



Mental Health in COVID Times

The isolation and dislocation caused by the spread of COVID-19 has taken a toll on the mental health and happiness of older Americans, according to a survey that highlights the vital insights available through **Foresight 50+**. The pandemic has caused older Americans to lose sleep, eat less healthy food, and worry more about the future. Many say they have sought mental health care.

The Challenge

It was vital for AARP to gauge how the pandemic was affecting the mental health of older Americans, so AARP commissioned the Foresight 50+ Omnibus survey for this important work.

Omnibus uses the Foresight 50+ Panel to survey even hard-to-reach segments of the 50-and-over population and does so with an impressive turnaround time to get results in less than two weeks.

CASE STUDY

The Findings

Seven in 10 Americans aged 50 and over report an increase in sadness or depression because of the pandemic.

Nearly 8 in 10 of 50+ Americans say they have increased concern about the future.

58% of 50+ Americans say they feel more lonely because of the pandemic, and 62% say they are less likely to socialize with friends and family during the pandemic than before it began.

Half of 50+ Americans report experiencing feelings of anxiety in the last two weeks before the survey; 56% say they had difficulties falling asleep or staying asleep.

About 1 in 4 say they are eating comfort foods or “unhealthy foods” like chips and candy more often than before the pandemic.

1 in 10 report seeking mental health care in the last year, and a third of those did so specifically because of the pandemic.

Methodology

This national survey, commissioned by AARP, was conducted online from April 22-26, 2021, with a total sample of 1,016 adults aged 50 and over, using the Foresight 50+ Omnibus. The margin of error is +/- 4.33 percent.

Foresight 50+ by AARP and NORC is the first panel of its kind to be developed with AARP, one of the most trusted names among Americans 50 and over.

27%

of Americans aged 50 and over say they have increased the time they spend praying or meditating.

For More Information

A breakdown of the numbers is presented in [this report](#).

To learn more about Foresight 50+, please contact Martha Cowley at Foresight50-bd@norc.org.

Foresight  50+

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