 110	1 570	1 050	740	600	2 260	22.6
20 000	3 500	2 220	2 640	1 450	2 050	1 390	1 040	810	3 050	15.3
30 000	4 130	2 600	3 100	1 700	2 390	1 640	1 260	960	3 630	12.1
40 000	4 640	2 910	3 470	1 900	2 670	1 850	1 440	1 080	4 100	10.2
50 000	5 070	3 170	3 790	2 060	2 900	2 020	1 600	1 190	4 500	9.0
100 000	6 650	4 120	4 990	2 680	3 780	2 700	2 190	1 590	5 980	6.0
200 000	8 640	5 340	6 570	3 470	4 900	3 620	2 990	2 120	7 900	3.9
300 000	10 040	6 190	7 720	4 030	5 710	4 300	3 570	2 500	9 260	3.1
400 000	11 150	6 880	8 650	4 470	6 360	4 860	4 040	2 810	10 350	2.6
500 000	12 080	7 450	9 460	4 850	6 910	5 340	4 440	3 080	11 270	2.3
1 000 000	15 410	9 550	12 470	6 230	8 940	7 200	5 940	4 070	14 630	1.5
2 000 000	19 500	12 180	16 440	7 970	11 550	9 730	7 870	5 380	18 840	0.9
5 000 000	26 270	16 690	23 720	10 980	16 170	14 540	11 300	7 730	26 040	0.5
10 000 000	32 600	21 070	31 320	13 940	20 820	19 770	14 720	10 140	32 980	0.3
20 000 000	40 120	26 480	41 370	17 630	26 770	26 960	19 010	13 270	41 470	0.2

(a) The standard errors and relative standard errors shown relate to person estimates for those items collected for the full survey sample. Approximate standard errors for those items which were collected for a sub-sample only (see Explanatory Notes, page 17) can be obtained by multiplying the standard errors shown by $\sqrt{2}$. Detailed tables for person estimates based on either sub-sample are available on request. (b) Shows the standard error as a percentage of the estimate.

GLOSSARY

.....

The following definitions apply to selected items covered in the statistics contained in this publication. Further information about item definitions, concepts, methodologies and procedures used in the survey are contained in the publication *1995 National Health Survey: Users' Guide* (4363.0) which is available from any ABS office.

SELF-ASSESSED HEALTH STATUS

Refers to respondent's perception of their general health status.

GENERAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Indicators for eight dimensions of health derived from answers given to the component questions of the SF-36 Health Survey¹. The eight dimensions covered are physical functioning, role limitations (physical), bodily pain, general health, vitality, social functioning, role limitations (emotional) and mental health. From the answers provided by each respondent, a score was derived on a scale of 0-100 for each of the eight dimensions. A higher score indicates a better state of health or well-being; for some dimensions the absence of ill-health, for others a positive state of health or well-being. As a result, scores for a healthy population are typically skewed towards the top end of the distribution. Scores are best interpreted for an individual or a population by comparison: with other individuals or populations, or with the same individuals or populations over time. The mean scores shown allow comparisons between population groups, within the NHS and as benchmarks for comparisons of data from other sources collected using the SF-36. Mean scores should not be used to compare between health dimensions.

TYPE OF CONDITIONS

All reported recent and long-term medical conditions and other reasons for health-related actions were coded to a list of 132 selected conditions/reasons for action developed by the ABS. This classification was based on the Ninth Revision (1975) of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD9), but was modified to take account of the fact that information obtained is 'as reported' by respondents. Special codes were created for some non-illness reasons for action (e.g. check-up, preventive measure) and for some frequently reported conditions which could not be readily coded to ICD categories because insufficient detail was provided (e.g. back problems, virus, infection).

RECENT CONDITIONS

Medical conditions (illness, injury or disability) experienced in the two weeks prior to interview. May include long-term conditions experienced in the period.

LONG-TERM CONDITIONS

Medical conditions (illness, injury or disability) which have lasted at least six months, or which the respondent expects to last for six months or more including:

- long-term conditions from which the respondent experienced infrequent or spasmodic attacks e.g. asthma;
- long-term conditions which may be under control through use of medications or other treatment e.g. diabetes, epilepsy;
- conditions which, although present, may not be generally considered illness because they are not necessarily debilitating e.g. reduced eyesight; and
- long-term and permanent impairments or disabilities.

¹ The Health Institute, New England Medical Center, Boston, MA.

ACTIONS TAKEN

As used in this publication this item refers to specific actions persons took about their health, and refers to actions taken in the two weeks prior to interview.

Actions covered in the survey are:

- inpatient episodes in hospital;
- visits to casualty/emergency;
- visits to outpatients units at hospitals;
- visits to day clinics;
- doctor consultations;
- dental consultations;
- consultations with other health professionals;
- other persons/organisations consulted;
- use of natural/herbal medications;
- use of other medications;
- use of vitamins/minerals;
- days away from work/school; and
- other days of reduced activity.

BODY MASS

Based on height and weight as reported by the respondent. Persons were categorised into four groups according to their body mass, derived using the formula $\text{weight (kg) divided by the square of height (m}^2\text{)}$. The groups used as shown below, are consistent with recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC).

.....	
<i>Body Mass Index Score</i>	
.....	
Underweight	Less than 20
Acceptable weight	20–25
Overweight	Greater than 25–30
Obese	Greater than 30
.....	

SMOKING

Refers to the regular smoking of tobacco, including manufactured (packet) cigarettes, roll-your-own cigarettes, cigars and pipes, but excludes chewing tobacco and smoking of non-tobacco products. The topic focused on 'regular smoking', where regular was defined as one or more cigarettes (or pipes or cigars) per day on average as reported by the respondent.

The topic describes smoking status (current smokers, ex-smokers and never smoked) at time of interview.

ALCOHOL INTAKE

Derived from the average daily consumption of alcohol and grouped into health risk levels as defined by the NH&MRC as follows:

<i>Consumption per day (mls)</i>		
<i>Health risk</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Low	Less than 50	Less than 25
Moderate	50-75	25-50
High	Greater than 75	Greater than 50

It should be noted that health risk as defined by the NH&MRC is based on regular consumption levels of alcohol, whereas indicators derived in the NHS do not take into account whether consumption was more, less, or the same as usual.

EXERCISE LEVEL

This item relates to exercise undertaken for sport, recreation or fitness only, and hence does not reflect the level of total physical activity. The item is derived from the information about the number of times exercise was undertaken in the two weeks prior to interview, the average length of each session and the intensity (i.e. vigorous, moderate or walking). The item is intended as a guide to the relative exercise levels of persons, and should not be interpreted as necessarily indicative of level of fitness.

SUN PROTECTION

Refers to measures taken for protection from the sun, focussing on measures taken in the month prior to interview. Measures covered include sunscreen, umbrella, hat, clothing and sunglasses. Figures shown for 1989-90 relate to the usual use of sunscreens only, and therefore are not directly comparable.

ACCIDENTS

Refers to events identified by respondents which resulted in injury or other recent or long-term medical condition reported in the survey. The term accident is used in this publication to refer to events (accidents, exposures to harmful factors and other incidents) with or without intent, which resulted in injury or illness. This topic does not provide data indicating the number of accidents (either injury or otherwise) occurring over a period. Information about injuries sustained and circumstances of the event relate to the most recent accident only.

For more information . . .

The ABS publishes a wide range of statistics and other information on Australia's economic and social conditions. Details of what is available in various publications and other products can be found in the ABS Catalogue of Publications and Products available from all ABS Offices.

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