

Wellness visits, preventive screenings not back to prepandemic levels

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Wellness visits and preventive health screenings have not returned to prepandemic levels, according to a study published online Feb. 2 in *JAMA Health Forum*.

Christopher Alba, from the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, and colleagues examined [health care access](#) and preventive health screenings among eligible U.S. adults in 2021 and 2022 compared with 2019 overall and by race and ethnicity in a cross-sectional study. The unweighted study population comprised 89,130 adults.

The researchers found that having a usual place for health care did not differ among adults in 2021 or 2022 versus 2019, after adjustment for age and sex. Compared with 2019, fewer participants had wellness visits in 2022 (adjusted rate ratio [aRR], 0.98), with the most pronounced decline observed among Asians (aRR, 0.95). Compared with 2019, in 2022, adults were less likely to delay medical care or to not receive care due to cost (aRRs, 0.79 and 0.76, respectively). In 2021, preventive health screenings remained below 2019 levels (aRRs, 0.95, 0.95, and 0.93 for [blood pressure](#), [blood glucose](#), and cholesterol, respectively). Compared with 2019, in 2021, eligible adults were also significantly less likely to receive [colorectal cancer screening](#), [cervical cancer screening](#), breast cancer screening, and prostate cancer screening (aRRs, 0.88, 0.86, 0.93, and 0.86, respectively). Across most preventive screenings, Asian adults experienced the largest declines.

"Targeted public health efforts are needed to increase preventive health screenings among eligible adults as the U.S. emerges from the pandemic," the authors write.

More information: Christopher Alba et al, Changes in Health Care Access and Preventive Health Screenings by Race and Ethnicity, *JAMA Health Forum* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jamahealthforum.2023.5058](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamahealthforum.2023.5058)

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