

University of Illinois at Chicago, Spring 2002

Executive Summary

American College Health Association's
National College Health Assessment

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Introduction

Interest in a healthy environment in higher education has grown over the last decade. Administrators, practitioners, faculty, and students are becoming increasingly concerned about the health and health-related costs that affect the quality of student and academic life within the campus community.

In 1998 the American College Health Association initiated a survey to address a broad range of health, risk, and protective behaviors, consequences of behavior, and perceptions among students. The survey also assesses illness and effects of selected health conditions on academic performance.

Additional information about survey development, design, and methods can be obtained by calling the ACHA Research Director, E. Victor Leino, Ph.D., at (410) 859-1500, ext. 239.

This Executive Summary highlights results of the NCHA survey for the University of Illinois at Chicago, Spring 2002, consisting of 990 respondents representative of the student population including undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. This sample was selected through representative sampling methods. A simple random sample of all UIC classes was selected from the Timetable, excluding classes smaller than 10. The full report describes the sampling in detail and compares characteristics of the sample to available demographic data on the population to empirically assess sample representativeness.

Principal Investigator is Robert B. Lees, Ph.D., Director of Counseling Service at UIC. James A. Danowski, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Communication is Co-Investigator. Questions about the NCHA survey at UIC should be directed to Dr. Danowski at jimd@uic.edu or (312) 413-2129.

Possible Uses of the NCHA

The following are possible uses of the National College Health Assessment

- Determine priority health issues among student populations.
- Provide prevalence rates and formulate baseline data for tracking trends.
- Measure progress and effectiveness of intervention strategies.
- Support institutional policies and local laws that affect the health of a campus community.
- Create individual reports, information campaigns, research projects to educate both campus and community partners.
- Distribute risk factor information about the student population through summary reports that focus on specific health topics or problem areas.
- Monitor prevalence and care for specific chronic disease groups.
- Monitor acute illness and prevention efforts.
- Provide group or cohort-specific estimates.
- Assess the correlation between one characteristic or behavior and another in a given population.
- Identify students' level of self-knowledge about health protection practices and illnesses.
- Identify students' perceptions about peer behavior.
- Assess the impact of health and behavior factors on academic performance.
- Track the progress of selected objectives in Healthy Campus 2000 and Healthy Campus 2010 for ongoing and future tracking.

Note on use of data:

Missing values have been excluded from analysis. Students responding "not applicable" were excluded from several analyses, which are specifically noted throughout this document. All response categories were included, including "don't know" or "0" unless otherwise noted.

Findings

A. General Health of College Students

57.7% of students surveyed (59.7% male, 58.9% female) described their health as good or excellent.

Within the last school year, college students reported

Allergy problems:	35.2 %	Repetitive stress injury:	4.6 %
Anorexia:	1.3 %	Seasonal affective disorder:	4.2 %
Anxiety disorder:	10.3 %	Substance abuse problem:	3.3 %
Asthma:	8.7 %	Back pain:	42.1 %
Bulimia:	2.5 %	Broken bone/fracture:	3.9 %
Chronic fatigue syndrome:	3.4 %	Bronchitis:	5.4 %
Depression:	13.3 %	Chlamydia:	0.8 %
Diabetes:	1.0 %	Ear infection:	9.0 %
Endometriosis:	1.6 %	Gonorrhea:	0.8 %
Genital herpes:	0.9 %	Mononucleosis:	0.7 %
Genital warts/HPV:	1.9 %	Pelvic inflammatory disease:	0.5 %
Hepatitis B or C:	0.8 %	Sinus infection:	20.6 %
High blood pressure:	3.5 %	Strep throat:	11.7 %
High cholesterol:	3.1 %	Tuberculosis:	0.7 %
HIV	0.6 %		

67.7% of college students (65.2% male, 74.6% female) experienced one or more of the above conditions within the last school year.

B. Preventive Health

Preventive health practices among college

- 63.5 % reported being vaccinated against hepatitis B.
- 30.2 % reported being vaccinated against meningococcal disease.
- 60.2 % reported being vaccinated against varicella (chicken pox).
- 86.8 % reported being vaccinated with measles, mumps, rubella (2 shots).
- 27.5 % reported being vaccinated against the flu in the last year.
- 68.2 % reported having a dental exam and cleaning in the last year.
- 33.1 % of males students reported that they performed testicular self exam in the last
- 37.9 % of female students reported that they performed breast self exam in the last
- 52.6 % of females reported having a routine gynecological exam in the last year.
- 85.8 % reported having their blood pressure checked in the last 2 years.
- 40.0 % reported having cholesterol checked in the last 5 years.
- 13.4 % reported using sunscreen daily.

College students reported the following behaviors within the last 12

	N/A, didn't drive, ride, or skate within the last 12 months / school year	Never	Rarely or sometimes	Mostly or always	Mostly or always (N/A responses not included)*
Wore a seatbelt	0.5%	2.7%	14.2%	82.5%	82.9%
Wore a helmet when riding a bicycle	51.5%	35.8%	5.7%	7.0%	14.4%
Wore a helmet when riding a motorcycle	82.0%	8.1%	2.6%	7.3%	40.8%
Wore a helmet when inline skating	66.0%	28.8%	2.8%	2.4%	7.0%

* Students responding "N/A, didn't drive, ride, or skate within the last school year" were excluded from this analysis.

Findings contd.

C. Academic Impacts

Within the last school year students reported the following factors affecting their individual academic performance, i.e. received an incomplete, dropped a course, received a lower grade in a class, on an exam, or on an important project (listed alphabetically):

Alcohol use	4.7 %	Eating disorder problem	1.2 %
Allergies	3.6 %	HIV infection	0.2 %
Assault (physical)	0.9 %	Injury	2.9 %
Assault (sexual)	0.5 %	Internet use/computer	7.9 %
Attention deficit disorder	3.4 %	Learning	1.1 %
Cold/flu/sore throat	17.2 %	Mononucleosis	0.4 %
Concern for a troubled friend or family member	18.2 %	Pregnancy (yours or your partner's)	1.5 %
Chronic illness (diabetes, asthma, etc.)	1.3 %	Relationship difficulty	13.6 %
Chronic pain	1.3 %	Sexually transmitted disease	0.6 %
Death of a friend or family	8.1 %	Sinus infection/ear infection/bronchitis	
Depression/anxiety disorder/seasonal affective	11.3 %	strep throat	6.2 %
Drug use	2.8 %	Sleep difficulties	17.9 %
		Stress:	27.2 %

D. Violence

Within the last school year, college students reported

	Male	Female	Total
A physical fight	16.9%	3.3%	7.3%
Being physically assaulted	6.7%	2.7%	4.2%
Verbal threats for sex against their will	3.1%	3.4%	3.3%
Sexual touching against their will	5.1%	6.2%	6.2%
Attempted sexual penetration against their will	2.0%	2.1%	2.0%
Sexual penetration against their will	2.0%	1.2%	1.4%
An emotionally abusive relationship	9.0%	14.2%	12.0%
A physically abusive relationship	3.5%	3.4%	3.2%
A sexually abusive relationship	3.9%	1.5%	2.0%

E. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use

Thirty day prevalence - substance use reported by college students (male, female, total):

Alcohol	Male	Female	Total
Never used	20.8%	24.7%	24.6%
Used, but not in the last 30	12.9%	18.5%	16.2%
Used within 1-9 days	45.9%	46.5%	45.8%
Used within 10-29 days	18.0%	9.4%	12.0%
Used all 30 days	2.4%	0.9%	1.3%
Cigarettes	Male	Female	Total
Never used	61.7%	62.9%	62.5%
Used, but not in the last 30	11.7%	14.7%	13.6%
Used within 1-9 days	9.4%	7.7%	8.4%
Used within 10-29 days	6.6%	6.7%	6.7%
Used all 30 days	10.5%	8.0%	8.7%
Marijuana	Male	Female	Total
Never used	64.1%	75.3%	71.3%
Used, but not in the last 30	14.8%	14.6%	15.2%
Used within 1-9 days	14.1%	6.5%	8.9%
Used within 10-29 days	4.3%	2.4%	3.2%
Used all 30 days	2.7%	1.2%	1.5%

Reported use versus perceived use - reported use for all students within the past 30 days compared with how often students perceived the typical student on campus used substances within the same time period:

	Never		Used one or more		Used daily	
	Reported use (total)	Perception of typical	Reported use (total)	Perception of typical	Reported use (total)	Perception of typical
Alcohol	24.6%	2.6%	57.8%	63.3%	1.3%	34.1%
Cigarettes	62.5%	4.5%	15.1%	39.7%	8.7%	55.7%
Marijuana	71.3%	16.9%	12.0%	64.1%	1.5%	19.0%

8.0% of college students reported driving after having 5 or more drinks in the last 30 days.

*Students responding "N/A, don't drive" were excluded from this

Findings contd.

Estimated BAC (Blood Alcohol Content) of college students: This is an estimated figure based on the reported number of drinks consumed during the last time all students (including non-drinkers) "partied" or socialized, their approximate time of consumption, sex, and the average rate of ethanol metabolism.

Estimated BAC	Male	Female	Total
< .08	62.7%	67.0%	65.6%
< .10	68.7%	73.2%	71.8%
Mean	0.084	0.069	0.073
Median	0.046	0.042	0.043
Mode	0.000	0.000	0.000

Reported number of drinks consumed the last time students "partied" or socialized:

Number of drinks	Male	Female	Total
<= 4	51.6%	73.0%	68.0%
<= 5	57.3%	81.8%	75.2%
<= 6	62.5%	87.4%	80.4%
Mean	6.16	3.18	4.17
Median	4.0	2.0	3.0
Mode	0.0	0.0	0.0

Reported number of times college students consumed five or more drinks in a sitting within the last two weeks:

	Male	Female	Total
None	56.9%	75.1%	70.2%
1-2 times	22.5%	18.7%	19.3%
3-5 times	13.8%	5.0%	7.5%
6 or more times	6.7%	1.2%	3.1%

College students reported doing the following when they "partied" or socialized during the last school year:*

When at a party or when going out....	usually or always
alternate non-alcoholic with alcoholic beverages:	26.0%
determine in advance not to exceed a set number of drinks:	34.9%
choose not to drink alcohol:	32.2%
use a designated driver:	67.2%
eat before and/or during drinking:	67.2%
have a friend let you know when you have had enough:	32.6%
keep track of how many drinks being consumed:	59.0%
pace drinks to one or fewer an hour:	33.3%
avoid drinking games:	55.3%
drink an alcoholic look-alike:	9.9%

*Students responding "N/A, don't drink" were excluded from this

93.7% of college students reported usually doing or always doing one or more of the above behaviors when drinking alcohol during the last school year.

*Students responding "N/A, don't drink" were excluded from this

College students who drank alcohol reported the following consequences occurring in the last school year as a result of their own drinking:*

	Male	Female	Total
Being physically injured	16.7%	12.0%	13.5%
Being physically injured by another	9.1%	2.8%	4.5%
Being involved in a fight	14.7%	4.4%	7.5%
Doing something they later regretted	40.6%	24.6%	29.3%
Forgetting where they were or what they had	30.5%	20.3%	23.2%
Having someone use force or threat of force to have sex with them	1.5%	2.1%	2.0%
Having unprotected sex	22.7%	12.0%	15.1%

*Students responding "N/A, don't drink" were excluded from this

Findings contd.

F. Sexual Behavior

College students reported the following within the last school year:

	Male	Female	Total
Having had no sexual partner	30.9%	31.5%	32.3%
Having had 1 sexual partner	37.0%	51.4%	46.8%
Having had 2 sexual partners	12.6%	9.3%	9.7%
Having had 3 sexual partners	7.7%	4.6%	5.5%
Having had 4 or more sexual partners	11.8%	3.2%	5.7%

Number of partners among students reporting to have at least one sexual partner within the last school year:*

Mean	2.68	2.34	2.53
Median	1.0	1.0	1.0
Mode	1.0	1.0	1.0

*Only students reporting to have at least one sexual partner are included in the analysis.

Oral sex within the past 30	Male	Female	Total
Never did this sexual behavior	28.9%	29.3%	30.5%
Have not done this during the last 30 days	23.8%	23.8%	23.4%
Did this 1 or more times	47.3%	46.9%	46.1%

Vaginal sex within the past 30	Male	Female	Total
Never did this sexual behavior	30.7%	29.6%	30.6%
Have not done this during the last 30 days	24.8%	16.5%	19.0%
Did this 1 or more times	44.5%	53.8%	50.4%

Anal sex within the past 30	Male	Female	Total
Never did this sexual behavior	69.7%	76.3%	74.9%
Have not done this during the last 30 days	23.5%	16.3%	17.8%
Did this 1 or more times	6.7%	7.4%	7.2%

Type of sexual behavior	Oral	Vaginal	Anal
<i>Sexually active students</i>			
Using a condom within the last 30 days (mostly or always)*	3.8%	43.3%	21.1%
Using a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse	4.0%	46.3%	25.9%

*Students responding "Never did this sexual activity" or "Have not done this during the last thirty days" were excluded from the analysis.

**Students responding "Never did this sexual activity" were excluded from the analysis.

Reported means of birth control used among sexually active college students or their partners to prevent pregnancy the last time they had vaginal intercourse:

	Male	Female	Total
Birth control pills	27.7%	31.5%	28.0%
Depo Provera (shots)	2.0%	1.0%	1.1%
Norplant (implant)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Condoms	39.1%	33.2%	33.5%
Diaphragm, cervical cap,	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%
Spermicide	2.0%	3.9%	3.2%
Fertility awareness	1.6%	2.6%	2.4%
Withdrawal	12.1%	17.9%	15.7%
Other method	2.3%	1.5%	1.9%
Nothing	8.2%	4.9%	5.9%

6.5% of sexually active college students reported using (or reported their partner used) contraception ("morning after pill") within the last school year (male 5.2%; female: 7.6%).*

*Students responding "Not sexually active" were excluded from the analysis.

4.1% of college students who had vaginal intercourse within the last school year experiencing an unintentional pregnancy or got someone pregnant within the last school year (male 3.4%; female: 4.5%).**

**Students responding "Have not had vaginal intercourse within the last school year" were excluded from the analysis.

Findings contd.

G. Nutrition and Exercise

Within the last 30 days, college students reported:

	Male	Female	Total
Exercising to lose weight	43.4%	49.2%	45.6%
Dieting to lose weight	16.4%	34.4%	26.8%
Vomiting or taking laxatives to lose weight	1.2%	3.1%	2.2%
Taking diet pills to lose weight	3.1%	8.7%	6.4%
Doing none of the above	50.8%	41.2%	43.0%

College students reported usually eating the following number of servings of fruits and vegetables:

	Male	Female	Total
Don't eat fruits and vegetables	6.9%	5.8%	5.6%
1 or 2 per day	66.5%	63.3%	65.2%
3-4 per day	20.6%	24.3%	22.8%
5 or more per day	6.0%	6.5%	6.4%

College students reported the following behaviors within the past 7 days

Participated in vigorous exercise for 20 minutes (or 30 minutes moderate exercise)

	Male	Female	Total
0	28.5%	41.2%	37.6%
1-2 days	28.5%	27.2%	27.5%
3-5 days	34.5%	27.2%	28.9%
6+ days	8.4%	4.3%	6.0%

Exercising to strengthen or tone muscles

	Male	Female	Total
0	29.7%	44.6%	39.9%
1-2 days	23.7%	28.5%	27.2%
3-5 days	39.0%	22.5%	27.6%
6+ days	7.6%	4.5%	5.3%

Getting enough sleep to feel rested in the morning

	Male	Female	Total
0	13.1%	15.5%	14.5%
1-2 days	33.9%	36.5%	35.4%
3-5 days	43.4%	37.0%	39.3%
6+ days	9.6%	11.0%	10.8%

Estimated average Body Mass Index (BMI): This figure incorporates reported sex, height, and weight to form a general indicator of physical health.

BMI	Male	Female	Total
< 18.5 Underweight	4.6%	12.7%	10.2%
18.5-24.9 Healthy Weight	54.6%	66.7%	63.1%
24-29.9 Overweight	32.4%	12.8%	18.7%
30-34.9 Class I Obesity	7.1%	4.3%	5.2%
35-39.9 Class II Obesity	1.3%	2.2%	1.9%
>= 40 Class III Obesity	0.0%	1.3%	0.9%
Mean	24.5	23.8	24.0
Median	24.3	21.5	22.3
Mode	21.3	20.6	20.4

H. Depression

Students reported experiencing the following within the last school year:

Feeling overwhelmed by all they had to do; Feeling so depressed it was difficult to function

	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
Never	9.2%	3.1%	5.7%	Never	56.6%	55.1%	55.7%
1-10	68.8%	69.0%	68.2%	1-10	36.1%	37.1%	36.7%
11+	22.0%	27.9%	26.1%	11+	7.2%	7.8%	7.6%

Feeling exhausted (not from physical activity); Seriously considering attempting suicide

Never	9.6%	5.4%	7.3%	Never	92.0%	90.0%	90.0%
1-10	67.6%	68.2%	67.8%	1-10	6.0%	8.7%	8.4%
11+	22.8%	26.4%	24.9%	11+	2.0%	1.4%	1.6%

Feeling very sad

	Male	Female	Total	Attempting suicide	Male	Female	Total
Never	23.2%	15.7%	18.7%	Never	98.4%	98.3%	98.1%
1-10	63.2%	70.5%	67.4%	1-10	1.6%	1.2%	1.5%
11+	13.6%	13.8%	13.9%	11+	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%

Feeling things were hopeless

Never	40.0%	26.4%	30.3%
1-10	48.4%	62.5%	58.2%
11+	11.6%	11.1%	11.4%

	Male	Female	Total
College students reported ever diagnosed with depression	6.4%	9.0%	8.2%
<i>Of those students reporting ever having been diagnosed with depression in the above item</i>			
Diagnosed with depression in the last school year	43.8%	29.2%	35.2%
Currently in therapy for depression	18.8%	33.3%	30.0%
Currently taking medication for depression	31.3%	37.5%	36.6%

Demographics and Student Characteristics

Age		Sexual orientation	
Average	23.17	Heterosexual	95.7 %
Median	21	Gay/Lesbian	1.3 %
Mode:	20	Bisexual	1.8 %
		Transgendered	0.2 %
18 -	37.8 %	Unsure:	1.0 %
21 -	40.3 %		
25 -	12.9 %	Housing	
30+:	8.5 %	Campus residence	16.6 %
		Fraternity or sorority	0.2 %
Sex		Other university	0.9 %
Female	69.6%	Off-campus	32.3 %
Male	30.4%	Parent/guardian's	41.9 %
		Other	8.1 %
Student Year			
1st year	15.9 %	Hours of paid work per week	
2nd year	16.8 %	0	28.5 %
3rd year	18.2 %	1-9	14.8 %
4th year	11.1 %	10-19	25.7 %
5th year or more	6.9 %	20-29	20.3 %
Graduate or professional	29.8 %	30-39	5.8 %
Adult special	1.3 %	40	2.7 %
		More than 40	2.2 %
Full-time student	92.9%		
		Hours of volunteer work per week	
Relationship Status		0	77.1 %
Single:	52.4 %	1-9	20.5 %
Married/domestic	8.9 %	10-19	1.7 %
Engaged or committed		20-29	0.2 %
dating	36.8 %		0.2 %
Separated	36.8 %	30-39	0.2 %
Divorced	0.3 %	40	0.0 %
Widowed:	1.3 %	More than 40	0.2 %
Students' self-described race/ethnicity		Have any kind of health insurance	
White	46.5 %	(including prepaid plans, HMOs)	
Black – not Hispanic	6.7 %	Yes:	89.8 %
Hispanic or Latino	11.5 %	Unsure:	5.4 %
Asian or Pacific Islander	23.6 %		
American Indian or Alaskan	0.2 %		

Other 2.6 %

NCHA Advisory Committee*Co-chair*

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