

# CDC: 20 percent of U.S. adults have a disability

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(HealthDay)—More than 50 million Americans live with a physical or mental disability, according to research published in the July 31 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

The researchers found that most people with disabilities live in southern states, such as Alabama (31.5 percent) and Mississippi and Tennessee (31.4 percent). Although why these states tend to have the highest number of [disabled people](#) isn't known, the researchers suggested that states in the South have higher rates of [chronic diseases](#), such as [heart disease](#) and diabetes, which may be linked to disability.

People with disabilities were also more likely to be aged 65 and older. In

addition, the researchers found blacks (29.0 percent) and Hispanics (25.9 percent) were more likely to suffer from disabilities than whites (20.6 percent). Moreover, education and income levels appear to have strong ties to disability rates. Nearly 40 percent of people in the study who had less than a [high school education](#) reported a disability. Also, 46.9 percent of people who had annual household incomes of less than \$15,000, and 33.5 percent of unemployed people who were able to work reported a disability. According to the report, more women than men have a disability (24.4 versus 19.8 percent).

Costs for maintaining health among people with [disabilities](#) were estimated at nearly \$400 billion in 2006, the researchers reported. More than half of these costs were related to non-independent living, such as institutional care and personal-care services.

**More information:** [Full Text](#)

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