



American Experiences Survey:

A Nationally Representative Multi-Mode Survey

October 2020 Omnibus Results – Pandemic Weight Change Items

Overview of Methodology

Each month, Consumer Reports fields the American Experiences Survey (AES) to track consumer attitudes and behaviors over time. October results are based on interviews conducted from October 8-26, 2020. This document focuses on the section of the omnibus survey related to pandemic weight changes, eating, and physical activity habits.

The survey was administered by NORC at the University of Chicago through its AmeriSpeak® Panel to a nationally representative sample. Interviews were conducted in English and in Spanish, and were administered both online and by phone. In total NORC collected 2,670 interviews, 2,492 by web mode and 178 by phone mode. Final data are weighted by age, gender, race/Hispanic ethnicity, housing tenure, telephone status, education, and Census Division to be proportionally representative of the US adult population.

The margin of error for results based on the total sample is +/-2.63 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Smaller subgroups will have larger error margins, and only those subgroups for which there are at least 100 unweighted cases are included.

TOPLINE RESULTS

The questions presented below were shown to respondents in this order unless otherwise noted. Where appropriate, question verbiage, response answer choices, or direction of scales were randomized or rotated and those instances are noted below.

Note that the October omnibus contained three blocks of questions (items on COVID, pandemic weight changes, and medical test results and race adjustments) and respondents saw blocks in that order.

Prepared by CR Survey Research Department, November 2020

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INFO2. [INTRO TEXT SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS.]

Now, we are interested if you have experienced weight loss or weight gain during the pandemic. We recognize this can be a sensitive topic for people, but please answer as honestly as possible.

WEIGHTCHANGE. [SCALE DIRECTION ROTATED. VERBIAGE IN QUESTION STEM ('INCREASED'/'DECREASED') ROTATED TO MATCH SCALE.]

Thinking about your weight today, would you say it has increased, stayed about the same, or decreased compared to before the COVID-19 outbreak?	
	Total
	%
Increased	32
Stayed about the same	53
Decreased	15
Base: All respondents	2,669

WEIGHSELF.

Do you weigh yourself on a scale at least once a month?	
	Total
	%
Yes	65
No	35
Base: All respondents	2,666

WEIGHTCHANGECATS. [SHOW IF WEIGHSELF = YES AND WEIGHTCHANGE = 'INCREASED' OR 'DECREASED'. 'GAINED' OR 'LOST' WAS PIPED INTO QUESTION STEM BASED ON RESPONSE TO WEIGHTCHANGE.]

Compared to before the COVID-19 outbreak, how much weight have you gained / lost?		
	Among those who gained weight	Among those who lost weight
	%	%
0 to 2 pounds	3	2
3 to 5 pounds	20	15
6 to 10 pounds	35	33
11 to 15 pounds	20	19
16 to 20 pounds	12	14
More than 20 pounds	9	16
Base: Respondents who weigh themselves regularly who say they either gained or lost weight since before the pandemic	621	301

Note: Respondents in the 'gained weight' column saw the question worded as "how much weight have you gained?" and respondents in the 'lost weight' column saw the question worded as "how much weight have you lost?"

INFO3. [INTRO TEXT SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS.]

We'd like to ask you a few questions about your eating and physical activity over the course of the pandemic. We understand that you may have been doing things differently several months ago, in the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak. We'll get to that next. However, for the next few questions, please tell us about your current habits. That is, your habits over the past month.

EATHEALTHY. [SCALE DIRECTION ROTATED. VERBIAGE IN QUESTION STEM ('HEALTHIER'/'LESS HEALTHY') ROTATED TO MATCH SCALE.]

During the <u>past month</u> , would you say you are eating healthier, about the same, or less healthy than a year ago?	
	Total
	%
Healthier	22
About the same	60
Less healthy	18
Base: All respondents	2,661

ACTIVITYLEVEL. [SCALE DIRECTION ROTATED. VERBIAGE IN QUESTION STEM ('MORE'/'LESS') ROTATED TO MATCH SCALE.]

During the past month, would you say you spend more, about the same, or less time being physically active or exercising than a year ago?

	Total
	%
More	17
About the same	50
Less	33
Base: All respondents	2,664

INFO4. [INTRO TEXT SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS.]

Now please think back to your habits starting in April, at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, through today.

EATHEALTHYCONSISTENT. [PRESENTED TO RESPONDENTS IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING THREE WAYS, BASED ON THEIR RESPONSE TO EATHEALTHY. ROTATE 'CONSISTENTLY' ITEM WITH 'HEALTHY' AND 'LESS HEALTHY' ITEMS.]

<p>You mentioned that you currently eat healthier than you did before the pandemic. Which of the following <u>best</u> describes your eating habits throughout the pandemic?</p>	
	Among those who currently eat healthier
	%
I've consistently eaten healthier than before the outbreak	32
I'm eating healthier now than I was earlier in the pandemic	63
I'm eating less healthy now than I was earlier in the pandemic	5
Base: Respondents who currently eat healthier than they did a year ago	542
<p>You mentioned that you currently eat less healthy than you did before the pandemic. Which of the following <u>best</u> describes your eating habits throughout the pandemic?</p>	
	Among those who currently eat less healthy
	%
I've consistently eaten less healthy than before the outbreak	30
I'm eating healthier now than I was earlier in the pandemic	16
I'm eating less healthy now than I was earlier in the pandemic	54
Base: Respondents who currently eat less healthy than they did a year ago	490
<p>You mentioned that you currently eat about the same as you did before the pandemic. Which of the following <u>best</u> describes your eating habits throughout the pandemic?</p>	
	Among those who currently eat about the same
	%
I've consistently eaten about the same as before the outbreak	75
I'm eating healthier now than I was earlier in the pandemic	14
I'm eating less healthy now than I was earlier in the pandemic	11
Base: Respondents who currently eat about the same as they did a year ago	1,619

ACTIVITYLEVELCONSISTENT. [PRESENTED TO RESPONDENTS IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING THREE WAYS, BASED ON THEIR RESPONSE TO ACTIVITYLEVEL. ROTATE 'CONSISTENTLY' ITEM WITH 'MORE TIME' AND 'LESS TIME' ITEMS.]

<p>You mentioned that you currently spend more time being physically active than before the pandemic. Which of the following best describes your physical activity or exercise habits throughout the pandemic?</p>	
	<p>Among those who currently spend more time being physically active / exercising</p>
	<p>%</p>
I've consistently spent more time being physically active than before the outbreak	35
I'm spending more time being physically active now than I was earlier in the pandemic	56
I'm spending less time being physically active now than I was earlier in the pandemic	8
Base: Respondents who currently spend more time being physically active/exercising than they did a year ago	442
<p>You mentioned that you currently spend less time being physically active than before the pandemic. Which of the following best describes your physical activity or exercise habits throughout the pandemic?</p>	
	<p>Among those who currently spend less time being physically active/ exercising</p>
	<p>%</p>
I've consistently spent less time being physically active than before the outbreak	42
I'm spending more time being physically active now than I was earlier in the pandemic	13
I'm spending less time being physically active now than I was earlier in the pandemic	45
Base: Respondents who currently spend less time being physically active/exercising than they did a year ago	914
<p>You mentioned that you currently spend about the same time being physically active as before the pandemic. Which of the following best describes your physical activity or exercise habits throughout the pandemic?</p>	
	<p>Among those who currently spend about the same time being physically active / exercising</p>
	<p>%</p>
I've consistently spent about the same time being physically active as before the outbreak	69
I'm spending more time being physically active now than I was earlier in the pandemic	14
I'm spending less time being physically active now than I was earlier in the pandemic	17
Base: Respondents who currently spend about the same time being physically active/exercising as they did a year ago	1,292

EATHABITS. [SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. RANDOMIZE ITEMS, WITH 'NONE OF THE ABOVE' SHOWN LAST.]

Throughout the pandemic, which, if any, of the following would you say you've done more than you used to before the outbreak?	
Respondents selected ALL that apply.	Total
	%
Snack	42
Eat comfort foods	37
Eat out of stress or emotion	29
Eat dessert	24
Skip meals	23
Drink alcohol	23
Choose foods that help your immune system	22
None of the above	22
Base: All respondents	2,670

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