



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
*Republic of South Africa*

# SOUTH AFRICA DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY 1998

## Full Report



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## **PREFACE**

The 1998 South Africa Demographic and Health Survey (SADHS) is the first study of its kind to be conducted in South Africa and heralds a new era of reliable and relevant information in South Africa. The SADHS, a nation-wide survey has collected information on key maternal and child health indicators, and in a first for international demographic and health surveys, the South African survey contains data on the health and disease patterns in adults.

Plans to conduct the South Africa Demographic and Health Survey go as far back as 1995, when the Department of Health National Health Information Systems of South Africa (NHIS/SA) committee, recognised serious gaps in information required for health service planning and monitoring.

Fieldwork was conducted between late January and September 1998, during which time 12,247 households were visited, 17,500 people throughout nine provinces were interviewed and 175 interviewers were trained to interview in 11 languages.

The information from this benchmark survey will be used to evaluate health programmes of the department, describe health status and will be instrumental in identifying new directions for the national and provincial health programmes in South Africa. The survey findings serve as an important tool for programmes to assess progress and highlight some of the challenges facing the health sector in continuing to improve the health status of all South Africa, now and into the new millennium.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all who have made the completion of the 1998 South Africa Demographic and Health Survey possible. I am deeply indebted to the staff of the National and Provincial Departments of Health for their hard work. Thanks also go to the Medical Research Council, Macro-International and USAID for their technical advice and support, and the Centre for Health Systems Research and Development, University of the Orange Free State for conducting the field work. Very special thanks go to the families and individuals who participated for sharing information about themselves and giving their invaluable time without which this study would not have been possible.

Finally, I would like to invite all to make use of the data in search of strategies and plans for the improvement of the health of all South Africans

Dr M E Tshabalala-Msimang  
Minister of Health

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To all who have contributed to the 1998 SADHS – thank you. This is a substantial achievement. South Africa, for the first time has an understanding of the nation's health status. We have a clearer idea of the challenges which face us and the directions we need to take in order to improve the health of South Africans.

Dr Ayanda Ntsaluba  
Director General  
Department of Health

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

### Mortality rates

Infant mortality rate: 45 per 1,000 live births  
 Under-5 mortality rate: 59 per 1,000 live births  
 Child mortality rate: 15 per 1,000 live births  
 Maternal mortality ratio: 150 per 100,000 births

### \*Immunisation coverage in children aged 12-23 months (%)

Total: 63  
 Urban: 67  
 Non-urban: 60  
 Male: 65  
 Female: 62

### Percent of children 12-23 months with Road-to-Health card: 75

### Exclusive breastfeeding (% of infants)

0-3 months: 10  
 4-6 months: 1

### Awareness of HIV/AIDS (% of women 15-49): 97

### Perceptions about AIDS (% of women 15-49)

People can protect themselves from HIV/AIDS by using condoms  
 True: 87  
 False: 7  
 People can protect themselves from HIV/AIDS by avoiding public toilets  
 True: 24  
 False: 65

### Condom use (% of sexually active women 15-49)

Ever used condom: 22  
 Used condom at last sex: 8

### Prevalence of STD symptoms (% of men 15+)

Total: 12  
 Urban: 9  
 Non-urban: 17

### Fertility rate

Total: 2.9 children per woman  
 Urban: 2.29 children per woman  
 Non-urban: 3.92 children per woman

### \*\* Modern contraceptive prevalence (%): 61

Urban: 66  
 Rural: 53

### Treatment of women (%)

Ever abused by partner: 13  
 Abused when pregnant: 4  
 Ever raped: 4

### Antenatal care from doctor/nurse (% of births): 94 Assistance during delivery (% of births in last 5 years)

Doctor: 30  
 Nurse/midwife: 54

### Smoking rate (% of adults age 15+)

Men: 42  
 Women: 11  
 Adolescents age 15-19: 10

### Alcohol rates (% of men and women age 15+)

Ever drank alcohol: Men:58; Women: 26  
 Drink alcohol now: Men:45; Women:17  
 Dependent on alcohol: Men:28; Women:10

### Prevalence of hypertension (% of adults age 15+)

Men: 13; Women: 16

### Percentage of hypertensives who were controlled

Men:26; Women: 38

### Prevalence of airways limitation (Asthma) (% of adults age 15+)

Men: 7; Women: 9

### Prevalence of chronic bronchitis (% of adults age 15+)

Men: 2; Women: 3

### Abnormal peak flow (% of adults age 15+)

Men: 4; Women: 4

### Overweight (% of adults age 15+)

Men: 29; Women: 55

### Obesity (% of adults age 15+)

Men: 9; Women: 29

### Injury rates (per 100,000)

Intentional: Men:381  
 Women: 175  
 Unintentional: Men: 1,373  
 Women: 631

### Access to medical aid (% of adults age 15+)

Urban: 24  
 Non-Urban: 16  
 Total: 17

### Health service utilisation (% of adults age 15+)

Public sector: 19  
 Private sector: 13  
 Chemist: 7  
 Traditional Healer:3  
 Faith Healer: 2  
 Dentist: 3

### Tooth loss and dentures (% of adults age 15+)

Lost any teeth: Men :59; Women: 64  
 Lost all teeth: Men: 7; Women: 9  
 Wear dentures: Men: 10; Women: 9

### Perception about the benefits of fluoridation: (% of adults age 15+)

Fluoride is beneficial: Men 52; Women: 51

\* Childhood immunisation coverage is the percentage of children aged 12-23 months who have received BCG, three doses of DPT and polio, and measles vaccines.

\*\* Contraceptive prevalence refers to the percentage of all sexually active women aged 15-49 who are using a modern contraceptive method.



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

