



# *The State Of Supplements*

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AMERICANS' KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF  
SUPPLEMENTS

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# METHODOLOGY

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The survey was conducted online by The Harris Poll on behalf of Samueli Foundation among 2,053 U.S. adults ages 18+, including 1,531 who are currently taking supplements, surveyed from June 15-17, 2021.

Results are weighted for age within gender, region, race/ethnicity, household income, education, employment, marital status, and size of household where necessary to align them with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting is also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

# QUESTION 1

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How many different types of supplements, if any, do you currently take on a regular basis?

	Gender		Age					
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Unweighted Base	2053	793	1204	668	406	266	236	477
Weighted Base	2053	951	1056	606	343	314	335	454
0	483	226	237	181	83	82	58	79
	24%	24%	22%	30%	24%	26%	17%	17%
Any (Net)	1570	725	819	425	260	232	277	375
	76%	76%	78%	70%	76%	74%	83%	83%
1	386	157	219	120	52	45	70	100
	19%	17%	21%	20%	15%	14%	21%	22%
2	364	180	179	136	69	46	51	62
	18%	19%	17%	22%	20%	15%	15%	14%
3	284	133	144	73	61	42	33	74
	14%	14%	14%	12%	18%	13%	10%	16%
4	190	90	99	38	26	39	47	40
	9%	9%	9%	6%	8%	12%	14%	9%
5	150	67	80	23	24	31	34	38
	7%	7%	8%	4%	7%	10%	10%	8%
More than 5	196	97	97	36	27	30	43	60
	10%	10%	9%	6%	8%	9%	13%	13%

# QUESTION 2

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Are you now taking more, less, or about the same number of supplements since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020?

	Gender		Age					
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Unweighted Base	2053	793	1204	668	406	266	236	477
Weighted Base	2053	951	1056	606	343	314	335	454
More (Net)	596	292	296	224	131	109	76	55
	29%	31%	28%	337%	38%	35%	23%	12%
Much more	203	106	96	75	61	35	19	13
	10%	11%	9%	12%	18%	11%	6%	3%
Somewhat more	393	187	200	149	70	74	58	42
	19%	20%	19%	25%	20%	24%	17%	9%
No change	1334	603	700	327	182	187	244	393
	65%	63%	66%	54%	53%	59%	73%	87%
Less (Net)	124	56	59	56	30	18	15	6
	6%	6%	6%	9%	9%	6%	4%	1%
Somewhat less	74	34	37	39	18	8	8	2
	4%	4%	3%	6%	5%	3%	3%	*
Much less	49	22	23	17	12	10	6	4
	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%

# QUESTION 3

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You indicated that you are a now taking more supplements. Why did you begin taking new or more supplements since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic?



	Gender		Age					
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Unweighted Base	596	233	350	228	154	96	48	70
Weighted Base	596	292	296	224	131*	109*	76*	55*
To enhance my immunity	337	155	177	105	74	70	54	34
	57%	53%	60%	47%	57%	64%	71%	62%
To take my health into my own hands	252	129	121	82	50	63	37	19
	42%	44%	41%	37%	38%	58%	49%	35%
To improve my sleep	242	111	127	86	56	49	38	13
	41%	38%	43%	39%	43%	44%	49%	24%
To fill any nutritional gaps (e.g., supplement iron, protein intake, etc.)	241	114	125	81	66	46	27	21
	40%	39%	42%	36%	50%	42%	36%	38%
To protect myself from COVID-19	213	99	109	70	43	38	36	26
	36%	34%	37%	31%	33%	34%	48%	48%
To improve physical fitness	209	109	97	76	60	44	20	8
	35%	37%	33%	34%	46%	40%	27%	14%
To improve mental health	202	92	105	86	58	30	19	10
	34%	32%	35%	38%	44%	27%	24%	19%
To enhance outward appearance (e.g., strengthen nails, help hair grow, reduce wrinkles, etc.)	183	76	106	76	39	43	17	7
	31%	26%	36%	34%	30%	40%	23%	13%

\* small base

	Gender		Age					
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
To improve my gastrointestinal issues	161	86	72	66	34	32	15	13
	27%	29%	24%	30%	26%	29%	20%	23%
Because my doctor or other health professional suggested I do	150	79	67	52	32	36	15	14
	25%	27%	23%	23%	25%	33%	19%	26%
To help with my chronic disease (e.g., heart disease, cancer, lung disease, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, etc.)	137	78	56	50	30	31	13	12
	23%	27%	19%	22%	23%	29%	17%	22%
To relieve my chronic pain	133	74	57	51	38	24	12	8
	22%	25%	19%	23%	29%	22%	16%	14%
To support fertility	81	49	32	36	31	11	3	-
	14%	17%	11%	16%	24%	10%	4%	-
Other	27	11	15	12	2	8	2	3
	4%	4%	5%	5%	2%	7%	2%	6%

# QUESTION 4

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To the best of your knowledge, are the following statements about supplements true, false, or are you not at all sure?

## Summary of respondents that answered “True”

	Total	Currently Use Supplement(s)		Supplement discussion with HCP	
		Yes	No	Ever	Do not typically discuss
Unweighted Base	2053	1531	522	1042	489
Weighted Base	2053	1570	483	1057	512
Some supplements have been found essential and beneficial for certain groups	1503	1243	259	845	399
	73%	79%	54%	80%	78%
Taking too much of certain vitamins can be harmful to my health	1454	1178	276	808	370
	71%	75%	57%	76%	72%
Supplements can negatively interact with prescription medications	1269	1036	233	708	329
	62%	66%	48%	67%	64%
Taking more supplements does not necessarily improve my health	1258	999	259	687	312
	61%	64%	54%	65%	61%
Most dietary supplements available for purchase have been declared safe and effective by the FDA	960	810	150	591	219
	47%	52%	31%	56%	43%
If a supplement could be dangerous to me, it would not be allowed to be sold in the U.S.	599	499	100	390	109
	29%	32%	21%	37%	21%

# QUESTION 5

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Earlier you mentioned you take supplements on a regular basis. Typically, at what point(s) did you discuss taking these supplements with your health care provider(s)?

## Summary of respondents on the base “currently take any supplements”

	Total	Currently Use Supplement(s)		Supplement discussion with HCP	
		Yes	No	Ever	Do not typically discuss
Unweighted Base	1531	1531	-	1042	489
Weighted Base	1570	1570	-**	1057	512
Discuss taking supplements with health care providers (Net)	1057	1057	-	1057	-
	67%	67%	-	100%	-
Before I started taking the supplement(s)	731	731	-	731	-
	47%	47%	-	69%	-
After I started taking the supplement(s)	407	407	-	407	-
	26%	26%	-	38%	-
I typically do not discuss taking supplements with my health care provider(s)	512	512	-	-	512
	33%	33%	-	-	100%

\*\* very small base (under 30) ineligible for sig testing

# QUESTION 6

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Have you and your health care provider(s) ever talked about potential interactions supplements could have with any prescription medications you may be taking?

	Gender		Age					
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Unweighted Base	1701	693	969	518	329	223	195	436
Weighted Base	1732	832	870	482	285	266	282	417
Yes	744	380	356	198	143	111	98	195
	43%	46%	41%	41%	50%	42%	35%	47%
No	799	369	418	224	115	121	154	185
	46%	44%	48%	46%	40%	45%	55%	44%
Not sure	190	83	96	61	28	34	30	37
	11%	10%	11%	13%	10%	13%	11%	9%



# QUESTION 7

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How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about supplements?

## Summary of “Agree”

	Total	Gender		Age				
		Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
I am confident the supplements I am taking are safe for me.	1372	612	740	336	230	196	253	356
	87%	84%	90%	79%	89%	85%	91%	95%
I would feel comfortable sharing which supplements I take with my health care provider(s).	1668	726	913	428	270	260	296	414
	81%	76%	87%	71%	79%	83%	88%	91%
It is important to tell my health care provider whether I take supplement(s) or not.	1640	728	879	435	264	256	268	416
	80%	77%	83%	72%	77%	82%	80%	92%
Supplements are safer than prescription drugs.	1138	543	574	357	207	175	202	198
	55%	57%	54%	59%	60%	56%	60%	43%
It has not occurred to me to discuss my supplement use with my health care provider.	638	327	302	208	122	103	108	97
	41%	45%	37%	49%	47%	44%	39%	26%
A conversation with my health care provider(s) has changed my supplement use.	815	416	386	309	159	113	105	128
	40%	44%	37%	51%	46%	36%	31%	28%
I don't think my health care provider(s) are interested in whether I take supplements or not.	724	360	343	271	145	110	103	128
	35%	38%	32%	45%	42%	35%	31%	28%
I don't think my health care provider(s) know(s) enough about supplements to advise me properly.	654	336	305	228	136	100	92	99
	32%	35%	29%	38%	40%	32%	27%	22%
I worry my health care provider(s) will judge me based on the supplements I am taking.	406	221	183	163	107	48	60	28
	26%	30%	22%	38%	41%	21%	22%	7%

## Summary of “Agree”

	Race/Ethnicity			
	Total	Hispanic	Black (Not Hispanic)	White (Not Hispanic)
I am confident the supplements I am taking are safe for me.	1372	175	162	915
	87%	71%	86%	93%
I would feel comfortable sharing which supplements I take with my health care provider(s).	1668	215	185	1110
	81%	67%	75%	86%
It is important to tell my health care provider whether I take supplement(s) or not.	1640	221	187	1068
	80%	69%	76%	83%
Supplements are safer than prescription drugs.	1138	192	147	674
	55%	60%	60%	52%
It has not occurred to me to discuss my supplement use with my health care provider.	638	124	93	351
	41%	50%	49%	36%
A conversation with my health care provider(s) has changed my supplement use.	815	156	114	453
	40%	46%	46%	35%
I don't think my health care provider(s) are interested in whether I take supplements or not.	724	148	86	404
	35%	46%	35%	31%
I don't think my health care provider(s) know(s) enough about supplements to advise me properly.	654	124	72	377
	32%	39%	29%	29%
I worry my health care provider(s) will judge me based on the supplements I am taking.	406	86	55	217
	26%	35%	29%	22%

## Summary of “Agree”

	Total	Currently Use Supplement(s)		Supplement discussion with HCP	
		Yes	No	Ever	Do not typically discuss
I am confident the supplements I am taking are safe for me.	1372	1372	-	914	458
	87%	87%	-	86%	89%
I would feel comfortable sharing which supplements I take with my health care provider(s).	1668	1316	352	874	442
	81%	84%	73%	83%	86%
It is important to tell my health care provider whether I take supplement(s) or not.	1640	1271	368	921	350
	80%	81%	76%	87%	68%
Supplements are safer than prescription drugs.	1138	934	204	617	317
	55%	59%	42%	58%	62%
It has not occurred to me to discuss my supplement use with my health care provider.	638	638	-	318	320
	41%	41%	-	30%	62%
A conversation with my health care provider(s) has changed my supplement use.	815	648	167	537	111
	40%	41%	35%	51%	22%
I don't think my health care provider(s) are interested in whether I take supplements or not.	724	543	181	306	237
	35%	35%	37%	29%	46%
I don't think my health care provider(s) know(s) enough about supplements to advise me properly.	654	489	165	324	164
	32%	31%	34%	31%	32%
I worry my health care provider(s) will judge me based on the supplements I am taking.	406	406	-	275	132
	26%	26%	-	26%	26%