

22.1 percent of U.S. adults with chronic pain use prescription opioids

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(HealthDay)—In 2019, 22.1 percent of U.S. adults with chronic pain

reported using a prescription opioid in the previous three months, according to a study published online Aug. 5 in the *National Health Statistics Reports*, a publication from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

James M. Dahlhamer, Ph.D., from the National Center for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, and colleagues present prevalence estimates of prescription opioid use among U.S. adults with chronic pain using data from the redesigned 2019 National Health Interview Survey.

The researchers found that among U.S. adults with chronic pain, 22.1 percent reported using a prescription opioid in the previous three months in 2019. There was variation noted in prescription opioid use by age group, sex, [educational attainment](#), employment status, poverty status, and health insurance coverage. There was an increase observed in prescription opioid use with age, followed by a decline among adults aged 65 years and older; prevalence was highest for those aged 45 to 64 years (25.9 percent). Use of a prescription opioid for chronic pain was more likely among women (24.3 versus 19.4 percent for men), adults who were not employed (27.8 versus 15.2 percent for employed adults), and those with a [family income](#) below 100 percent of the federal poverty level (27.0 percent compared with 19.4 percent among those with a family income of 200 percent or more of the [federal poverty level](#)).

"Prescription opioid use in the context of [chronic pain](#) management is associated with increased risk of misuse, addiction, morbidity, and mortality," the authors write.

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