

INTERNET USE FOR HEALTH INFORMATION

Due in part to the growth in high-speed broadband, wireless networks, and mobile devices, the percentage of adults in the United States who use the Internet has increased substantially, from 47 percent in 2000 to 78 percent in 2011.²³ With regard to health, the Internet can provide valuable information on specific conditions, rankings and reviews of medical professionals, health assessment questionnaires, and other tools to better inform consumers of treatment options and preventative measures.²⁴ However, disparities in Internet access persist by age, race and ethnicity, education, and income.²³

In 2009, 45.5 percent of all adults reported

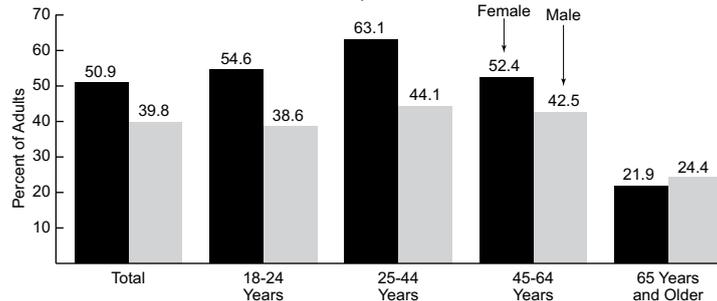
having used the Internet to obtain health information in the past year (data not shown). Overall, women were more likely than men to have utilized this resource (50.9 versus 39.8 percent, respectively). Internet use for health information also varied by age. Among women, those aged 25–44 years were most likely to use the Internet for health information (63.1 percent) while similar percentages of men, about 40 percent, had used the Internet for health information between 18 and 64 years of age. For both women and men, those aged 65 and older were least likely to use the Internet for health information and there was no significant sex difference among this age group (21.9 and 24.4 percent, respectively).

Internet use for health information increased

greatly with income and education. Among women, two-thirds of those with household incomes of 400 percent or more of poverty had used the Internet for health information in the past year, compared to less than one-third of those with incomes below the poverty level (66.3 versus 29.2 percent, respectively). Similarly, women with a college degree were more than 5 times as likely as women who had not finished high school to have used the Internet for health information (74.6 versus 14.5 percent, respectively; data not shown). With respect to race and ethnicity, Internet use for health information was highest among non-Hispanic White women (57.0 percent) and lowest among Hispanic women (31.9 percent; data not shown).

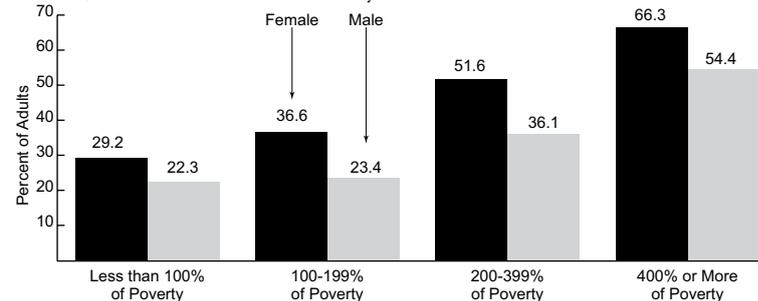
Adults Aged 18 and Older Who Used the Internet for Health Information in Past Year, by Age and Sex, 2009

Source II.8: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey



Adults Aged 18 and Older Who Used the Internet for Health Information in Past Year, by Poverty Status* and Sex, 2009

Source II.8: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey



*Poverty level, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, was \$23,021 for a family of four in 2009.