

WebMD Poll: Concern About COVID-19 Grows, Particularly in Young People

New York, NY, July 21, 2020: A new poll from WebMD finds that concern about coronavirus is on the rise, with more people worried about the pandemic now than at any point since early April.

The concern is across all age groups, but notably in people under age 35. In the most recent week, more than half of all readers say they feel somewhat or significantly more concerned about the pandemic the week of July 15 than they did in the previous week. The highest number, 59%, was in the 25-to-34 age group, with readers under 25 being the second largest at 57%. Young people have been driving the most recent increase in cases.

The findings reflect responses from readers to the [WebMD COVID Index](#) a weekly online poll of 3,000+ readers measuring concerns about personal risk, lifestyle impact, mental wellness, access to healthcare services and perception of overall well-being. More than 60,000 readers have shared their thoughts since the poll first began April 14. The index reflects weekly changes to the same five questions over 14 weeks. It is set to 100 as the baseline for the first week and reflects changes over time compared to the first week.

Click here for more information: <https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20200721/webmd-poll-concerns-around-covid19-grow>

The findings mirror the rise in COVID-19 cases, with level of concern decreasing from the initial baseline in April and May, when cases began a slow decline in Northeast hot spots, but then increasing to above baseline when COVID-19 cases began surging to record-setting levels in the South and Southwest.

People are most concerned with the pandemic overall, the ability to access healthcare services, and their personal stress levels.

Some concerns, including stress levels (exacerbated by news coverage), and access to healthcare and the ability to see a doctor have stayed relatively the same over time, while some, such as worries about access to food and other household needs has declined.

Interestingly, respondents in the most recent week were also somewhat less concerned about their risk of catching the virus), although nearly two-thirds (62%) of people age 65 and older said they were somewhat or very concerned about getting COVID, the highest of any age group. Older people are more likely to experience severe COVID cases and hospitalizations.

“The fact that people are growing more concerned about the pandemic overall, yet less concerned over their personal risk, particularly in younger age groups, may reflect that they feel that they have more control over how much they’re exposed,” said John Whyte, M.D., WebMD

Chief Medical Officer. “As we learn more about what behaviors are the riskiest and what keeps people safe, it might give them more confidence as they go about their daily lives.

“The good news is that even as concern goes up and down, people are keeping their stress levels about the same and feel they have the same access to healthcare. It’s important as we go forward that people take care of all aspects of their health while dealing with this pandemic.”

Source:

WebMD COVID Index, April 13 to July 15, 2020, 3,000+ readers each week.

Methodology

The index is designed to quantify changes in levels of stress and concerns over time and is a composite measure over five individual categories: Personal, Risk, Lifestyle Impact, Mental Wellness, Access to Health Services, Local Response and Government, and Perception of Wellbeing compared to a previous week. It is set to 100 for the first week and reflects dynamics of changes over time compared to the first week. The values above 100 correspond to increase of concerns and values below 100 correspond to reduction in concern levels. Theoretically, it may vary between 0 (total absence of concerns) to 200 (extreme concern over everything for everybody).

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