A Pandemic on a Pandemic: Racism and COVID-19 in People of Color
Share of College Students Who Experienced the Following Symptoms Due to Circumstances Related to COVID-19

- Social isolation, loneliness 44%
- Increased anxiety 40%
- Struggles with laziness/lack of focus 39%
- Loss of sleep 39%
- Decrease in physical activity 37%
- Unhealthy eating habits 37%
- Generally affected mental health 37%
- Disappointment or sadness 36%
- Issues with school-life balance 36%
- Increased depression 36%
- Increased irritability 36%
- Struggles with time management 35%
- Increased severity of stress 35%
- Increased self-doubt 35%
- Loss of hope/sense of hopelessness 32%

https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/college-mental-health-impacts-from-covid-19/
- Female students are much more likely than male students (60% vs. 45%) to report mental health effects brought about by pandemic-related circumstances.

- Over a quarter (27%) of male students expect that the mental health effects spurred on by COVID-19 circumstances will not extend into the long term, whereas nearly half (48%) of female students believe they will.

- Nearly half of students (48%) believe mental health effects from circumstances related to COVID-19 have directly affected their education.

- According to a recent BestColleges.com study, 46% of college students are struggling with burnout, i.e., feelings of extreme fatigue and apathy that lead to a decline in academic performance.
• 84% of adults report feeling at least one emotion associated with prolonged stress.
  • e.g., anxiety, sadness, anger

• Some subgroups of the population are experiencing disproportionately high levels of stress.
  • e.g., parents with children under 18
  • e.g., people of color
  • e.g., essential workers
  • e.g., Gen Z adults
Many adults are struggling to cope and adopting unhealthy coping behaviors.

For example:

- **Undesired weight changes**
  - 42% have gained weight (avg. = 29 lbs.)
  - 18% have lost weight (avg. = 26 lbs.)

- **Changes to sleep patterns**
  - 2 in 3 Americans (67%) reported increased or decreased sleep since the pandemic started.

- **Greater alcohol consumption**
  - Nearly 1 in 4 adults (23%) are drinking more alcohol to cope with stress during the pandemic.

- **Decreased exercise and activity**
  - 53% of adults have been less physically active than they wanted during the pandemic.
- Stress related to the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color.

- Hispanic adults were most likely to report undesired changes to sleep, physical activity levels and weight since the pandemic began.

- Black Americans were most likely to report feelings of concern about the future. More than half said they do not feel comfortable going back to living life like they used to before the pandemic.

- Nearly 2 in 3 Black (66%) and Hispanic (65%) adults said they could have used more emotional support than they received since the pandemic started, compared with 55% of white and 50% of Asian adults who said the same.
- This new survey finds Gen Z adults (ages 18-23) are also doing worse mentally and physically than other generations.

- Gen Z adults (46%) were the most likely generation to say that their mental health has worsened compared with before the pandemic, followed by Xers (33%), Millennials (31%), Boomers (28%) and older adults (9%).

- Another challenge for Gen Z adults is feeling isolated.

- Around half of U.S. adults (47%) agreed they have felt very lonely during the coronavirus pandemic, but Gen Z adults (65%) and Millennials (62%) were more likely than their older counterparts to report this (Xers: 41%, Boomers: 33%, older adults: 20%).

- Younger generations also were more likely to say they could have used more emotional support than they received since the pandemic started, with Gen Z adults nearly four times as likely as older adults to report this (Gen Z adults: 79%, Millennials: 75%, Xers: 54%, Boomers: 40%, older adults: 21%).

- When it comes to receiving treatment, Millennials were most likely to have received treatment from a mental health professional (32%) or to have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder (23%) since the start of the pandemic.
The reported physical impacts on younger adults are significant, with nearly 3 in 4 Gen Z adults (74%) and a similar proportion of Millennials (70%) reporting unwanted weight changes since the pandemic started, compared with 58% of Xers, 52% of Boomers and 30% of older adults.

More specifically, 52% of Gen Z adults reported gaining more weight than they wanted to, as did 48% of Millennials.

Among those who gained more weight than desired, Millennials on average reported the highest amount of weight gained (average of 41 pounds, median of 20 pounds), followed by Gen Z adults (average of 28 pounds, median of 15 pounds), Xers (average of 21 pounds, median of 15 pounds) and Boomers (average of 16 pounds, median of 10 pounds).
SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 6 IN 10 U.S. ADULTS (61%) REPORT UNDESIRED WEIGHT CHANGE SINCE START OF PANDEMIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% WHO REPORT UNDESIRED WEIGHT LOSS</th>
<th>AVERAGE WEIGHT LOSS</th>
<th>AVERAGE WEIGHT GAIN</th>
<th>% WHO REPORT UNDESIRED WEIGHT GAIN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>26 lbs</td>
<td><strong>U.S. ADULTS</strong></td>
<td>29 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25 lbs</td>
<td><strong>MEN</strong></td>
<td>37 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27 lbs</td>
<td><strong>WOMEN</strong></td>
<td>22 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22 lbs</td>
<td><strong>GEN Z ADULTS</strong></td>
<td>28 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26 lbs</td>
<td><strong>MILLENNIALS</strong></td>
<td>41 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>24 lbs</td>
<td><strong>XERS</strong></td>
<td>21 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26 lbs</td>
<td><strong>BOOMERS</strong></td>
<td>16 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>26 lbs</td>
<td><strong>OLDER ADULTS</strong></td>
<td>15 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22 lbs</td>
<td><strong>WHITE ADULTS</strong></td>
<td>30 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27 lbs</td>
<td><strong>HISPANIC ADULTS</strong></td>
<td>28 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>38 lbs</td>
<td><strong>BLACK ADULTS</strong></td>
<td>35 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>16%</td>
<td>38 lbs</td>
<td><strong>ASIAN ADULTS</strong></td>
<td>12 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29 lbs</td>
<td><strong>PARENTS</strong></td>
<td>36 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>30 lbs</td>
<td><strong>ESSENTIAL WORKERS</strong></td>
<td>38 lbs</td>
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</table>

1 Data among adults ages 21+
2 AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION STRESS IN AMERICA™ ONE YEAR LATER, A NEW WAVE OF PANDEMIC HEALTH CONCERNS

*Insufficient sample size for reporting
Americans’ Physical Health Has Taken a Back Seat Since Start of Pandemic

47% delayed or canceled health care services.

53% have been less physically active than they wanted.

(Stress in America™)
Parents’ Mental, Physical Health Impacted Since Start of Pandemic

- 75% say they could have used more emotional support than they received.
- 32% received treatment from a mental health professional.
- 24% were diagnosed with a mental health disorder since the pandemic started.

Mothers are more likely than fathers to say their mental health has worsened compared with before the pandemic (39% vs. 25%), but fathers are more likely to report behavioral and physical changes:

- % REPORT SLEEPING MORE OR LESS THAN THEY WANTED: 77% (Mothers), 87% (Fathers)
- % REPORT UNWANTED WEIGHT CHANGES: 66% (Mothers), 80% (Fathers)
- % REPORT DRINKING MORE ALCOHOL TO COPE WITH STRESS: 29% (Mothers), 48% (Fathers)
1 in 4 Essential Workers (25%) Diagnosed With Mental Health Disorder Since Start of Pandemic

- 75% say they could have used more emotional support than they received.
- 34% received treatment from a mental health professional.
Black Adults Most Likely to Report Concerns About the Future

I do not feel comfortable going back to living life liked I used to before the pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% STRONGLY/SOMEWHA T AGREE</th>
<th>54% Black</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48% Hispanic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45% Asian</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>44% White</td>
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</table>

I feel uneasy about adjusting to in-person interaction once the pandemic ends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% STRONGLY/SOMETHAT AGREE</th>
<th>57% Black</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50% Hispanic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51% Asian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47% White</td>
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COVID-19 Impact on Mental Health

Figure 7
Share of Adults Reporting Symptoms of Anxiety and/or Depressive Disorder During the COVID-19 Pandemic, by Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>48.9%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Black</td>
<td>48.0%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>46.3%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Adults</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Asian</td>
<td>33.1%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES: *Indicates a statistically significant difference relative to Non-Hispanic White adults at the p<0.05 level. These adults (ages 18+) report symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder generally occurring more than half the days or nearly every day. “Other Non-Hispanic” includes people of other races and multiple races. Data shown are for December 9 – 21, 2020.
HEALTHY COPING

- Aerobic exercise
- Practice quieting exercises
  - Low & slow breathing
  - Mindfulness, Guided Imagery, Progressive Muscle Relaxation
  - Yoga, Thai Chi
  - Expressive writing
  - Music & art
- Improve sleep quality & quantity
- Improve nutrition
  - Reduce stress related eating
- Reduce ETOH & other drugs
HEALTHY COPING

• Expectations
• Perfectionism
• Focus >
  • Prioritize
  • Reduce multi-tasking
• Grace for self & others
• Establish work & home boundaries
• Be informed & limit news

• Increase & deepen connection
• Ask for help early & often
• Maintain pleasurable activities
• Focus on gratitude
• Meaning in life
• Think out of the box
How Young Adults Can Build Resilience

• Create meaningful opportunities for connections with family, culture and community. Although many young adults have left home physically, these connections remain fundamental to youth well-being.

• Create traditions that celebrate important milestones like graduation and weddings in new ways and are still meaningful.

• Get regular sleep. Pick a bedtime and try to stick with it
  • (avoid the temptation to stay up late because you don’t have to commute to work or school in the morning).

• Move a little bit more. Attach activity goals to a specific time of day (e.g., pledge to walk 500 steps before breakfast). Small activities throughout the day add up—and if you miss one, you’ve got another goal later in the day you can still try to meet.
Resources

APA Hub for Resources on Stress, Anxiety and Grief
https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/index#stress

COVID-19 Stress Management Tools (action-oriented exercises and the science behind them)
https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/stress-management-tools

Stress in America Press Room

COVID-19 and Suicide
https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/06/covid-suicide

The Effects of Stress on the Body
https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/body

Stress Management for Leaders

APA/Alan Alda Communication Training: Make Your Science Make Sense
https://pages.apa.org/alan-alda-training/

Know the Signs of Distress from COVID
https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/psychological-impact

Building Your Resilience
https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience

APA’s Speaking of Psychology podcast: How We’re Coping One Year into the Pandemic
https://www.apa.org/research/action/speaking-of-psychology/pandemic-year-anniversary

Life after COVID-19: Making Space for Growth
https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/06/covid-life-after
THANK YOU!!!