

Behavioral health issues remain high as pandemic continues

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Self-reported symptoms of behavioral health issues remain high as the

COVID-19 pandemic continues, according to a research letter published online Feb. 19 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Mark É. Czeisler, from Monash University in Clayton, Australia, and colleagues conducted a survey of 5,285 U.S. adults (Aug. 28 to Sept. 6, 2020) to assess behavioral health symptoms.

The researchers found that 33.0 percent reported anxiety or [depression symptoms](#), 29.6 percent reported COVID-19-related trauma- and stressor-related disorder symptoms, 15.1 percent reported increased substance use, and 11.9 percent reported having seriously considered suicide in August. Overall, 43.1 percent reported at least one of the aforementioned symptoms. Adults younger than 65 years were more likely to report adverse mental or behavioral health symptoms than adults 65 years and older (e.g., 18 to 24 years: adjusted prevalence ratio [aPR], 3.56), as were multigenerational caregivers (aPR, 1.93) and respondents with prior psychiatric diagnoses (aPR, 1.98). A higher prevalence of adverse mental or behavioral health symptoms was also seen among respondents with disabilities or insomnia symptoms, caregivers for adults, essential workers and unemployed respondents, and respondents who were lesbian, gay, or bisexual versus heterosexual. Among participants who responded to a survey in June, the prevalence of adverse mental health symptoms remained elevated.

"Evidence of sustained adverse mental health symptoms among more than 5,000 community-dwelling U.S. [adults](#) highlights the need to promote preventive behaviors, expand mental health care access, and integrate medical and behavioral health services to mitigate the mental health effects of COVID-19," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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