

The 2020 COVID-19 Supplement to the 2019 Larimer County Community Health Survey: Key Findings

In July and August of 2020, the Health District of Northern Larimer County conducted a follow-up survey of households that had previously participated in the 2019 Community Health Survey. Of the 2,463 households invited to participate in the follow-up, 1,463 total unduplicated responses were received. Of those, 1,239 were identified as being from the same respondent as the previous survey, allowing for direct comparisons. This respondent sample was weighted to be representative of the Larimer County adult population.



COVID-19 Pandemic Concerns

- 93% of Larimer County adults are at least slightly concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - 39% are worried very much or extremely.
- 99% of adults report that their lives have changed at least slightly due to the pandemic.
 - 58% agreed their life has changed very much or extremely.
- 67% reported being somewhat, often, or always concerned about getting sick from COVID-19.
- 75% said they are somewhat, often, or always concerned that someone close to them will get sick from COVID-19.
- 78% of respondents who were not retired said they were somewhat, often, or always worried about their safety at work



Increases in unemployment and declines in income.

- 54% of non-retired adults saw a decrease in household income.
 - For 35% of respondents' household income stayed the same & 10% reported an increase.
- The proportion of adults reporting being unemployed, furloughed, or laid off increased from 2% to 9%.



Changes in health insurance.

- Those who have health insurance through an employer or who purchase insurance on their own declined from 71% in 2019 to 68% in 2020.
- 9% of adults had experienced some sort of change in their health insurance due to the pandemic. About one-third of those had lost health insurance due to the pandemic.
- 7% of adults indicated that they needed assistance understanding health insurance options and getting signed up.
 - Almost half of those without insurance said they needed but had not yet used this service.



Increased financial concerns.

- Those reporting being always or often worried about paying their rent or mortgage tripled from 4% pre-pandemic to 12% in the late summer of 2020.

- The proportion of survey respondents reporting their household needed financial assistance such as unemployment, Colorado Works, or social security also increased from 7% to 17%.
 - 88% of those who needed this service in 2020 used it.



Mental Health (MH), Stress, and Anxiety

- 36% adults reported experiencing pandemic related anxiety, depression, or stress at least half the time over the past 3 months.
 - However, there was no change in proportion of adults reporting a current MH issue (30%).
- Adults reported an increase in *severity* of mental health issues.
 - The number of days in the past month when they felt their mental health was poor increased from 3.1 to 4.4 days.
 - Also, the number of days in the past month when poor mental health limited their ability to do usual activities increased from 1.1 to 1.7 days.
- 20% of adults were interested in using the Larimer County COVID-19 emotional support phone line and another 27% were unsure about their need for this.
- 13% noted they thought about seeking mental health care due to how the pandemic made them feel. Of those, half reported already getting care for their mental or emotional health.



Alcohol Use

- When asked, 30% of those who drink alcohol reported drinking more than they did before the pandemic. They are more likely to be between the ages of 35 to 44 and are drinking, on average, one additional drink per week than they did in 2019.
 - However, across all adults (drinkers as well as non-drinkers), there was no change in the average number of drinks per week (~4) or
- The proportions of those meeting the definition of “heavy” drinkers stayed the same at 10%
- There was a drop in the proportion of adults reporting bingeing on alcohol in the past month, from 24% in 2019 to 18% in 2020.



Childcare and Work

- 27% of 2019 and 2020 survey respondents had children ages 0 to 17 in their household.
- 15% of those with children said they had to significantly reduce the amount they worked or are no longer able to work due to a lack of childcare. An additional 25% had to slightly reduce the amount they work.
- 20% are very or extremely worried that future closures of schools or daycares to in-person instruction would limit their ability to work, and an additional 50% are slightly or moderately worried.



Adults report high levels of often or always taking part in most prevention behaviors.

- 90% wash their hands after returning home from a public place.
- 89% practice 6 feet distancing when not in their home.
- 88% wear a mask or face covering when around people not in their household.
- 86% reduced time in non-essential public places (i.e. restaurants, bars, libraries)
- However, only 55% of adults reported having avoided visiting with family members who did not live with them in the past 30 days, and just 69% had avoided having visitors in their home.



A small percentage of adults have received a PCR coronavirus test

- When the survey was conducted in the late summer of 2020, just 13% of adults had so far had been tested for COVID-19 via nasal swab (PCR test). 6% said they were unable to get one if they wanted or needed one. 78% of adults had not needed or wanted a test by the time of the survey.
- Less than 1% of adults reported a confirmed positive test for COVID-19 infection.
- At the time of the survey (July-August 2020), Larimer County was at “low” or “medium” risks according to the Larimer County Department of Public Health and Environment dashboard.



One third of adults surveyed were reluctant or uncertain about receiving a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available.

- 66% of adults said they would be vaccinated if a safe and effective vaccine were available.
- 23% of adults were unsure while 11% of adults said they would not get vaccinated.
- Those with highest levels of education were most likely to report willingness to receive a vaccine, when compared to those with lower levels of education.



Survey respondents answered the following open-ended question: What do you feel are the greatest local concerns or issues impacting the health of the people of Larimer County right now? *(in order of frequency)*

1. Lack of compliance with COVID-19 regulations
2. Mental health*
3. School re-openings
4. The economy and job loss
5. Politics, partisanship, and societal division
6. Information and media
7. Health effects of COVID-19
8. Cost of living*
9. Health-care*
10. Strictness of COVID-19 regulations
11. People experiencing homelessness*
12. Concerns about COVID-19 testing
13. The environment and climate*

*These topics were also a primary theme from the same question on the 2019 Community Health Survey.