E-Health and the Elderly

How Seniors Use the Internet for Health Information

A Kaiser Family Foundation Report

January 2005
Who Are America’s 35 Million Seniors?
Senior Population Characteristics

Percent of total Senior population...

- 2+ Chronic Conditions: 72%
- High School or Less: 61%
- Women: 58%
- Below 200% Poverty*: 46%
- Lives Alone: 30%
- Fair / Poor Health: 25%
- Cognitive / Mental Impairment: 19%
- Black, Hispanic, Other: 19%
- 85+ Years Old: 14%
- In Nursing Home: 5%

*200% Poverty = $18,620 in 2004

Sources: MCBS 2002 and 1999; CPS 2003 (poverty)
The Digital Divide Among America’s Seniors
### Income Divide:
Internet Use Among Seniors by Income

Have you ever gone online to use the Internet or World Wide Web, or email?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Yes, have gone online</th>
<th>No, have never gone online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income &lt; $20K</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(approx. 64% of seniors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income $20K to 49K</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(approx. 29% of seniors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income $50K+</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(approx. 8% of seniors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation *Seniors and the Internet Survey* (conducted March 5—April 18, 2004); Dept. of Commerce, Current Population Study, March 2002
### Gender Divide: Internet Use Among Seniors by Gender

Have you ever gone online to use the Internet or World Wide Web, or email?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Have gone online</th>
<th>Never gone online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men ages 65+</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(42% of seniors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women ages 65+</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(58% of seniors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation *Seniors and the Internet Survey* (conducted March 5—April 18, 2004); Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, 2002
**Education Divide:**
Internet Use Among Seniors by Education

Have you ever gone online to use the Internet or World Wide Web, or email?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Yes, have gone online</th>
<th>No, have never gone online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School or Less (61% of seniors)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College (21% of seniors)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate (19% of seniors)</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation *Seniors and the Internet Survey* (conducted March 5—April 18, 2004); Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, 2002.
Have you ever gone online to use the Internet or World Wide Web, or email?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Division</th>
<th>Yes, have gone online</th>
<th>No, have never gone online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 75+ years (50% of seniors)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65-74 years (50% of seniors)</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50-64 years</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation Seniors and the Internet Survey (conducted March 5—April 18, 2004); Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, 2002
The Divide Won’t Disappear Quickly
Have you ever gone online to use the Internet or World Wide Web, or email?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Yes, have gone online</th>
<th>No, have never gone online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $20,000</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 to $49,000</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 or More</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation e-Health and the Elderly: How Seniors Use the Internet for Health Information, conducted March 5 - April 18, 2004
## Percentage of Adults 50-64 Years Old Who Have Ever Gone Online, By EDUCATION

Have you ever gone online to use the Internet or World Wide Web, or email?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>Yes, have gone online</th>
<th>No, have never gone online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Degree or Less</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *e-Health and the Elderly: How Seniors Use the Internet for Health Information*, conducted March 5 - April 18, 2004
Survey Methodology

✓ Nationally-representative
✓ Random-digit dial telephone survey
✓ 1,450 adults age 50 and older
  • 799 age 50-64
  • 583 age 65 and older
✓ Margin of error +/- 4 percent for each group
Internet Use

Percent of older Americans who have ever gone online, by age...

- 65 years & older: 31%
- 50-64 years: 70%
Internet Use For Health

Percent who have gone online for health information, by age...

- 21% for 65 years & older
- 53% for 50-64 years
Percent of older Americans who get “a lot” of health information online, by age…

- 8% of 65 years & older
- 24% of 50-64 years
Health Information Sources

Percent who get “a lot” of health information from, by age...

65 years & older

- TV: 21%
- Books: 21%
- Newspapers: 17%
- Magazines: 14%
- Internet: 8%

50-64 years

- TV: 21%
- Books: 21%
- Newspapers: 17%
- Magazines: 14%
- Internet: 24%
Percent of seniors and other adults who trust the Internet as a source of health information...

- 65 and older:
  - "A lot": 8%
  - "Some": 18%
  - Total: 26%

- 50-64 year-olds:
  - "A lot": 19%
  - "Some": 39%
  - Total: 58%
Percent of online seniors (65 & older) who have used the Internet to look for information on:

- Prescription drugs: 37%
- Nutrition: 30%
- Cancer: 23%
- Heart disease: 21%
- Arthritis: 21%
- High cholesterol: 20%
Percent of online seniors (65 & older) who have used the Internet to...

- Look for any information on prescription drugs: 37%
- Compare prices of prescription drugs: 16%
- Purchase prescription drugs: 15%
Percent of online seniors (65 & older) who have used the Internet to look for information on:

- Medicare: 19%
- Health policy news: 16%
- Health providers: 31% (Among 50-64 year-olds)
- Health insurance: 11%
- Medicaid: 7%
Percent of all seniors (65 & older) who have visited the Medicare.gov web site...

- March/April 2004: 2%
- June/July 2004: 4%
- October 2004: 8%
- December 2004: 3%
Among seniors (65 & older) who have looked for health information online, percent who say they have…

- Talked with a doctor about it: 34% (Seniors 65 & older), 50% (Adults 50-64)
- Changed their behavior because of it: 23% (Seniors 65 & older), 37% (Adults 50-64)
- Decided how to treat a condition because of it: 23% (Seniors 65 & older), 35% (Adults 50-64)
Health Providers

Percent of seniors and other adults who say their doctor has ever…

- **Asked if they go online**
  - Seniors 65 & older: 0%
  - Adults 50-64: 9%

- **Recommended a web site**
  - Seniors 65 & older: 0%
  - Adults 50-64: 3%
Health Providers & Advertisers

Percent of seniors and other adults who have ever...

- Used e-mail to communicate with a doctor or other provider
  - Seniors 65 & older: 2%
  - Adults 50-64: 7%

- Received e-mail advertising drugs, supplements or other products
  - Seniors 65 & older: 15%
  - Adults 50-64: 41%
WHAT IS ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE?

IT’S MORE THAN JUST FORGETTING THINGS.
About 4 million people in the U.S. have Alzheimer’s. It is an illness that makes it hard for people to remember, think, and use language. It can make them act strange or seem moody. After a while, people with Alzheimer’s have a hard time with things like using the phone, cooking or handling money.

Sadly, many people think the early symptoms of Alzheimer’s are signs of normal aging. So Alzheimer’s is often not diagnosed and treated early.

WHO GETS ALZHEIMER’S?
The disease is more common in older adults. And it affects all races. About 1 in 10 people over the age of 65 have Alzheimer’s. As many as 5 in 10 people over the age of 85 have Alzheimer’s.

THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO.
Through research, we are learning more about how the brain is affected in Alzheimer’s. We do not yet know how to prevent or cure it. But we do know how to treat its symptoms. Arixcept® can help treat the symptoms of mild to moderate Alzheimer’s.

UNDERSTANDING THE STAGES OF ALZHEIMER’S
Alzheimer’s gets worse over time. So, it is important to know what to expect. This chart shows the problems people tend to have in each stage of the disease.
Welcome to the ADEAR Center!

Use this site to find current, comprehensive Alzheimer's disease (AD) information and resources from the U.S. Government's National Institute on Aging (NIA).

Highlights

NEW!

2003 Progress Report on Alzheimer's Disease

Latest report highlights recent scientific advances in government-supported AD research, including new initiatives and findings. FREE.

Alzheimer's Disease: Unraveling the Mystery

Clearly explains what we understand about the basic science and workings of AD.

News

NIA Partners with Industry to Launch AD Neuroimaging Initiative

October 13, 2004

Volunteers Needed for AD Research

AD Genetics Study seeks families with 2 or more siblings with AD. Or, go to the ADEAR clinical trials database to search other studies.

Order Online
**Prostate Cancer**

- Causes
- Symptoms
- Images & Anatomy
- Bone Metastases
- Diagnosis
- Staging
- Treatment
- Living With Prostate Cancer

**What is Prostate Cancer?**
Prostate cancer is characterized by an uncontrolled growth of cells in the prostate gland - a gland that is found only in males.

**Symptoms, Causes, Prevention**

**Diagnosis & Treatment**
Prostate cancer generally does not produce symptoms until it is well-advanced. Detected early, the disease is quite curable.

**Staging, Treatment, Complications**
WebMD Physicians Recommend:

Alzheimer's information on Diagnosing, Long-Term Care, and Who's at Risk
Could it be Alzheimer's? Take this QUICK QUIZ.

Ad links by Google™

- Alzheimer's www.namenda.com
  Namenda, also known as memantine, for moderate to severe Alzheimer's
- Symptoms of Alzheimer's www.alz.org
  All the latest on symptoms, treatment, care, help and hope.
- Alzheimer's Care www.alzstore.com
  Products for Dignity, Safety, and Autonomy. Good for All Stages of AD
- Alzheimer’s Prevention www.hsfighters.com
  Major risk discovered in Framingham Study. How to reduce this risk.
- Meat Causes Alzheimer's www.peta.org
  People who eat meat have a greater risk of developing Alzheimer's.

WebMD Search Results

1. Types of Alzheimer's Disease - From the Cleveland Clinic
   100% (WebMD Medical Reference provided in collaboration with The
   Cleveland Clinic)
   Types of Alzheimer's Disease - From the Cleveland Clinic

2. Alzheimer's Disease -- Topic Overview
   87% (WebMD Medical Reference from Healthwise)
   What is Alzheimer's disease? - Alzheimer's disease is a progressive
   condition that damages areas of the
Living with Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's disease can bring families and friends together, even as memory fades. You face challenges, but also opportunities. Here are ways to help you make the most of this time.

A Simple Guide for Families

Things to Do

1. Get Tips for Living With Reduced Memory
2. Get Tips for Caregivers
3. Print 10 Questions to Ask the Doctor

ARICEPT® (donepezil HCl) is the #1 prescribed drug for Alzheimer's. ARICEPT® (donepezil HCl) is well tolerated but may not be for everyone. Some people may have nausea, diarrhea, not sleep well or vomit. Some people may have muscle cramps, feel very tired, or may not want to eat. In studies, these side effects were usually mild and went away over time. Some people who take ARICEPT may experience fainting.
Find out how to be healthy in body, mind, and spirit in later life by choosing one of the topics or selecting a letter from the list below.

Choose a topic:
- Aging
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Cancer
- Caregivers
- Depression
- Elder Care
- Heart Disease
- Independent Living
- Long Term Care
- Medicare

Select a letter to see more topics that start with that letter:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x

View a list of related organizations
Click "Speech On" at the top of any page, then click on the text to hear the information read aloud.

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Arthritis
- Balance Problems
- Breast Cancer
- Caring for Someone with Alzheimer's
- Colorectal Cancer
- Exercise for Older Adults
- Hearing Loss
- Lung Cancer
- Prostate Cancer

- Read a welcome message from our directors.
- Learn more about NIH Senior Health.
- We welcome your suggestions! Use our form to Contact us.
Alzheimer’s disease begins slowly. At first, the only symptom may be mild forgetfulness. People with Alzheimer’s disease may have trouble remembering recent events, activities, or the names of familiar people or things. Simple math problems may become hard to solve. Such difficulties may be a bother, but usually they are not serious enough to cause alarm. (For more, click below on "Next Page.")
Welcome to AARP Health Guide—a new health information service that provides reliable, easy-to-use information designed to help you take charge of your health. AARP is testing this service and wants your opinion. Tell us what you think.

Begin your quick search of AARP Health Guide

Frequently Requested Topics

- Alzheimer's
- Breast Cancer
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Depression
- Diabetes II
- Hypertension
- Lower Back Pain
- Obesity
- Osteoporosis
- Prostate Cancer
- Rheumatoid Arthritis

Decision Support You Can Trust!

FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) AND THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

» Interactive Tutorials
  Easy-to-understand talking slide shows about conditions and procedures.

» Clinical Trials
  Find studies for new drugs and treatments.

» Directories
  Find doctors, dentists, hospitals and other healthcare providers.

» Alternative Medicine
  Information on alternative medicine.
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