

# Utah Health Status Update:

## Uninsured in Utah 2005

May 2006

Utah Department of Health

Health care and the costs of medical services are a major concern for Americans. In a recent national poll, health care costs were a significant source of personal worry for many adults.<sup>1</sup> Official estimates for the number of uninsured in Utah are provided by the Utah Health Status Survey. Most recent survey results indicate that between 2004 and 2005, Utah's uninsured population has grown from an estimated 251,500 (10.2%) to 292,800 people (11.6%). This increase illustrates an overall trend over the past few years towards a higher proportion of the population lacking any kind of health insurance coverage.

Lack of health insurance coverage was associated with a variety of vulnerabilities, such as a lower likelihood of having a usual source of medical care (68.2% vs. 96.2% for those with coverage) or a routine medical visit in the last year (57.8% vs. 72.6%). Utahns without coverage were also more likely to seek primary care from an emergency department or urgent care center (9.5% vs. 4.9%).

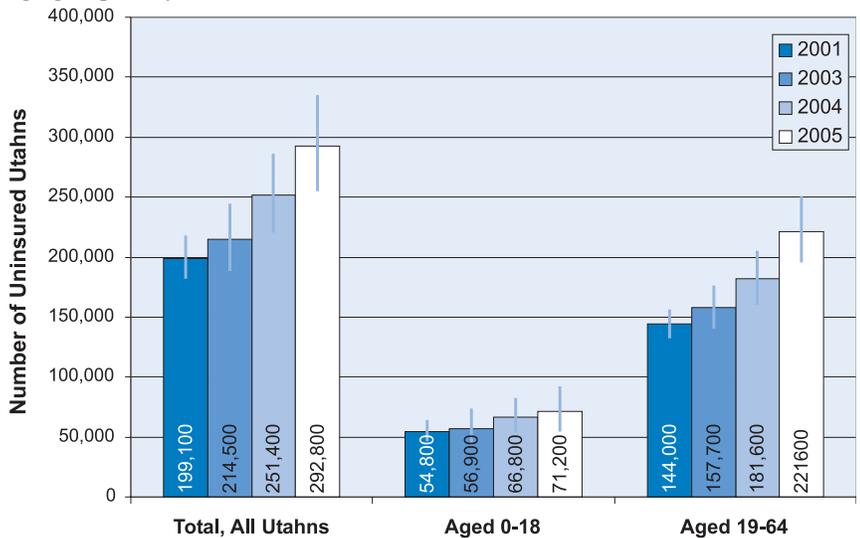
Utahns who lacked health insurance were also financially vulnerable. Nearly one-third (31.4%) of uninsured Utahns reported difficulty receiving needed medical care because of cost, and 13.6% reported that they did not have enough money for food, heat, or other basic necessities after paying for prescription medication. Evidence from other studies suggests that uninsured people have difficulty paying medical bills and are often contacted by collection agencies regarding unpaid medical bills. The inability to pay expensive medical bills can be financially devastating to families.<sup>2</sup>

### Who was at greater risk for lacking insurance?

- Young adults aged 19 to 26 (23.3%).
- Males aged 19 to 26 (26.5% versus 20.0% of females 19 to 26).
- Utahns aged 19 to 64 who were full-time students (22.2%).
- Utahns in lower income households. Over two-thirds (68.8%) of the uninsured live

### Number of Uninsured by Age Group and Year

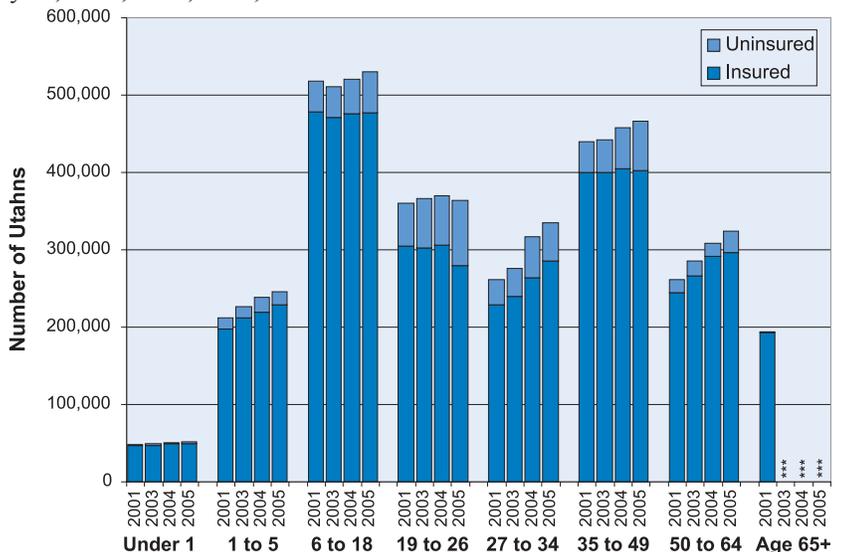
Figure 1. Estimated number of Utahns without health insurance coverage by age group and year, 2001, 2003, 2004, and 2005



Source: Utah Health Status Survey

### Insurance Status by Age Group and Year

Figure 2. Estimated number of insured and uninsured Utahns by age group and year, 2001, 2003, 2004, and 2005



\*\*\* Insufficient sample size for calculation of estimates.

Source: Utah Health Status Survey

in households with incomes at or less than 200% of the federal poverty level.

- Adults who did not have a high school diploma (47.4%).
- Utahns who were of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (37.4%).

- Utahns in Southwest Health District (14.7%).
- 76.1% of uninsured Utahns had been uninsured for one year or longer.

Among Utahns who had insurance the majority received it through a current or former employer or union (77.5%), however this percentage has dropped over the past few years.<sup>3</sup> Comparatively, the percentage of persons receiving insurance through Medicaid, Medicare, or CHIP has increased slightly.

Having health insurance does not guarantee access to good medical care. Even among persons who were insured, 13.9% reported difficulties accessing care due to: insurance company would not cover a procedure, cost, services were not available in their area, or because of residency status. A sluggish economy may further affect insurance coverage as increases in health premiums tend to outpace both wages and general economic growth.<sup>2</sup> Even as the economy continues to recover from the 2001 recession, the Health Status Survey has measured an increase in poverty for children and adults. This increase in poverty has coincided with an increase in the uninsured rates (Figure 4).

**References:**

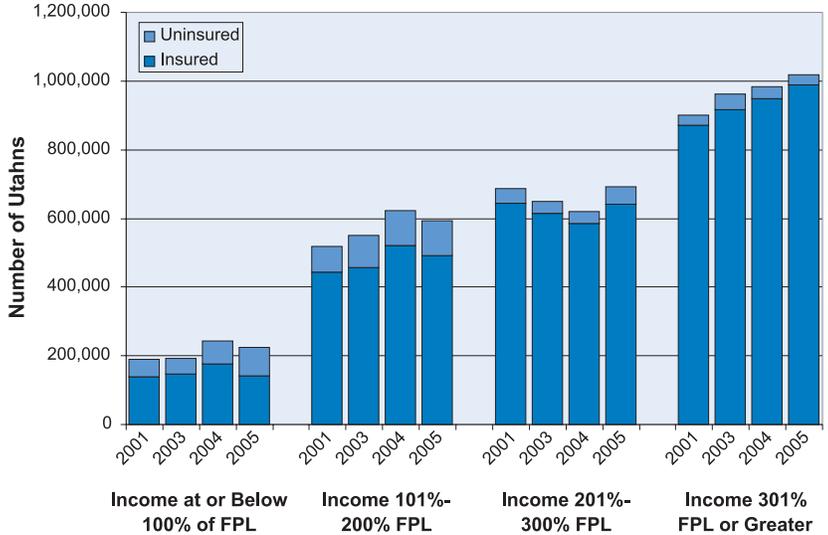
1. Kaiser Family Foundation. *Health Poll Report Survey* (Oct. 2005) <http://www.kff.org/spotlight/healthcosts/2.cfm>
2. *The Uninsured and Their Access to Health Care*. The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. The Kaiser Family Foundation: Washington D.C., November 2005. <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/1420-07.cfm>
3. Kaiser Family Foundation. *Covering the Uninsured, Growing Needs, Strained Resources*. (Nov. 2005). <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/upload/Covering-the-Uninsured-Growing-Need-Strained-Resources-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

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## Insurance Status by Poverty and Year

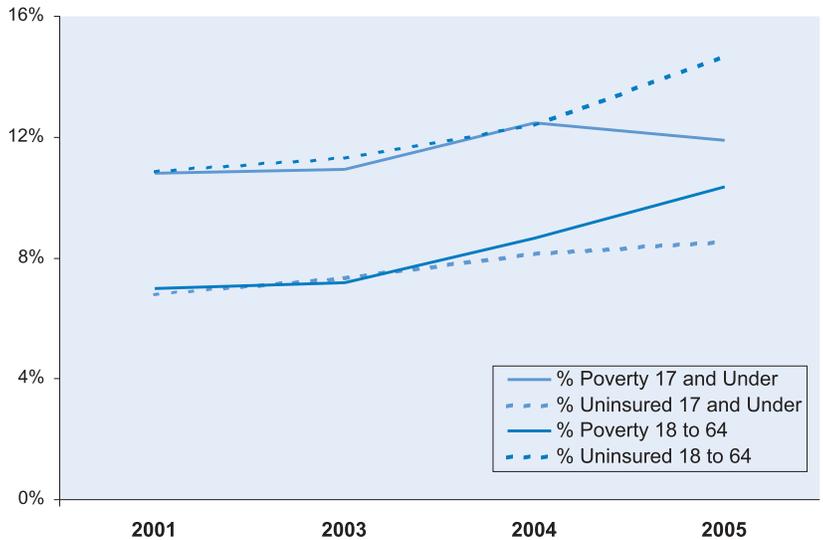
Figure 3. Estimated number of insured and uninsured Utahns by poverty status and year, 2001, 2003, 2004, and 2005



Source: Utah Health Status Survey

## Insurance and Poverty Status by Age Group and Year

Figure 4. Percentage of Utahns without health insurance coverage and percentage of Utahns living in poverty by age group, 2001, 2003, 2004, and 2005



Source: Utah Health Status Survey

The Utah Health Status Survey (UHSS), conducted on an ongoing basis by the Utah Department of Health, is representative of non-institutionalized adults and children living in Utah households with telephones. It includes information on physical and mental health status, health insurance coverage, and access to care. The HSS was conducted with 2,978 households (9,195 persons) in 2005, 2,881 households (9,104 persons) in 2004, 3,175 households (9,958 persons) in 2003, and 7,520 households (24,088 persons) in 2001.

The estimates for uninsured Utahns produced by the Utah HSS are believed to be the most valid available. For a thorough discussion of why state health insurance estimates differ from those produced by the U.S. Current Population Survey (CPS), please refer to the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC) Issue Brief #1: <http://www.shadac.umn.edu/img/assets/18528/IssueBrief1.pdf>

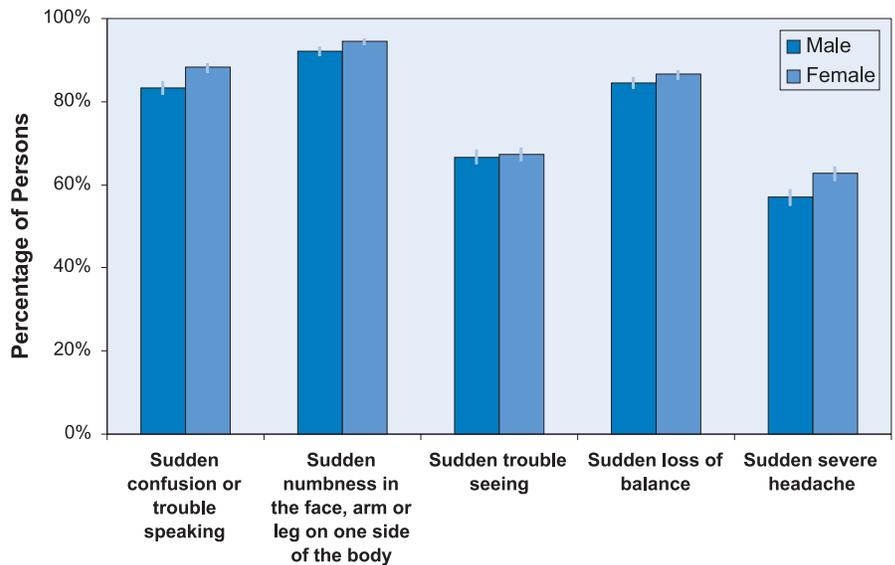
## Breaking News, April 2006

### May is Stroke Awareness Month

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Utah. It accounted for nearly 800 deaths and 3,000 hospital visits in 2004. Although rates for stroke deaths have been declining, the percentage of deaths that occur before getting to the hospital has remained relatively unchanged. In 2004, 63% of deaths that occurred due to stroke occurred before reaching the hospital. Being able to properly recognize the signs and symptoms of a stroke and calling 9-1-1 immediately can help victims get the care they need as quickly as possible.

The five major signs of a stroke are sudden numbness or weakness, especially on one side of the body; sudden confusion or trouble speaking; sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes; sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination; and sudden severe headache with no known cause. Approximately 71% of Utahns were able to correctly identify 4 out of the 5 major symptoms of stroke in data collected in 2001–2005. Other risk factors that increase the risk for stroke include high-blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, smoking, and excessive alcohol consumption.

**Percentage of Adults Aged 18 or Over Who Could Correctly Identify the Corresponding Stroke Symptom by Sex, Utah, 2001–2003, 2005**



Source: Utah Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2001-2003, 2005

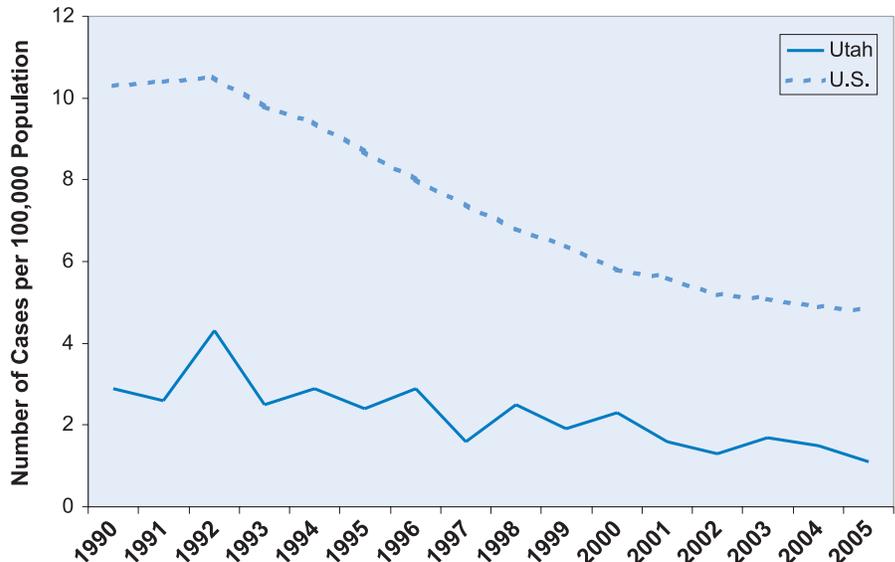
## Community Health Indicators Spotlight, April 2006

### Tuberculosis

In 2005, the TB case rate in both Utah and the U.S. declined to its lowest level since national reporting began in 1953: 1.1 per 100,000 population in Utah and 4.8 in the U.S. Despite these encouraging numbers, there are a number of areas of concern. Worldwide, TB remains one of the leading causes of death from an infectious disease, and it is estimated that one third of the world's population is infected with *M. tuberculosis*. In 2005, the TB rate in foreign-born persons in the U.S. was 8.7 times that of U.S.-born persons. In Utah, 76% of persons with TB in 2005 were born outside the U.S.

There continues to be higher TB rates in certain racial/ethnic populations. From 2001–2005 in Utah, Hispanics, blacks, and Asians had TB rates 8.2, 31.5, and 20.8 times higher than whites, respectively. During this five-year period, 85% (17 of 20) of the TB cases among blacks occurred among foreign-born individuals, 65% (11 of 17) of whom had been in the U.S. for less than one year. This emphasizes the importance of health screening provided to newly-arriving refugees.

**Number of Tuberculosis Cases per 100,000 Population, Utah and U.S., 1990-2005**



Sources: Bureau of Communicable Disease Control, Utah Department of Health; National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# Monthly Health Indicators Report for March 2006

Monthly Report of Notifiable Diseases, March 2006	Current Month # Cases	Current Month # Expected Cases (5-year average)	# Cases YTD	# Expected YTD (5-year average)	YTD Standard Morbidity Ratio (obs/exp)
Campylobacteriosis (Campylobacter)	18	17	45	46	1.0
Escherichia coli (E. coli) 0157:H7	0	3	2	3	0.7
Hepatitis A (infectious hepatitis)	0	5	4	13	0.3
Hepatitis B (serum hepatitis)	1	3	3	9	0.3
Influenza**	For the most up-to-date information on influenza in Utah, visit <a href="http://health.utah.gov/epi/diseases/flu">http://health.utah.gov/epi/diseases/flu</a>				
Measles (Rubeola, Hard Measles)	0	0	0	0	--
Meningococcal Diseases	0	1	2	2	1.0
Norovirus	0	9*	0	9*	0.0
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	149	10	261	33	8.0
Salmonellosis (Salmonella)	19	16	53	42	1.3
Shigellosis (Shigella)	2	4	11	11	1.0
Varicella (Chickenpox)	145	89*	279	202*	1.4
Viral Meningitis	18	5	44	17	2.6

Note: Active surveillance has ended for West Nile Virus (WNV) until the 2006 season.

Notifiable Diseases Reported Quarterly, 1st Qtr 2006	Current Quarter # Cases	Current Quarter # Expected Cases (5-year average)	# Cases YTD	# Expected YTD (5-year average)	YTD Standard Morbidity Ratio (obs/exp)
HIV	11	14	11	14	0.8
AIDS	10	13	10	13	0.8
Chlamydia	1,125	617	1,125	617	1.8
Gonorrhea	213	72	213	72	3.0
Tuberculosis	6	6	6	6	1.0

Program Enrollment for the Month of March 2006	Current Month	Previous Month	% Change From Previous Month	1 Year Ago	% Change From 1 Year Ago
Medicaid	178,723	177,170	+0.9%	178,840	-0.1%
PCN (Primary Care Network)	16,046	16,425	-2.3%	20,996	-23.6%
CHIP (Children's Health Ins. Plan)	34,957	34,064	+2.6%	30,982	+12.8%

Program Expenditures for the Month of March 2006	Monthly	Expected/ Budgeted for Month	Fiscal YTD	Budgeted Fiscal YTD	Variance - over (under) budget
Ambulatory Surgical Care	\$ 663,575	\$ 618,480	\$ 5,162,634	\$ 5,184,780	(\$ 22,146)
Fee for Service Hospital Inpatient	\$ 17,592,474	\$ 15,065,590	\$ 125,604,202	\$ 126,005,810	(\$ 401,608)
Long Term Care	\$ 14,872,130	\$ 13,708,580	\$ 126,327,519	\$ 122,531,810	\$ 3,795,709
Pharmacy	\$ 10,524,015	\$ 14,257,000	\$ 141,475,920	\$ 153,873,180	(\$ 12,397,260)

Health Care System Measures	Current Data Year	Number of Events	Percentage of Utah Population	% Change From Previous Year	Total Charges in Millions	% Change From Previous Year
Overall Hospitalizations	2004	266,195	10.1%	-0.3%	\$ 3,225.0	+11.1%
Non-maternity Hospitalizations	2004	160,302	5.9%	0.0%	\$ 2,692.5	+12.0%
Emergency Department Encounters	2004	627,078	24.2%	-4.2%	\$ 456.6	+14.7%
Outpatient Surgery	2004	303,123	11.7%	+6.0%	\$ 845.3	+15.6%

Annual Community Health Measures	Current Data Year	Population at Risk	Number Affected	Percentage/Rate	Previous Year Rate	% Change From Previous Year
Overweight and Obesity (Adults 18+)	2005	1,740,474	942,900	54.2%	56.4%	-3.9%
Cigarette Smoking (Adults 18+)	2005	1,740,474	200,600	11.5%	10.5%	+9.7%
Influenza Immunization (Adults 65+)	2005	212,582	148,300	69.7%	75.5%	-7.6%
Health Insurance Coverage (Uninsured)	2005	2,528,926	292,800	11.6%	10.2%	+13.5%
Motor Vehicle Crash Injury Deaths	2004	2,469,230	299	12.1 / 100,000	11.6 / 100,000	+4.3%
Suicide Deaths	2004	2,469,230	378	15.3 / 100,000	13.9 / 100,000	+10.1%
Diabetes Prevalence	2005	2,528,926	104,200	4.1%	3.8%	+8.7%
Coronary Heart Disease Deaths	2004	2,469,230	1,603	64.9 / 100,000	70.6 / 100,000	-8.1%
All Cancer Deaths	2004	2,469,230	2,442	98.9 / 100,000	100.9 / 100,000	-2.0%
Births to Adolescents (Ages 15-17)	2004	57,505	857	14.9 / 1,000	16.0 / 1,000	-6.9%
Early Prenatal Care	2004	50,653	39,509	78.0%	78.0%	0.0%
Infant Mortality	2004	50,653	263	5.2 / 1,000	5.0 / 1,000	+4.0%
Childhood Immunization (4:3:1:3:3)	2004	48,619	34,700	71.3%	78.8%	-9.5%

\* Due to limited historical data, the average is based upon 2 years of data for norovirus, and 3 years for varicella.

\*\* During this month, influenza activity remained muted. The average weekly proportion of patient visits to sentinel providers in Utah for influenza-like illness (ILI) were below baseline values for this month. As of March 31, 2006, 470 influenza-associated hospitalizations have been reported to UDOH.

Note: % Change could be due to random variation