

Teen health, mental health has declined in last decade

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(HealthDay)—Adolescents' self-rated health and mental health worsened over the last decade, according to a study published July 3 in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Preventing Chronic Disease*.

Wanjun Cui, Ph.D., and Matthew M. Zack, M.D., M.P.H., from the CDC in Atlanta, analyzed data from 7,087 [adolescents](#) aged 12 to 17 years participating in the 2001 to 2010 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Ninety-three percent responded to questions about health-related quality of life (HRQOL).

The researchers found that the self-rated health of adolescents was stable from 2001 through 2004, and then worsened. In 2009 to 2010 the

percentage of adolescents reporting excellent or very good health was significantly lower than in previous years (51.8 percent in 2009 to 2010 versus 63.4 percent in 2001 to 2002 and 64.0 percent in 2003 to 2004). Compared with 2003 to 2004, in 2007 to 2008, the percentage of adolescents reporting fair or [poor health](#) was significantly higher (10.0 versus 5.7 percent). The pattern was the same for adolescents with low family income. Self-reported mental health also worsened over time. From 2001 to 2006 the percentage of adolescents reporting zero mentally unhealthy days was stable, but then decreased significantly, from 60.9 percent in 2005 to 2006 to 49.4 percent in 2009 to 2010. The percentage of zero mentally unhealthy days decreased significantly only in adolescents from low-income families.

"Adolescents' self-rated health and mental health generally worsened over the study period, especially more recently," the authors write. "Because the worsening occurred more recently, the 2008 to 2009 U.S. recession might have adversely affected adolescent HRQOL."

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