

# NATIONAL SURVEY OF HEALTHCARE CONSUMERS: FOOD SAFETY

JULY 2010



THOMSON REUTERS™

# SURVEY OVERVIEW

Each year, the *Thomson Reuters PULSE™ Healthcare Survey* collects information about health-related behavior and attitudes from more than 100,000 U.S. households. This nationally representative telephone survey is conducted in 11 waves (each a standalone market research study) conducted sequentially throughout the year. Many healthcare topics are covered, including use of medical services, health status, insurance coverage, lifestyle, and current issues. The survey is self-funded and the data it generates are used in Thomson Reuters information products for healthcare professionals, particularly strategic planning and marketing managers in hospitals.

The results depicted below represent responses from 3,015 survey participants interviewed from July 1-11, 2010. The survey questions, which address consumer food safety concerns, were developed in conjunction with National Public Radio. The margin of error is 1.8 percent.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The survey asked respondents about their concerns over the safety of the country's food supply. Among those polled, 61 percent expressed concern about contamination and overall safety.

- Of the food groups addressed in the survey, meat was by far the most worrisome for respondents. Over half (51 percent) of those polled said they were concerned over the safety of meat.
- Thirty-eight percent of respondents said their fear of seafood contamination has increased in the last three months, roughly the timeframe of the Gulf of Mexico disaster.
- A tenth said they were made sick by something they ate in the past six months; 26 percent of those who became ill sought medical treatment.
- Worry over food safety declines slightly as age, income, and education increases. Respondents who were younger and had lower incomes and less education expressed the most concern over food safety.

## SURVEY DATA

Responses in **RED** are statistically significant.

**QUESTION 1: Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "Not at All Concerned" and 5 is "Very Concerned," in general how concerned are you about the safety of our food?**

	<b>1: Not at All Concerned</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5: Very Concerned</b>
<b>Age</b>					
<35	5.5%	7.3%	22.2%	19.2%	45.7%
35 - 64	6.6%	9.5%	24.2%	19.6%	40.2%
65+	8.4%	7.3%	25.0%	18.7%	40.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>
<b>Income</b>					
< \$25k	7.2%	4.8%	24.4%	17.3%	46.3%
\$25k - \$49.9k	5.9%	8.5%	22.8%	20.0%	42.8%
\$50k - \$99.9k	5.1%	11.1%	22.4%	21.4%	40.0%
\$100k+	5.5%	10.5%	26.4%	16.3%	41.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>
<b>Education</b>					
High School or Less	8.9%	5.1%	21.8%	16.5%	47.8%
Some College	6.3%	7.8%	21.7%	20.1%	44.2%
College+	5.8%	10.4%	25.7%	20.2%	37.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>



**QUESTION 2: What type of food do you believe poses the greatest risk for food-borne illness?**

- 1) Meat
- 2) Seafood
- 3) Dairy Products
- 4) Fresh Produce

	Meat	Seafood	Dairy Products	Fresh Produce
<b>Age</b>				
<35	65.2%	10.7%	3.3%	20.9%
35 - 64	45.9%	25.0%	4.3%	24.8%
65+	43.7%	28.5%	4.8%	23.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.0%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>23.4%</b>
<b>Income</b>				
< \$25k	59.2%	18.4%	3.3%	19.1%
\$25k - \$49.9k	47.3%	23.6%	6.2%	22.9%
\$50k - \$99.9k	46.5%	23.4%	3.4%	26.6%
\$100k+	52.6%	14.7%	4.6%	28.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.0%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>23.4%</b>
<b>Education</b>				
High School or Less	54.2%	23.0%	2.9%	19.9%
Some College	53.2%	23.2%	5.5%	18.1%
College+	48.6%	19.9%	3.8%	27.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.0%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>23.4%</b>

**QUESTION 3: What do you think would be the best approach for the industry to use to reduce the risk of food-borne illness?**

	More Inspections	Better Quality Controls	Stiffer Penalties	Increased FDA Oversight	Better Consumer Education
<b>Age</b>					
<35	18.9%	33.4%	16.1%	8.4%	23.2%
35 - 64	20.5%	37.4%	10.7%	13.2%	18.2%
65+	24.0%	39.7%	7.1%	11.4%	17.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
<b>Income</b>					
< \$25k	24.2%	35.8%	12.0%	14.3%	13.6%
\$25k - \$49.9k	20.7%	37.8%	8.8%	11.7%	21.0%
\$50k - \$99.9k	19.4%	34.2%	16.2%	8.6%	21.6%
\$100k+	19.9%	38.8%	9.1%	14.4%	17.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
<b>Education</b>					
High School or Less	30.5%	28.8%	13.5%	8.4%	18.7%
Some College	18.2%	40.2%	11.5%	12.0%	18.0%
College+	18.0%	37.7%	10.9%	12.6%	20.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>



**QUESTION 4: Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is “Not at All Concerned” and 5 is “Very Concerned,” how concerned are you about the safety of seafood in general?**

	<b>1: Not at All Concerned</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5: Very Concerned</b>
<b>Age</b>					
<35	11.4%	25.3%	21.8%	23.6%	17.9%
35 - 64	11.1%	16.3%	27.4%	16.8%	28.4%
65+	11.2%	11.3%	25.8%	18.7%	33.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>
<b>Income</b>					
< \$25k	17.7%	11.9%	17.2%	23.7%	29.4%
\$25k - \$49.9k	8.5%	19.6%	22.1%	18.0%	31.8%
\$50k - \$99.9k	7.6%	22.8%	32.5%	16.8%	20.2%
\$100k+	10.5%	20.5%	28.2%	17.9%	22.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>
<b>Education</b>					
High School or Less	13.5%	14.5%	18.5%	19.9%	33.6%
Some College	9.7%	12.3%	25.4%	19.7%	32.9%
College+	11.1%	22.8%	28.6%	18.3%	19.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>

**QUESTION 5: In the past 3 months, has your concern regarding the safety of seafood in general:**

- 1) Increased?
  - 2) Decreased?
  - 3) Remained the same?
- (The results represent the percentage of people who answered yes.)

	<b>Increased</b>	<b>Decreased</b>	<b>Remained the Same</b>
<b>Age</b>			
<35	39.6%	3.3%	57.1%
35 - 64	38.1%	1.2%	60.7%
65+	33.0%	2.3%	64.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>60.3%</b>
<b>Income</b>			
< \$25k	37.4%	3.6%	59.0%
\$25k - \$49.9k	39.0%	1.4%	59.6%
\$50k - \$99.9k	37.7%	0.5%	61.8%
\$100k+	38.2%	0.5%	61.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>60.3%</b>
<b>Education</b>			
High School or Less	37.1%	1.9%	60.9%
Some College	41.4%	0.9%	57.7%
College+	35.9%	2.6%	61.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>60.3%</b>



**QUESTION 6: In the past 3 months, have you become ill from something that you ate? (The results represent the percentage of people who answered yes.)**

**Age**

<35	14.8%
35 - 64	10.1%
65+	4.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.5%</b>

**Income**

< \$25k	12.9%
\$25k - \$49.9k	14.0%
\$50k - \$99.9k	8.6%
\$100k+	9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.5%</b>

**Education**

High School or Less	10.4%
Some College	15.1%
College+	8.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.5%</b>

**QUESTION 7: Did you seek medical treatment? (The results represent the percentage of people who answered yes.)**

**Age**

<35	32.2%
35 - 64	21.2%
65+	30.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.2%</b>

**Income**

< \$25k	53.3%
\$25k - \$49.9k	18.9%
\$50k - \$99.9k	10.8%
\$100k+	23.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.2%</b>

**Education**

High School or Less	65.1%
Some College	13.8%
College+	18.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.2%</b>



**QUESTION 8: Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "Not Very Serious" and 5 is "Very Serious," how serious was the illness?**

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	<b>1: Not Very Serious</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5: Very Serious</b>
<b>Age</b>					
<35	0.0%	24.5%	75.5%	0.0%	0.0%
35 - 64	9.2%	18.6%	34.9%	14.0%	23.3%
65+	10.5%	5.3%	31.6%	26.3%	26.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>20.4%</b>	<b>54.6%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>
<b>Income</b>					
< \$25k	4.5%	12.9%	67.5%	6.1%	9.0%
\$25k - \$49.9k	6.3%	46.3%	34.9%	1.9%	10.7%
\$50k - \$99.9k	0.0%	10.7%	74.0%	4.7%	10.7%
\$100k+	7.7%	15.4%	18.8%	31.2%	26.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>20.4%</b>	<b>54.6%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>
<b>Education</b>					
High School or Less	2.7%	1.9%	76.1%	6.3%	12.9%
Some College	2.1%	82.4%	10.8%	0.0%	4.7%
College+	10.9%	7.3%	47.4%	18.0%	16.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>20.4%</b>	<b>54.6%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>

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