

7 in 10 respondents worry poor health will limit their life experiences

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Learn about the link between type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke for a healthier future:

KnowDiabetesbyHeart.org

Survey conducted by OnePoll for the American Heart Association and American Diabetes Association with a sample of 2,000 Americans from May 4-14, 2020.

Credit: American Heart Association

Seven in 10 U.S. adults worry poor health will prevent them from doing all the things they'd like to do in life, according to a new survey from the American Heart Association and American Diabetes Association.

The research was conducted by OnePoll for Know Diabetes by Heart, a joint initiative of the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association which combats two of the most persistent U.S. health threats—type 2 [diabetes](#) and cardiovascular disease—and the devastating link between them.

The survey asked 2,000 U.S. adults how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their views on time with friends and family, and generally, the role health plays in experiencing a full life.

Missing out on milestones and time with loved ones is a reality for millions of people in the U.S. living with type 2 diabetes. In addition to being at a higher risk of death from COVID-19 if blood glucose is poorly controlled, people with type 2 diabetes are at double the risk of developing and dying from [heart disease](#) and stroke. For adults at age 60, having type 2 diabetes and [cardiovascular disease](#) such as heart attacks, heart failure and strokes shortens life expectancy by an average of 12 years,[6] but there is a lot people can do to lower their risk.

The survey found respondents with type 2 diabetes, heart disease or stroke are more worried that health will limit their experiences (89%, 90% and 87%, respectively) compared to respondents who don't have those conditions (58%).

Generation Comparison Reveals Differences

About two in three (65%) respondents are worried their loved ones won't be healthy enough to experience various life moments with them.

Millennials (ages 24-39) and Generation X (ages 40-55) were most worried, 73% and 69% respectively, compared to 59% for Generation Z (ages 18-23) and 58% for [baby boomers](#) (ages 56+).

Gen Z respondents are most worried about health preventing them from experiencing everything they'd like to do in life (75%), while baby boomers, are least worried overall (63%). Baby boomers, however, report the highest percentage of prioritizing their health more as they've gotten older, 68%, compared to 34% for Gen Z, 48% for millennials and 65% for Gen X.

COVID-19 Pandemic Created Greater Appreciation for Daily Moments with Loved Ones

Survey results revealed the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way many think about daily moments, and how respondents view their experiences with others. Eight in 10 respondents said the pandemic has made daily moments with their loved ones more special. Even more, 85%, said the pandemic has made them more grateful for the time they spend with their loved ones.

Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., MPH, FAAFP, American Heart Association chief medical officer for prevention, said COVID-19 shines a direct spotlight on chronic health conditions and the additional health risks they present.

"Controlling blood glucose and managing and modifying risk factors for heart disease and stroke has never been more important," Sanchez said.

"If there's a silver lining in all of this, perhaps it's a new appreciation for wellness and emphasis on controlling the controllable, the existing threats to our health that we know more about and have more tools to manage."

Returning to Routine Medical Care

Robert H. Eckel, M.D., American Diabetes Association president of medicine and science and an endocrinologist at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, emphasized the need for regular, routine medical care and expressed concern that many patients canceled or postponed doctor appointments during the pandemic.

"If you want to have the full life you are hoping for on the other side of COVID-19, then resume your doctor appointments, check your [health](#) numbers, like [blood glucose](#)—and if you have diabetes your hemoglobin A1c—cholesterol and blood pressure, and get a plan for preventing [heart](#) disease and stroke," said Eckel. "Taking medications as prescribed is also an important thing you can do for yourself and the people you love."

Visit [KnowDiabetesbyHeart.org/join](https://www.knowdiabetesbyheart.org/join) for practical information and recipes to help people with type 2 diabetes live a longer, healthier life.

Provided by American Heart Association

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