

# Heart issues have affected 4 in 10 U.S. adults since pandemic began: Survey

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(HealthDay)—Four in 10 Americans say they've had at least one heart-

related issue during the COVID-19 pandemic, and about one in four who have tested positive say COVID has affected their heart health, according to a new online poll.

Shortness of breath (18%), dizziness (15%), higher blood pressure (15%) and [chest pain](#) (13%) were the top problems reported in the survey of 1,000 American adults.

"COVID fatigue is a very real thing—and for this year's survey we wanted to see what kind of effect the ongoing pandemic is having on Americans' [heart health](#) and in particular their [healthy habits](#)," said Dr. Samir Kapadia, chairman of cardiovascular medicine at the [Cleveland Clinic](#), which conducted the poll.

"We know 90% of heart disease is preventable through a healthier diet, regular exercise, and not smoking, so now is the time to refocus on our heart health," he added in a clinic news release.

As the pandemic nears its second anniversary, the poll found that one habit in particular was on the rise. More Americans are glued to their chairs, and walking has declined. In all, 77% of respondents said they often or sometimes sit throughout the day.

Overall, four in 10 respondents who have lost a family member to [heart disease](#) before age 60 have never been screened for the condition that caused their loved one's death. But the rate of screening was higher (54%) among millennials.

And one-third of respondents said that even if they have a [family history of heart disease](#), there is nothing they can do to reduce their risk. But doctors say [early screening and treatment](#) can save lives.

About one-third of respondents were unaware that these factors can

increase the risk of heart disease: stress (33%); [high blood pressure](#) (35%); obesity (39%); and smoking/vaping (41%).

Just 22% were aware that the [Mediterranean diet](#) is heart healthy, and about 51% said they don't follow a specific diet plan.

The poll did find that 77% of respondents knew their family history of [heart disease](#) and 65% said they had had their blood pressure checked within the last six months.

The online poll was conducted Nov. 8 to 26, 2021, and released to mark American Heart Month in February. The margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

**More information:** The U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute offers a [guide to a healthy heart](#).

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