

Center for Economic and Social Research

Understanding America Study Survey Topline – **National Results**

Methodology and Sample

Sample information

A total of 7,145 adult U.S. residents participated in the survey from March 10 to March 31, 2020. Participants are members of the Center for Economic and Social Research’s Understanding America Study (UAS) probability-based internet panel. The weighted sample comprises 6,933 participants recruited via UAS address-based sample waves. The remaining 212 participants, recruited from a listed sample for a specific project, were excluded from the weighted data file associated with this release. In that sample, 48 respondents started but did not complete the survey.

The overall margin of sampling error is +/-2 percentage points. Factors other than sampling error may affect results of any survey, including question wording, question order, mode, sample type, population coverage, and impact of current events. Sampling error calculations are at the 98% confidence level.

This document provides an overview of survey-specific methods and information. For panel methods, including weighting details; panel sampling procedures; recruitment protocols, survey and recruitment response rates; panel attrition rates; panel management protocols; and microdata files (including nonresponse and paradata), please visit the Understanding America Study website at <https://UASdata.usc.edu>.

Survey and Data

The full survey wording and question text are provided in this release. For most questions, we rotated the order of response options, and/or questions to average out order effects. Respondents participated via computer, mobile device or tablet, at any time of day or night during the field period. The survey was conducted in the respondents’ choice of English or Spanish.

Topline reports, codebook, and microdata associated with this release are available to registered UAS users at <https://uasdata.usc.edu/page/COVID-19+Corona+Virus>.

Survey Weights and Participation Rate

A total of 8,815 panel members were invited to participate, including 8,502 panel members who were eligible to be included in the weighted sample. The participation rate for the weighted sample is 82%. We calculated weights in two stages: (1) base weights account for the probabilities of selection in our sampling procedures, and (2) post-stratification weights align survey distributions to CPS benchmarks. Weighting benchmarks were derived from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement¹.

Panel Information

The UAS is an ongoing national research panel that started in 2014. We recruit panel members in waves from Marketing Systems Group frames of all household addresses in the United States. To ensure full coverage of the U.S. population, we provide internet-connected tablets to households that were not already online. Our panel includes U.S. residents who have cell phones, landlines, or no phone at all. It also includes a small number of respondents recruited from a listed sample, these participants are not included in weighted samples. Panel members are compensated for their participation.

¹ Due to the panel’s sample design, unweighted subgroup sizes may not be representative of the weighted proportion in variable estimates. For more information view the demographic summary table below or visit <https://UASData.USC.edu> for information on sample design and weighting

About the Center for Economic and Social Research

The Center for Economic and Social Research (CESR), part of the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, conducts basic and applied research in economics, psychology, demography, education, and sociology. The center's name signifies the breadth of the research, which encompasses numerous disciplines, topics and methodologies. The Center's multi-disciplinary philosophy fosters a productive and innovative research environment focused on understanding and informing important societal issues.

Survey Team

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For questions about this survey, please contact uas-l@usc.edu

The USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research is a proud member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research's [Transparency Initiative](#). The survey was funded by the USC Dornsife College of Arts, Letters and Sciences.

Topline Report – United States

This report provides the sample characteristics for the national sample as well as brief summaries of responses to the main questions asked in the survey. We list the major questions in the survey and show the weighted responses in the form of tables and graphs.

National Sample Characteristics

The table below summarizes select characteristics of the sample, with and without survey weights.

	Unweighted	Weighted
Male	41%	48%
Age (18-34)	21%	24%
Age (35-54)	37%	37%
Age (55-64)	20%	18%
Age (65+)	22%	20%
Low education (GED)	22%	38%
Medium education (Some College)	37%	28%
High education (College and above)	41%	34%
HH income (\$0-24,999)	20%	23%
HH income (\$25,000-49,999)	21%	23%
HH income (\$50,000-74,999)	20%	19%
HH income (\$75,000 and above)	39%	35%
Non-Hispanic White	65%	63%
Non-Hispanic Black	8%	12%
Non-Hispanic Asian	5%	5%
Non-Hispanic Other	5%	3%
Hispanic/Latino	17%	17%

Awareness and Spread of the Coronavirus

U.S. residents were very aware of the coronavirus during the survey period (March 10-31). Almost all survey participants had heard of it, but almost none reported having been diagnosed.

cr001: Have you heard of the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

	<u>percent</u>
Yes	98.5
No	1.0
Unsure	0.6

cr002: Has a doctor or another healthcare professional diagnosed you with the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

	<u>percent</u>
Yes	0.1
No	99.6
Unsure	0.3

Quarantine and Self-Evaluation on Possible Infection

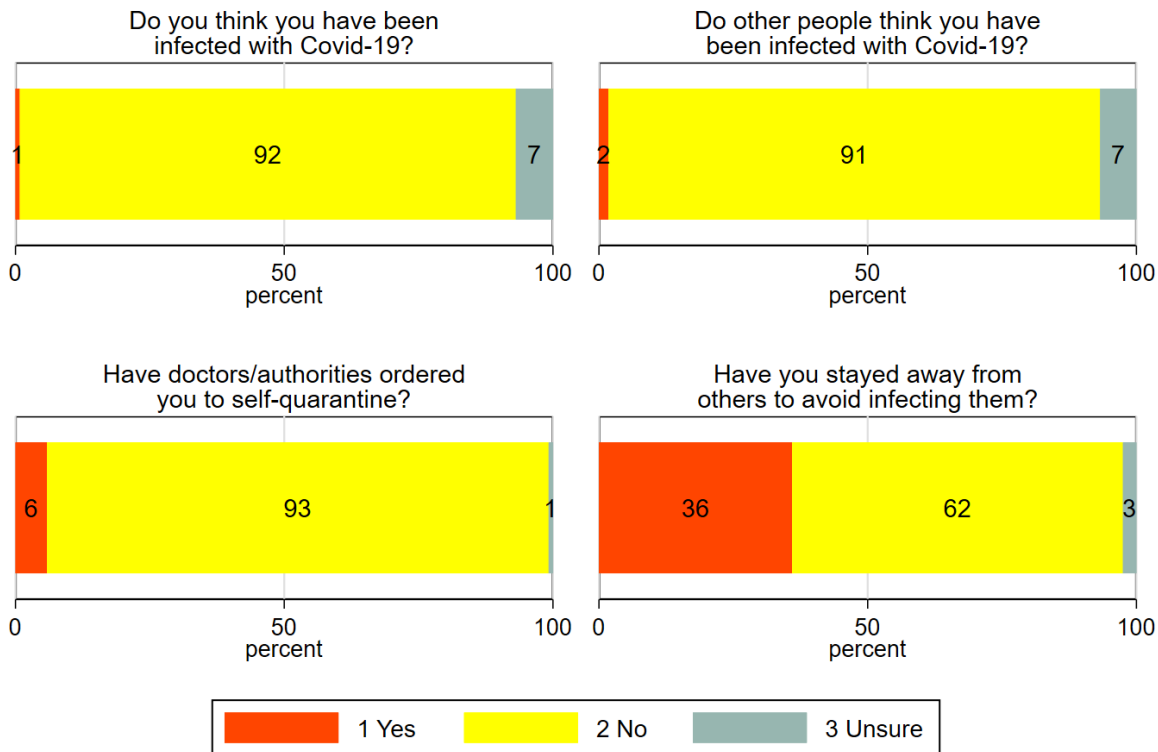
During the survey period (March 10-31), very few U.S. residents believed they had been infected. About 7% were unsure if they had been infected. A small number have been told by doctors or other authorities to avoid other people. About one in three (36%) have taken steps to self-quarantine or stay away from other people to avoid infecting them.

cr019: Do you think you've been infected with the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

cr020: Do other people think you might have been infected with the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

cr021: Have doctors or other authorities ordered you to stay away from other people to avoid infecting them?

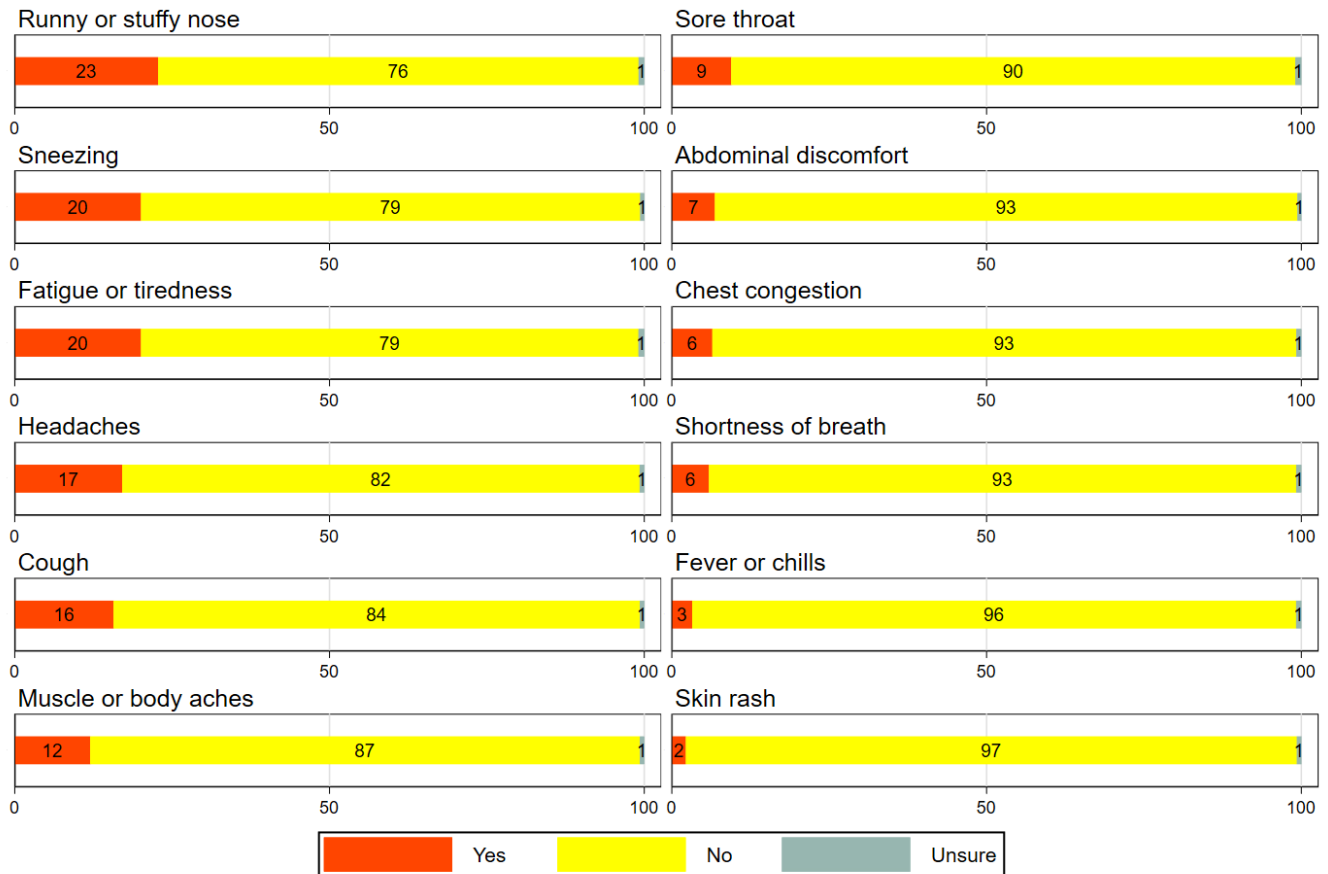
cr022: Have you taken steps to stay away from other people to avoid infecting them?



Symptoms of Potential Ill Health

A low to moderate percentage of U.S. residents reported experiencing any symptoms of ill health during the survey period. Roughly one in five reported having a runny or stuffy nose and/or sneezing, and roughly one in five reported fatigue or tiredness. A low percentage of respondents reported symptoms suggestive of the coronavirus: 3% reported having fever or chills, 4% reported shortness of breath, and 16% reported a cough.

cr002c: Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 7 days?



Social Circle

The median number of family and close friends reported by U.S. residents is 16; the mean is 39. Six percent of respondents reported that they think one or more of their close friends or family members have been infected with the coronavirus.

cr003: We would like to ask about your family, as well as your close friends. How many family or close friends do you have? Only include people who are still alive, regardless of where they live.

Mean: 39.3

Median: 16

cr004: Of these [*# of close friends*] people, how many do you think have been infected with the coronavirus?

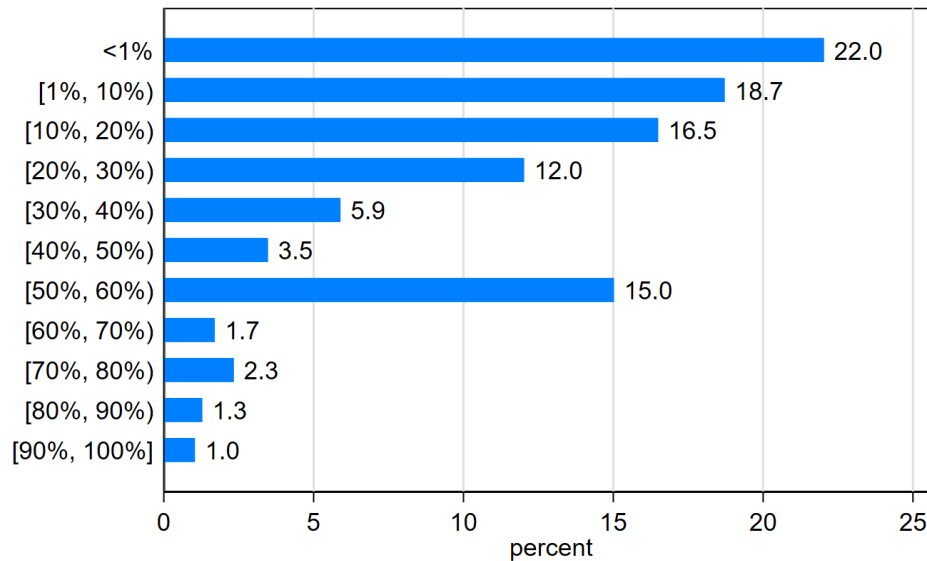
	percentage
Zero friends or family infected	94.5
One friend or family infected	2.5
Two or more friends or family infected	3

Chance of getting, or dying from, the coronavirus

During the survey period (March 10-31), just above one in five respondents (22%) estimated their chance of being infected by the coronavirus at or near zero. The mean percentage likelihood of getting the virus was 21 and the median was 10.

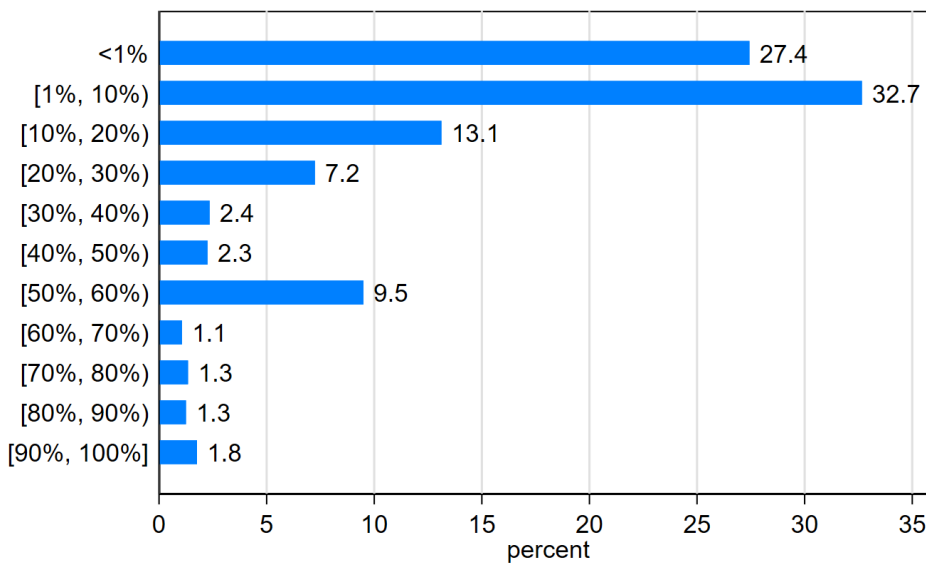
About one in four (27%) respondents estimated that they had a zero or near zero percent chance of dying from the virus if they do get it. Mean percent likelihood of dying from the virus was 15 and the median was 5.

cr005: On a scale of 0 to 100 percent, what is the chance that you will get the coronavirus in the next three months?



Note: [x,y) indicates that x included in the interval, while y is excluded.

cr006: If you do get the coronavirus, what is the percent chance you will die from it?

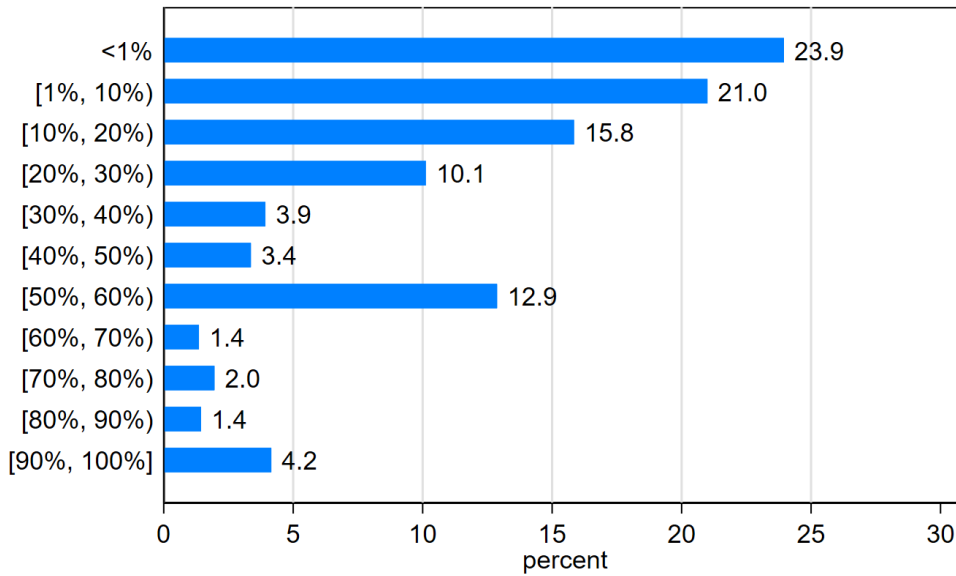


Note: [x,y) indicates that x included in the interval, while y is excluded.

Chance of Being Quarantined

Nearly one in four (24%) respondents put the chance of their being quarantined at or near zero. Nearly half said the chance was below 10%. The mean percentage likelihood of being quarantined was 22 and the median was 10.

cr007: What is the percent chance that you will be quarantined within the next three months?



Note: [x,y) indicates that x included in the interval, while y is excluded.

Impact of the Coronavirus on Jobs and Income

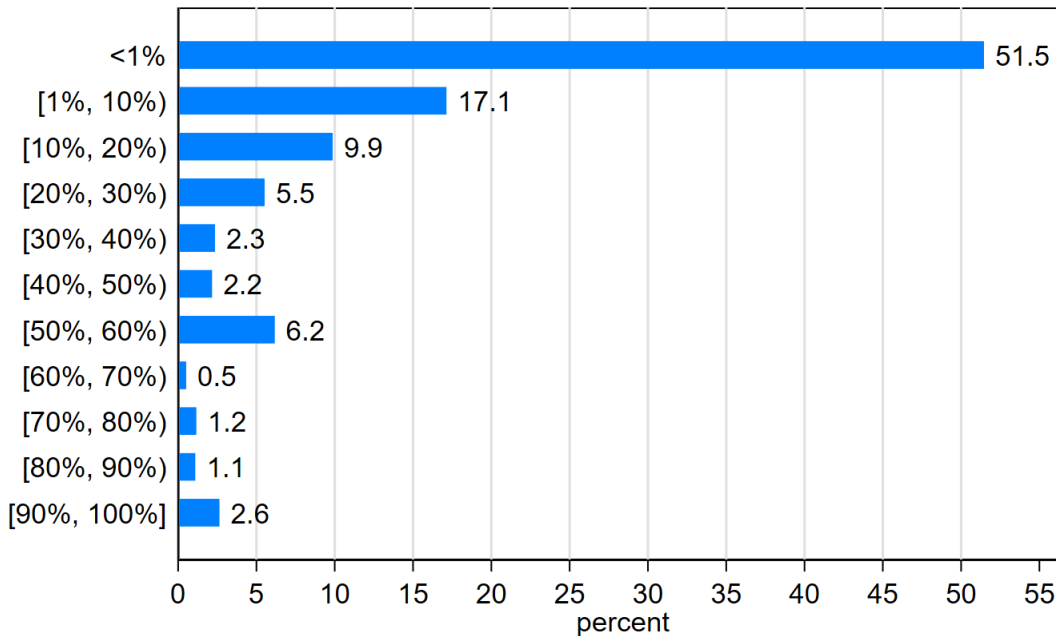
The survey asked U.S. residents if they have the kind of job that allows them to work from home and how likely they were to lose their job because of the coronavirus. Thirty-eight percent of residents with a job said they could work from home, 58% said they could not, and 4% were not sure.

Overall, 52% of respondents rated the likelihood of losing their job in the next three months at or near zero and another 27% rated the percent likelihood between 1 and 20.

Respondents' perceived likelihood of running out of money is similar to their perceived likelihood of losing their job. Nearly the same proportion of respondents - 50% - said they had a zero or near zero chance of running out of money in the next three months as said they were at risk of losing their job.

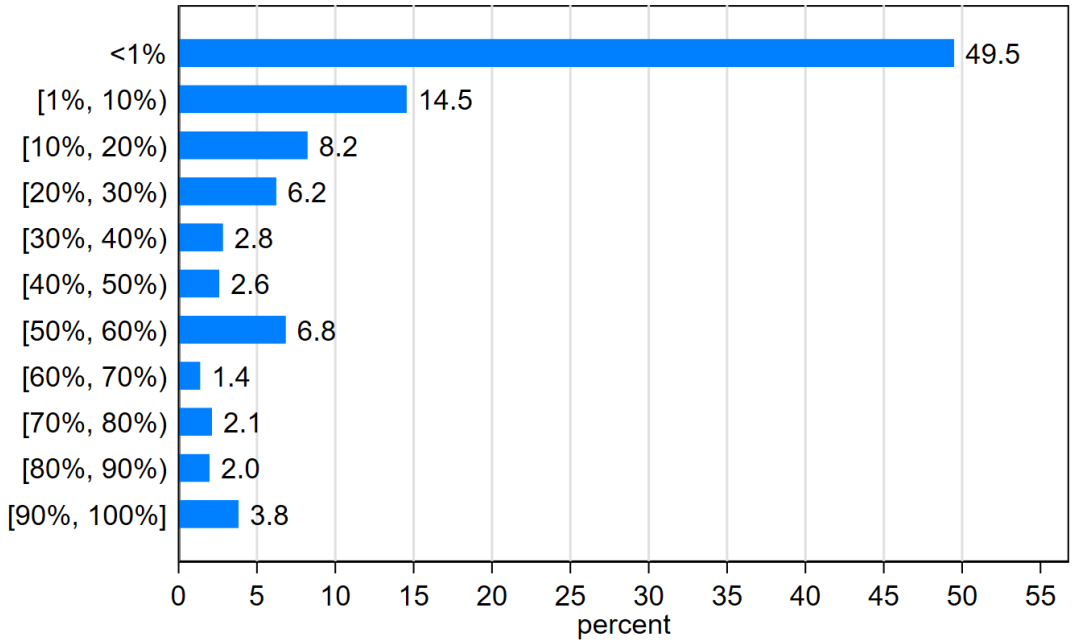
Overall, the median percent likelihood of job loss was 0.3. The median percent likelihood or running out of money was 1. The mean percent likelihood was 13 for job loss and 16 for running out of money. Those who do not have the ability to work from home rated their likelihood of losing their job in the next three months more highly (mean: 16% likelihood) than those who have the opportunity to work from home (mean: 8% likelihood).

cr008a: What is the percent chance that you will lose your job because of the coronavirus within the next three months?



Note: [x,y) indicates that x is included in the interval, while y is excluded.

cr009: What is the percent chance you will run out of money because of the coronavirus in the next three months?



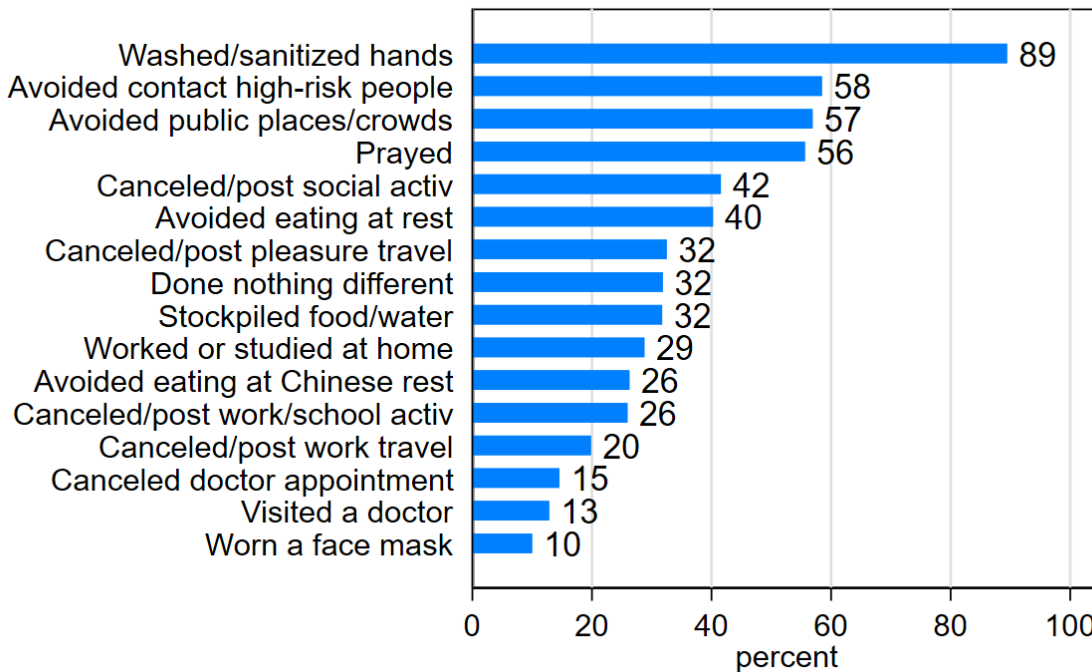
Note: [x,y) indicates that x included in the interval, while y is excluded.

Coronavirus Prevention Behaviors

We asked survey participants what they have been doing to stay safe from the coronavirus, in addition to what they normally do.

About 89% of respondents said they have been washing and sanitizing their hands. About 58% said that they have been avoiding high-risk individuals and/or avoiding public places.

cr010: Which of the following have you done in the last seven days to keep yourself safe from coronavirus in addition to what you normally do?



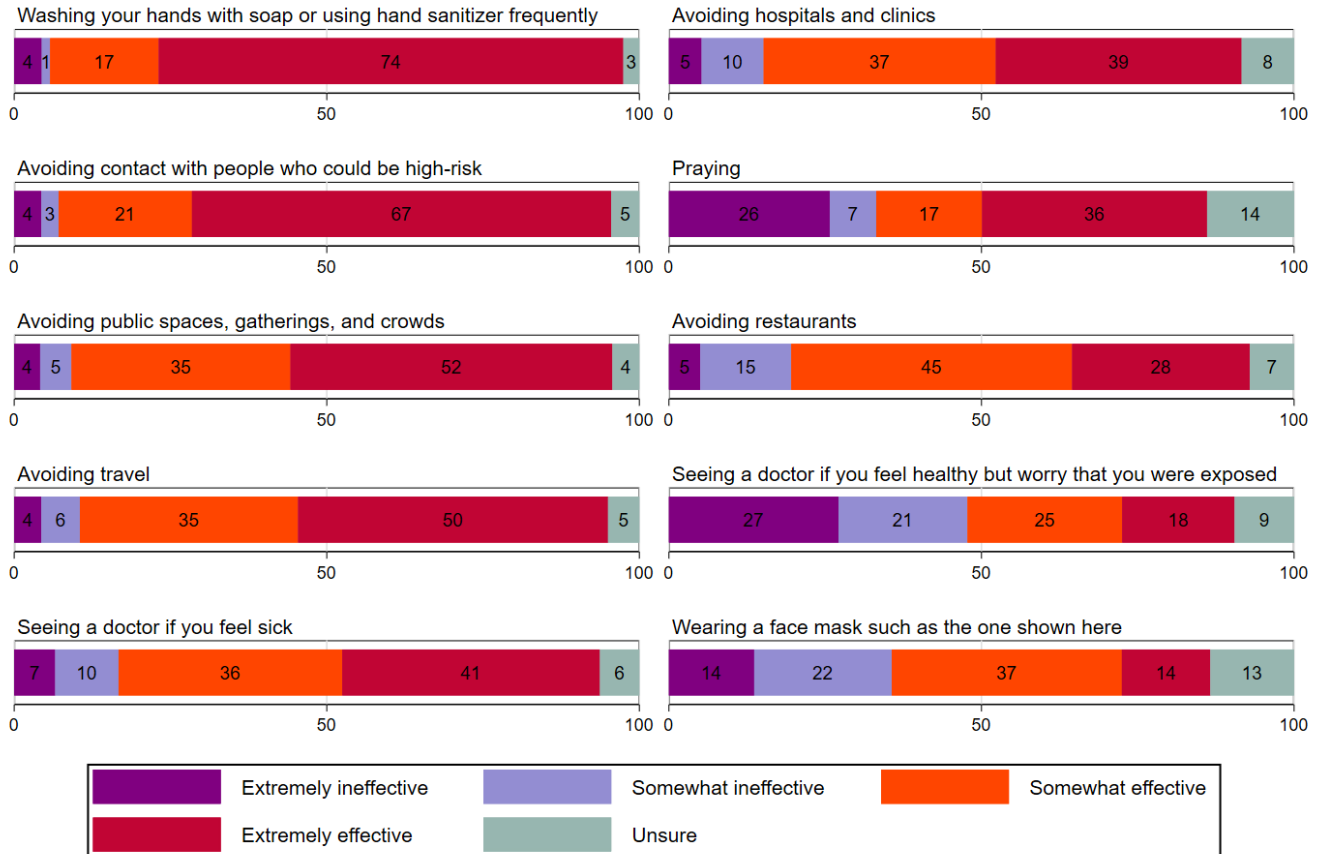
The survey also asked participants to rate the effectiveness of various actions in keeping them safe from the coronavirus. Hand washing or using hand sanitizer was rated by nearly three out of four respondents (74%) as an extremely effective means of keeping safe from infection, and another 17% rated it as somewhat effective.

About two-thirds (67%) said that avoiding contact with high-risk people was extremely effective, along with 21% who said it was somewhat effective. Roughly 86% said that avoiding public places, crowds, and airplanes was extremely or somewhat effective.

Praying was considered to be effective by 53% of participants, including 17% who said it is somewhat effective and 36% who rated it as extremely effective.

Wearing a face mask was rated as effective by 51% and seeing a doctor while healthy was rated as effective by 43%.

cr011: How effective are the following actions for keeping you safe from coronavirus?

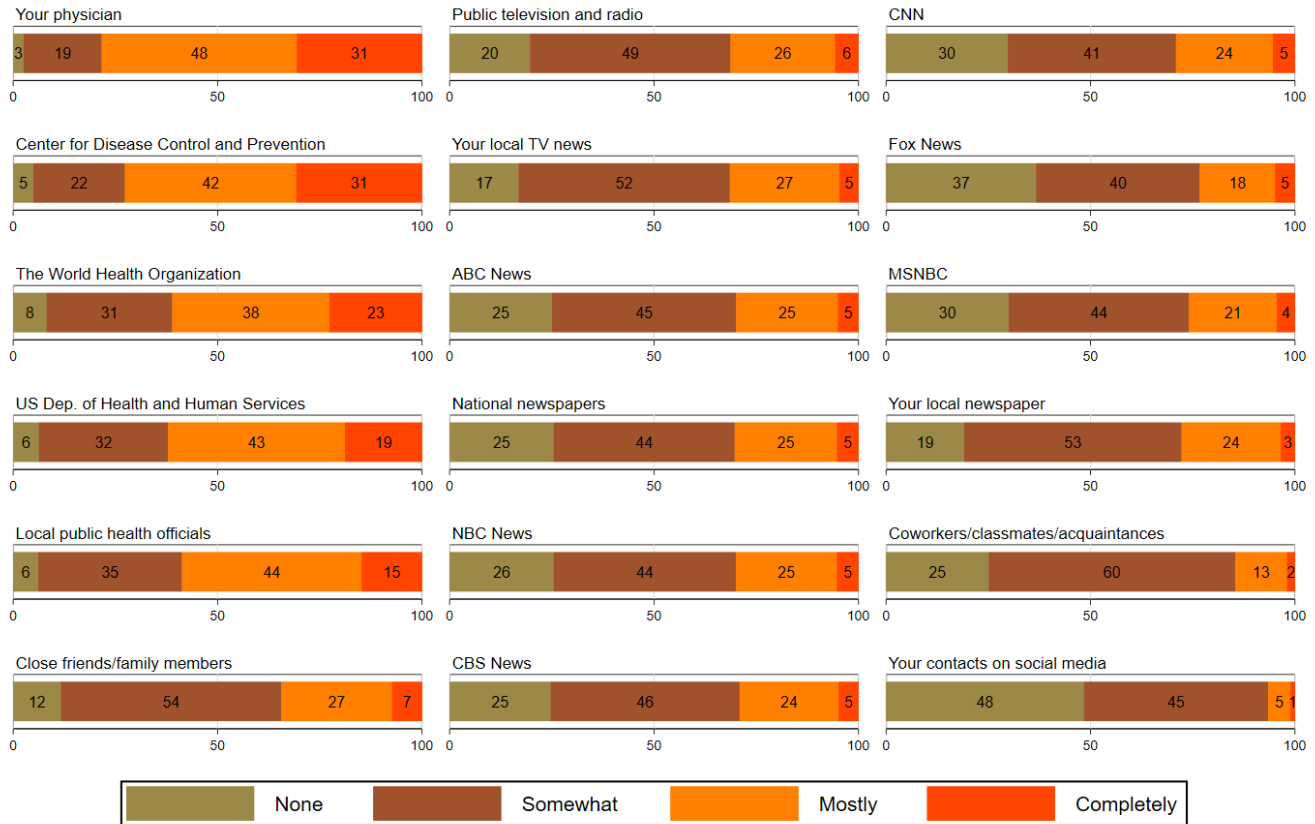


Sources of Information

The survey asked U.S. residents to rate the trustworthiness of different sources of coronavirus information.

The CDC and physicians were rated as completely trustworthy by roughly one-third of respondents, the World Health Organization by 23%, and the HHS and local health officials by 19% and 15% respectively. Least trusted were social media contacts (at 48% no trust), Fox News (at 37% no trust), and MSNBC and CNN (at 30% no trust).

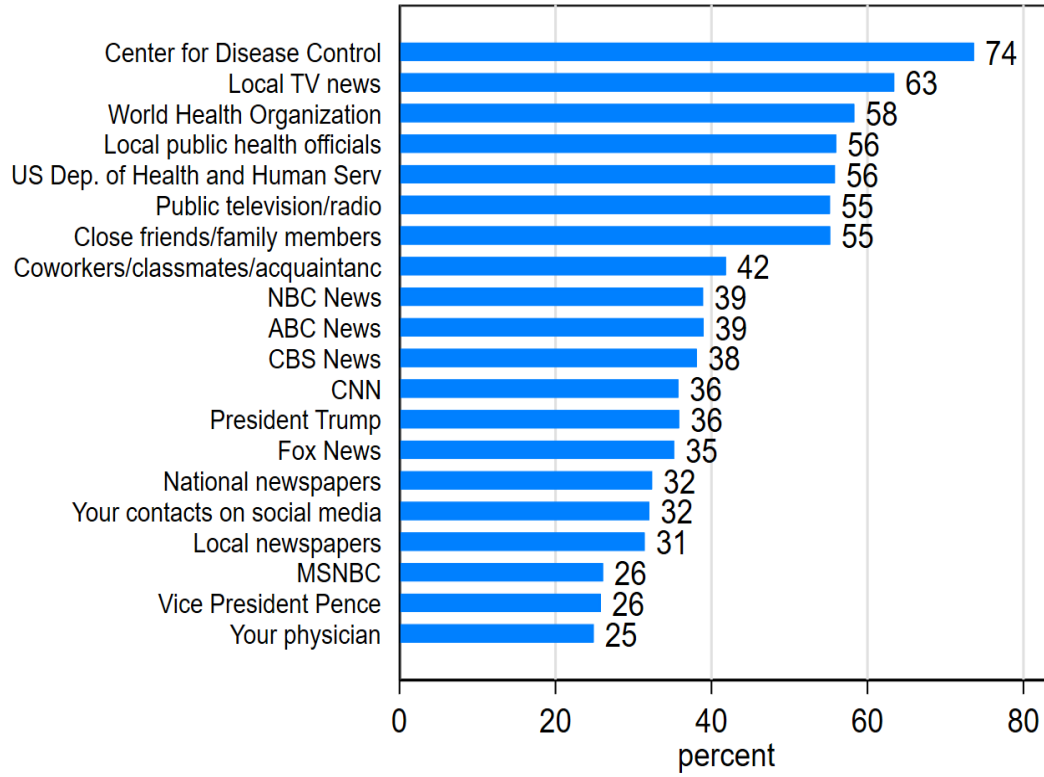
cr012: How much do you trust the following sources of information about the coronavirus (COVID-19)?



In addition to evaluating the trustworthiness of their coronavirus information sources, U.S. residents were also asked which sources of information they had used in the past week.

Results suggest that U.S. residents seem to be relying most heavily on the Centers for Disease Control as a source of information about the coronavirus, followed by local TV news, the World Health Organization, and local public health officials. Roughly 55% relied on close friends and family members while 38-42% relied on network news stations, coworkers, classmates, or CNN. About 32% have used national newspapers, and 35% have used Fox news.

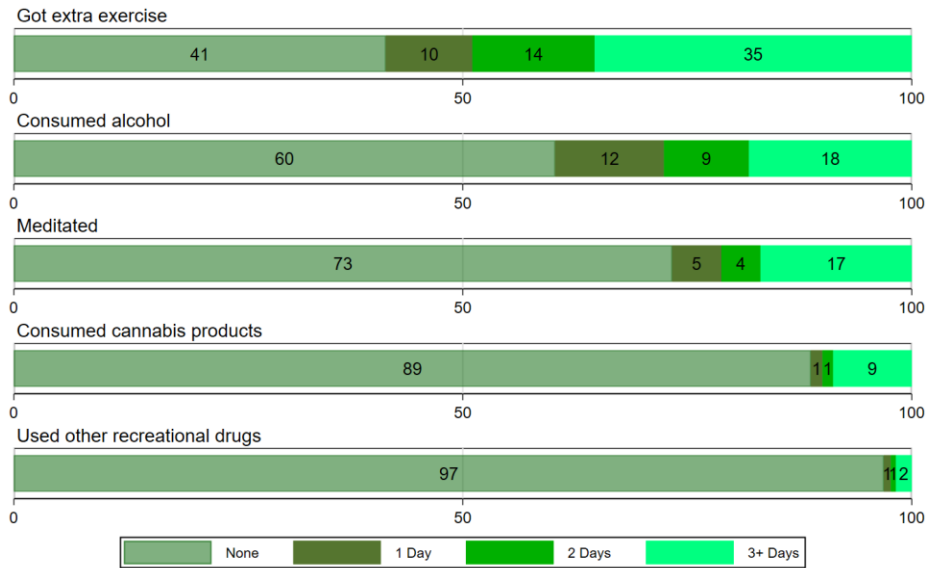
cr013: Which of the following information sources have you used to learn about the coronavirus in the past 7 days?



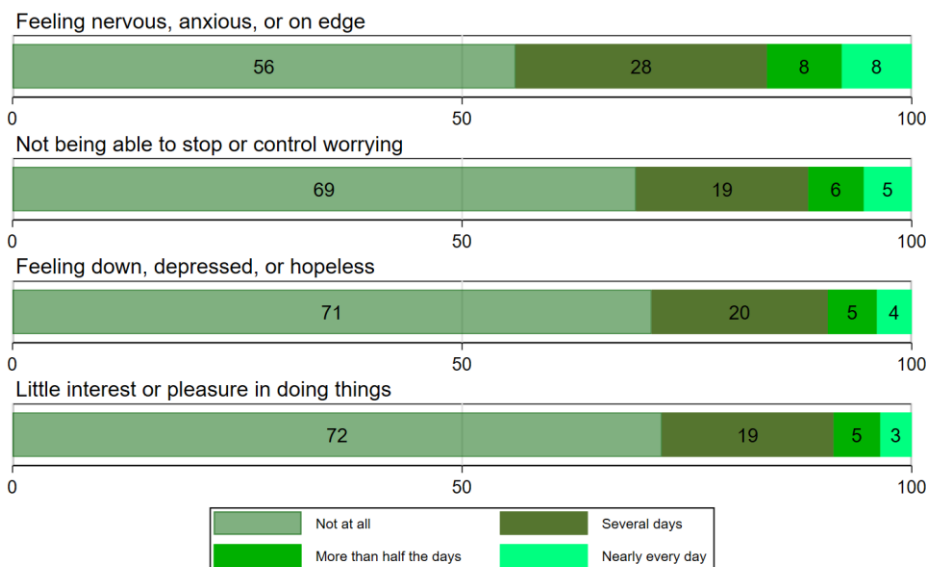
Mental Health and Behavior

The survey included a mental health battery, as well as questions about health-related behaviors, to allow us to track how mental health and health-related behaviors may change over time. At this point, the majority of respondents reported no consumption of alcohol or drugs over the past seven days. The majority of respondents also reported no days of feeling anxious, worried, depressed, or having little interest in doing things. About 8-16% reported feelings of anxiety, worry, or depression for more than half of a two-week period.

cr015: Out of the past 7 days, what is your best estimate of the number of days that you did each of the following activities?



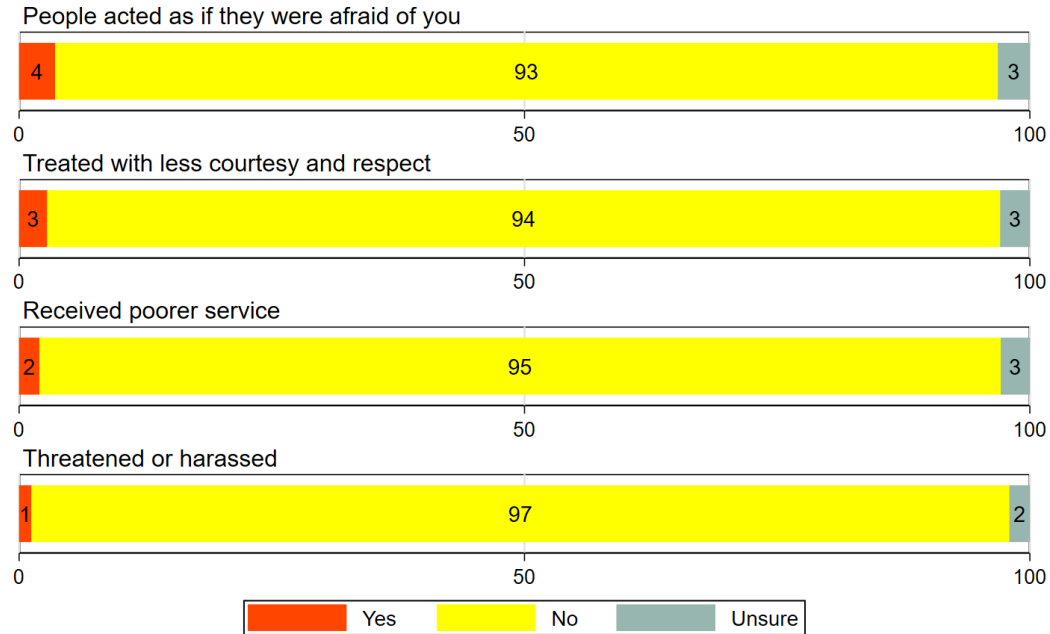
cr014: Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?



Perceived Treatment and Discrimination

The percentage of U.S. residents who have experienced poor treatment as a result of the coronavirus is limited at this point. While the numbers are small, a higher percentage of Asian respondents report poor treatment relative to other racial and ethnic groups.

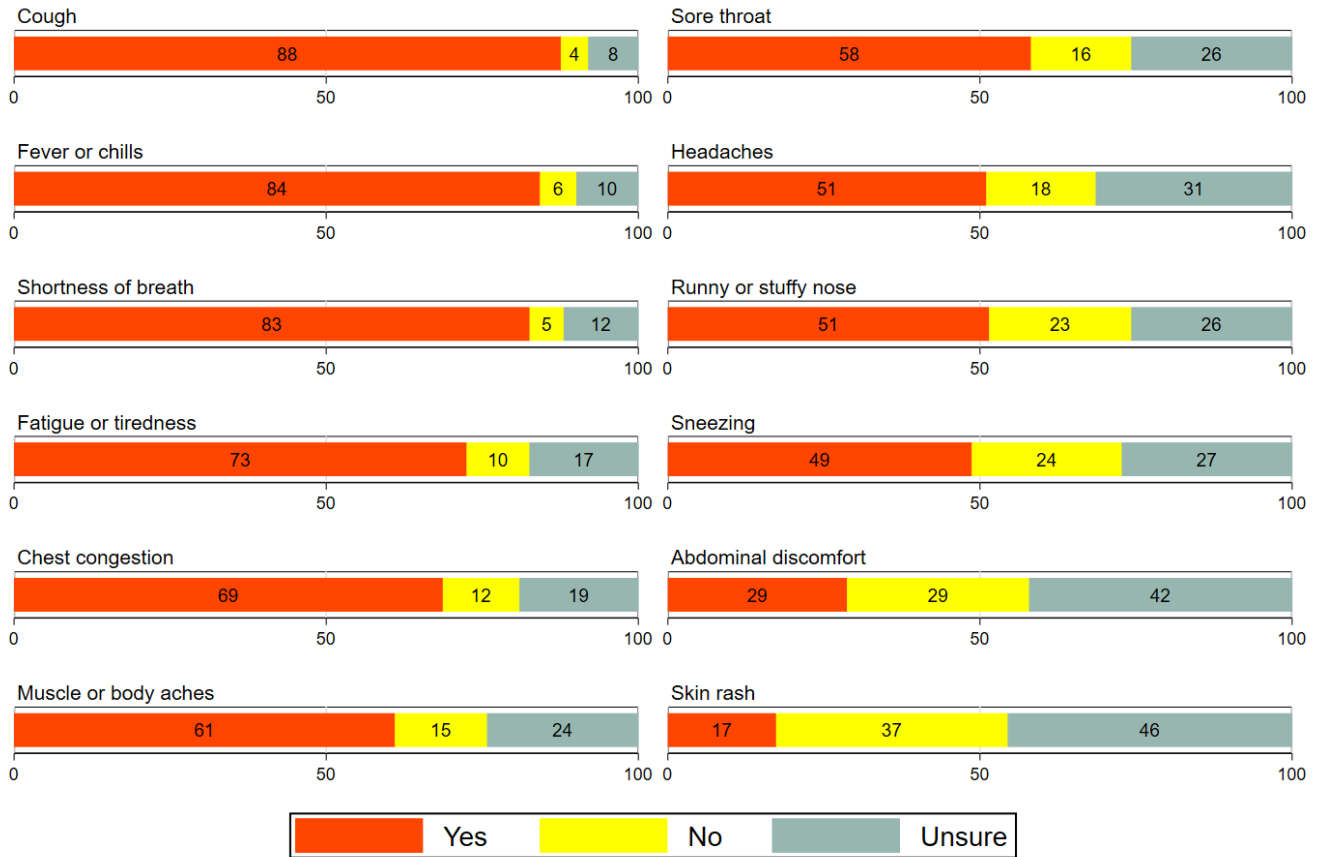
cr016: Have any of the following things happened to you due to people thinking you might have the coronavirus?



Knowledge of Symptoms of Coronavirus

It appears that most U.S. residents have a good understanding of the symptoms typically associated with the coronavirus. Fever/chills, cough, and shortness of breath are recognized as symptoms by the majority of respondents, followed by fatigue or tiredness and chest congestion. There is more uncertainty about symptoms such as skin rash and abdominal discomfort.

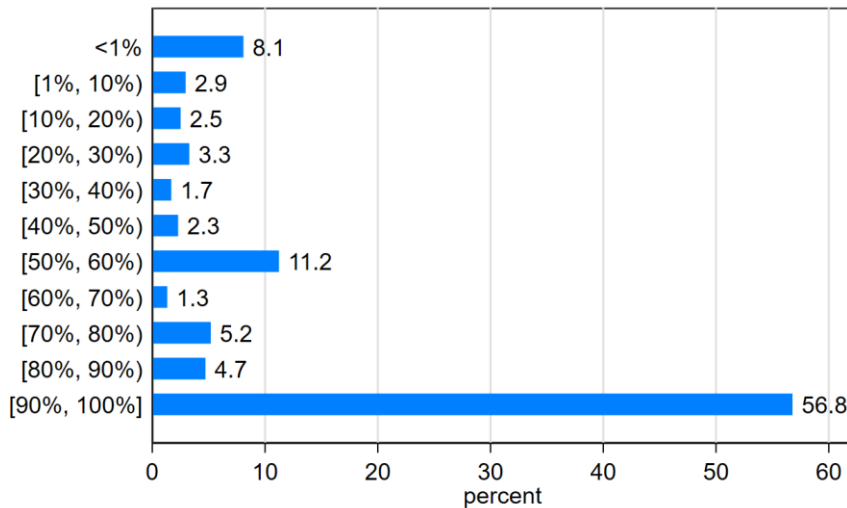
cr018: Which of the following are the main symptoms people infected with the coronavirus (COVID-19) experience?



Attitude Toward Vaccination

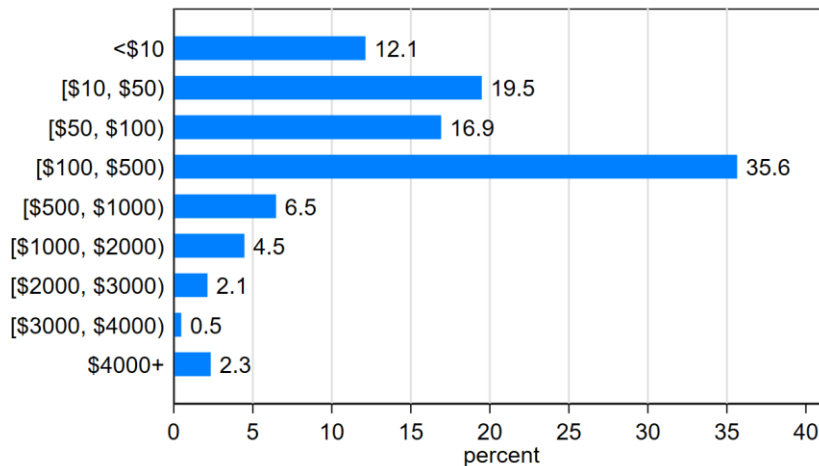
The survey also asked U.S. residents about their willingness to get vaccinated and how much they might be willing to pay if a vaccine were available. If a vaccine were available, about six out of every 10 (57%) U.S. residents said they would be 90-100% likely to use it. The vast majority of residents (84%) were unwilling or unable to pay more than \$500 for a new and effective vaccine. A small minority (about 4%) indicated that they would be willing to pay \$4000 or more. The median reported amount was \$100 and the mean reported amount was \$380.

cr0024: Suppose that a 100% safe and effective coronavirus vaccine was available today. How likely are you to get yourself vaccinated?



Note: [x,y) indicates that x included in the interval, while y is excluded.

cr0023: Suppose that a 100% safe and effective coronavirus vaccine is developed today but insurance does not cover it. How much would you be willing to pay to get yourself vaccinated?



Note: [x,y) indicates that x included in the interval, while y is excluded.