

High Rates of Depression Among Baby Boomers

US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) reports the prevalence of depression among American adults as 9%, with 3.4% afflicted by major depression. CDC researchers analyzed data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) surveys conducted in 2006 and 2008 among 235,067 adults in 45 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Depression was assessed via telephone interviews using a standardized questionnaire involving diagnostic criteria for depression. The survey data revealed that the prevalence of major depression was highest, standing at 4.6%, among men and women ages 45 to 64 years, and lowest, at 1.6%, among those 65 years and up. Commenting that: "Depressive disorders are more common among persons with chronic conditions (e.g., obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, arthritis, and cancer and among those with unhealthy behaviors (e.g., smoking, physical inactivity, and binge drinking," the CDC researchers urge that states set "health goals for prevention and control, and monitor the effectiveness of relevant programs and policies."

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Current depression among adults – United States, 2006 and 2008." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2010; 59: 1229-1235.