

Healthy Lifestyle Beliefs vs. Behaviors

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Healthy Lifestyle: Beliefs vs. Behaviors

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About Life Reimagined

Life Reimagined was launched by AARP in 2014 as a personal guidance system to help people navigate transitions, pursue their goals, dreams and purpose in life. Through groundbreaking online programs and tools, and powerful live experiences, today Life Reimagined helps people discover new possibilities in life. Begin reimagining at www.lifereimagined.org.

About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million that helps people turn their goals and dreams into 'Real Possibilities' by changing the way America defines aging. With staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and promote the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare security, financial security and personal fulfillment. AARP also advocates for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the world's largest circulation magazine, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @aarp and our CEO @JoAnn_Jenkins on Twitter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To understand attitudes and behaviors related to living a healthy lifestyle, Life Reimagined commissioned a survey of adults at least 40 years old with support from Optum. The survey explored the importance consumers place on particular healthy behaviors as well as the frequency with which they engage in these behaviors. The survey also addressed topics of discussion with doctors as well as perceptions of various health care professionals. Key findings from the survey are:

- **Knowledge is not enough: Gaps exist between attitudes and behaviors.**
 - While nearly all consumers believe maintaining a healthy lifestyle is very/extremely important to them, less than half rate their health as very good/excellent. Also, gaps exist between perceived importance of healthy behaviors and regularity of engagement in them.
- **Keep it Simple: Break down big goals into small steps.**
 - The gap between importance and action appears smaller for less time consuming behaviors (for example, the gap between importance and action is 6 percentage points for taking vitamins/supplements compared with 38 percentage points for eating healthy foods).
- **Be Social: Build opportunities to connect with friends and family.**
 - Consumers with close friends are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors, such as getting plenty of sleep, eating healthy foods, maintaining peace of mind and minimizing stress, engaging in brain health activities, and taking on new challenges or hobbies.
- **Speak Up: Bring health professionals into the conversation.**
 - The most popular resource for information about health and wellness is friends and family. In addition, less than half of consumers have discussed select healthy behaviors with their doctor

The online survey was fielded from August 18-27, 2016 by OpinionsUSA. The sample of 1,006 consisted of adults ages 40 and older. The sample was weighted by age, gender, and income.

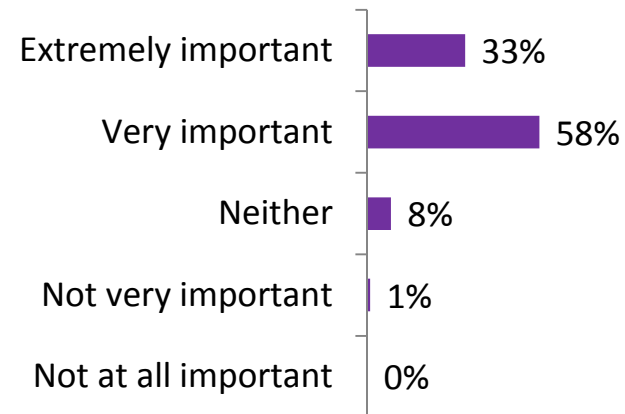
FINDINGS: HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

While nearly all consumers believe maintaining a healthy lifestyle is important to them, fewer than half rate their health as very good or excellent.

In general, how would you rate your health?



How important is it to you to maintain a healthy lifestyle?

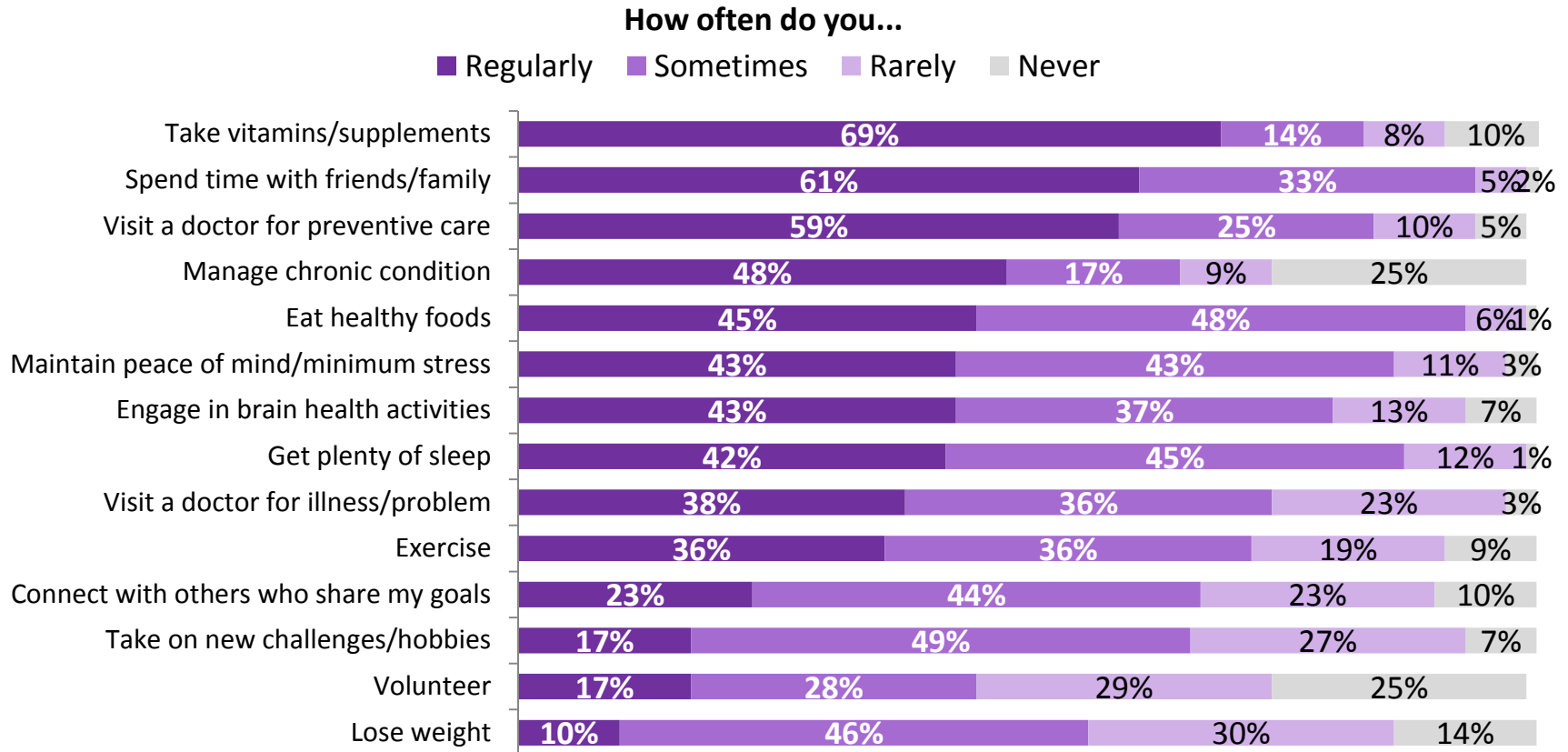


Ratings vary by age, income, and number of close friendships.

- Consumers ages 40-49 are more likely than consumers ages 50+ to rate their health as “excellent” (19% vs. 8%).
- Consumers whose household income is at least \$50,000 are more likely than consumers in households that earn less to rate their health as “excellent” (12% of \$50,000-\$99,000 and 16% of \$100,000+ vs. 7% of under \$50,000).
- Consumers who have at least 5 close friends are more likely than consumers with fewer close friends to rate maintaining a healthy lifestyle as “extremely” important to them (41% of 5+ close friends vs. 26% of no close friends and 30% of 1-4 close friends).

FINDINGS: BEHAVIORS

Most consumers do not regularly engage in specific healthy behaviors, with the exception of taking vitamins, spending time with friends/family, and visiting a doctor for preventative care.



FINDINGS: BEHAVIORS

Some groups are more likely to *regularly* engage in various behaviors.

BY AGE

	60+	50-59	40-49
Get plenty of sleep	49%	35%	39%
Eat healthy foods	49%	41%	40%
Take vitamins/supplements	78%	60%	62%
Visit doctor for preventative care	70%	52%	47%

	50+	40-49
Visit a doctor for an illness/ problem	43%	27%
Manage a chronic condition	52%	37%
Engage in brain health activities	45%	36%
Exercise	34%	42%

BY GENDER

	Men	Women
Maintain peace of mind/minimize stress	47%	38%
Eat healthy foods	40%	49%

BY INCOME

	<\$50k	\$50-99k	\$100K+
Get plenty of sleep	43%	48%	32%
Exercise	30%	40%	43%
Spend time with friends/family	53%	66%	70%
Engage in brain health activities	36%	49%	47%
Take on new challenges/hobby	13%	21%	22%
Connect w/ others share goals	19%	25%	29%

BY CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS

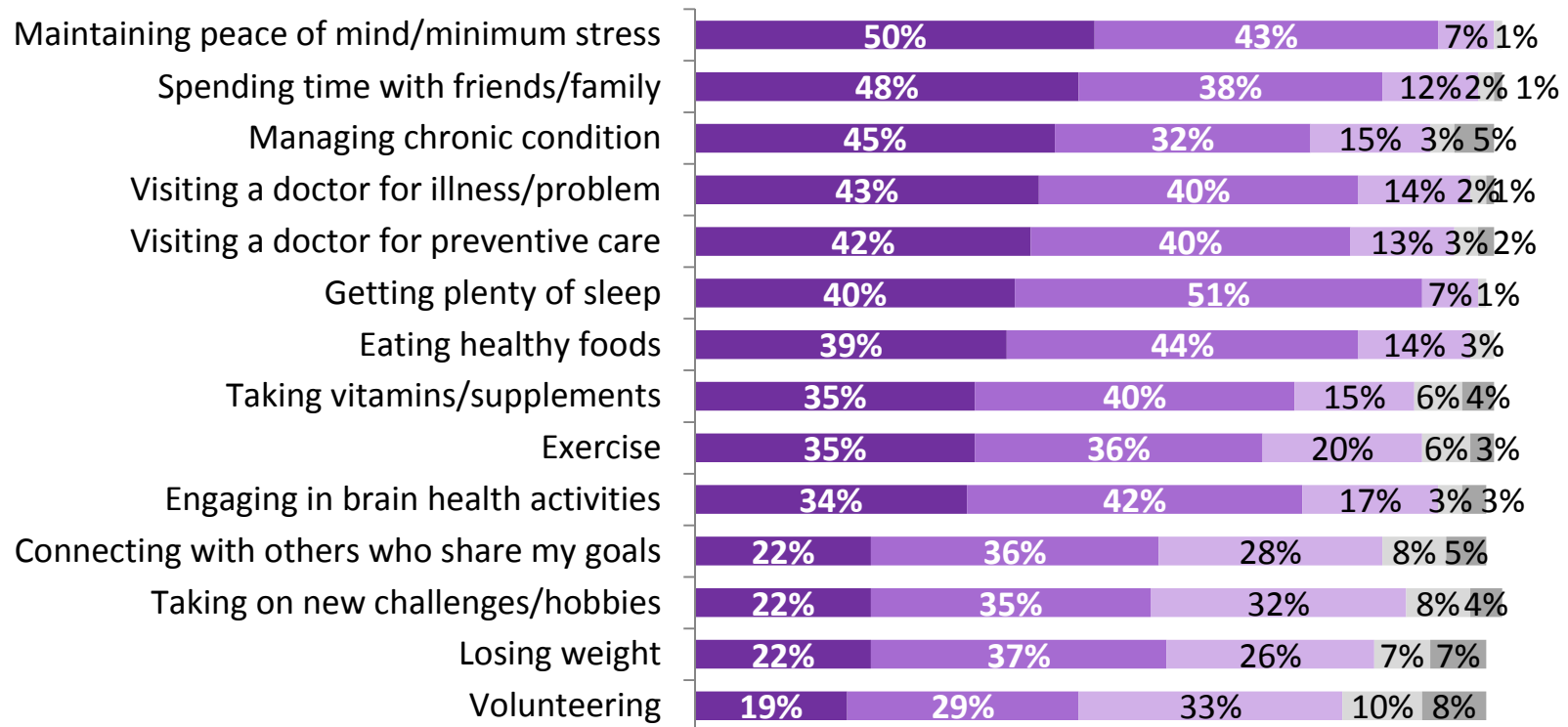
	None	1-4	5+
Get plenty of sleep	26%	43%	46%
Maintain peace of mind	33%	38%	53%
Eat healthy foods	32%	41%	54%
Take vitamins/supplements	59%	68%	72%
Spend time w/ friends/family	35%	58%	73%
Visit doc for preventative care	55%	56%	65%
Volunteer	10%	14%	26%
Engage in brain health activities	35%	40%	50%
Take on new challenges/hobby	7%	15%	25%
Connect w/ others share goals	7%	20%	33%

FINDINGS: BELIEFS

Most consumers find specific healthy behaviors important, led in intensity by maintaining peace of mind and spending time with friends/family.

How important is...?

■ Extremely ■ Very ■ Neither important nor unimportant ■ Not very ■ Not at all



FINDINGS: BELIEFS

Some groups are more likely to believe various behaviors are *important* (extremely or very).

BY AGE

	50+	40-49
Exercise	69%	79%
Volunteering	44%	59%
Take on new challenges/hobby	54%	64%
Connect w/ others who share goals	56%	66%
Visit doctor for preventative care	84%	76%
Visit a doctor for an illness/ problem	85%	77%
Manage a chronic condition	80%	70%

BY INCOME

	<\$50k	\$50-99k	\$100K+
Connect w/ others share goals	53%	59%	70%
Exercise	65%	73%	82%
Spend time with friends/family	80%	88%	96%
Volunteer	41%	50%	60%
Engage in brain health activities	71%	81%	80%

BY GENDER

	Men	Women
Get plenty of sleep	89%	94%
Maintain peace of mind/minimize stress	90%	95%
Eat healthy foods	78%	87%
Spend time w/ friends/family	82%	90%
Lose weight	55%	64%
Volunteering	44%	52%
Engage in brain health activities	72%	80%
Take on new challenges/hobby	51%	61%
Connect with others who share goals	54%	62%

BY CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS

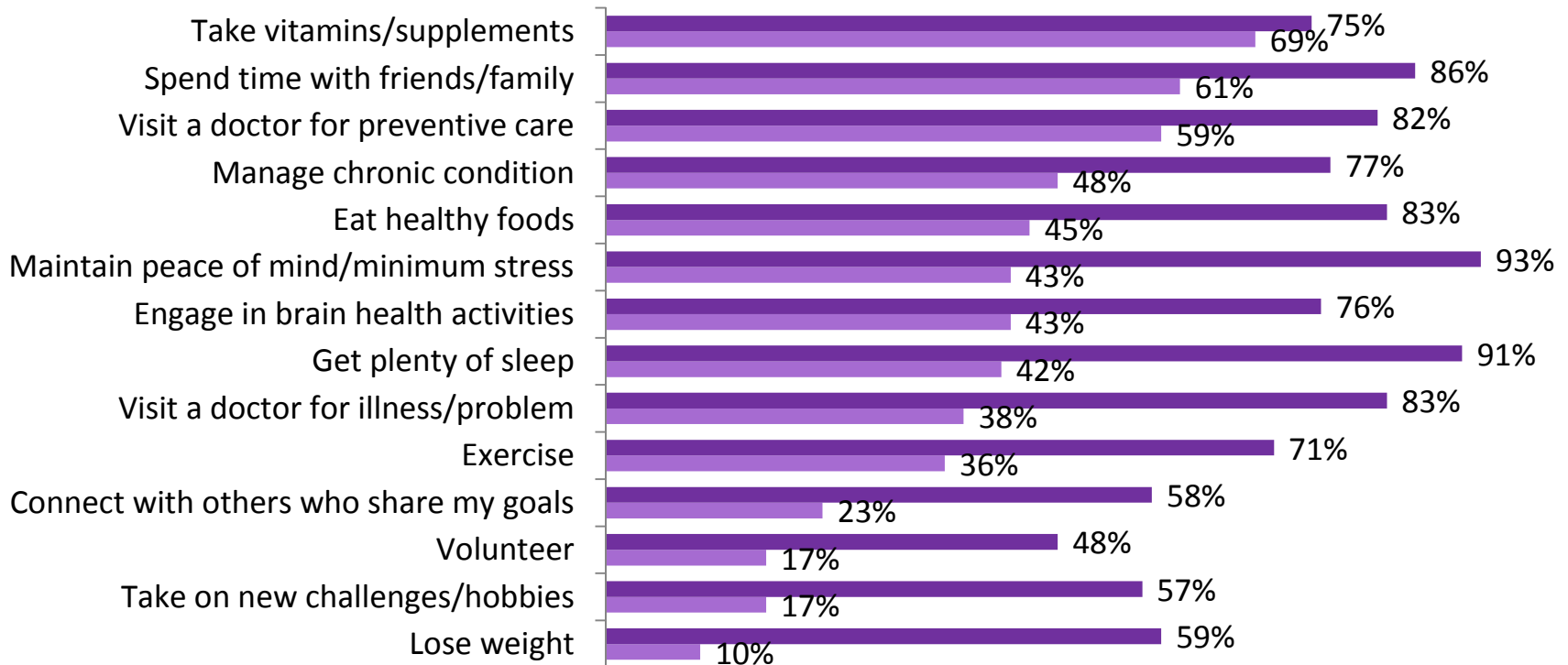
	None	1-4	5+
Maintain peace of mind	87%	91%	97%
Exercise	63%	69%	78%
Get plenty of sleep	81%	92%	94%
Eat healthy foods	73%	83%	86%
Spend time w/ friends/family	65%	85%	94%
Visit doc for preventative care	71%	82%	86%
Volunteer	30%	45%	59%
Take on new challenges/hobby	40%	55%	64%
Connect w/ others share goals	29%	57%	70%

FINDINGS: GAPS BETWEEN BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS

There are gaps between the importance consumers place on healthy behaviors and the frequency with which they engage in these behaviors.

Gap Between Importance and Engagement

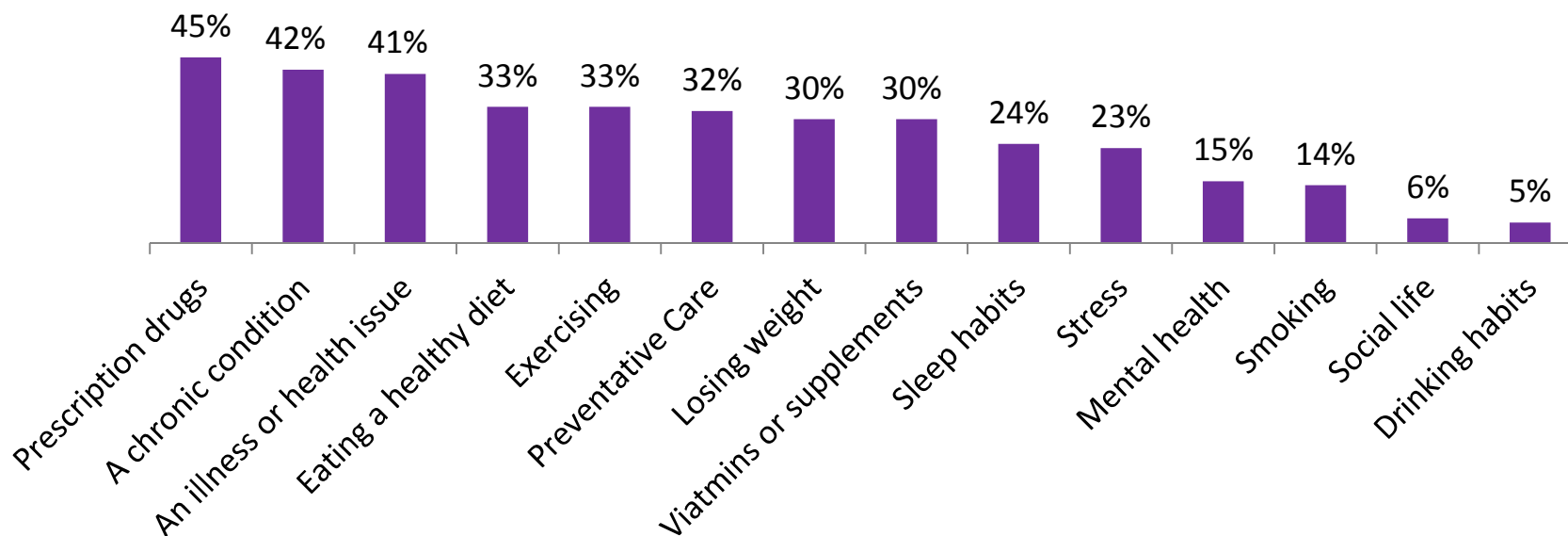
■ Extremely/Very Important ■ Do Regularly



FINDINGS: CONVERSATIONS WITH DOCTORS

Fewer than half of consumers have discussed specific healthy behaviors with a doctor in the past two years.

In the last two years, have you and a doctor discussed...?



FINDINGS: CONVERSATIONS WITH DOCTORS

Some groups are more likely to have *discussed a topic* with their doctor in the past two years.

BY AGE

	50+	40-49
Prescription drugs	49%	32%
A chronic condition	46%	29%
An illness or health issue	46%	28%
Preventative care	34%	27%
Vitamins or supplements	32%	24%
Stress	19%	34%
Mental health	12%	23%
Smoking	13%	20%

BY CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS

	None	1-4	5+
Exercise	27%	31%	39%
Preventative care	24%	32%	34%
Vitamins or supplements	20%	28%	36%

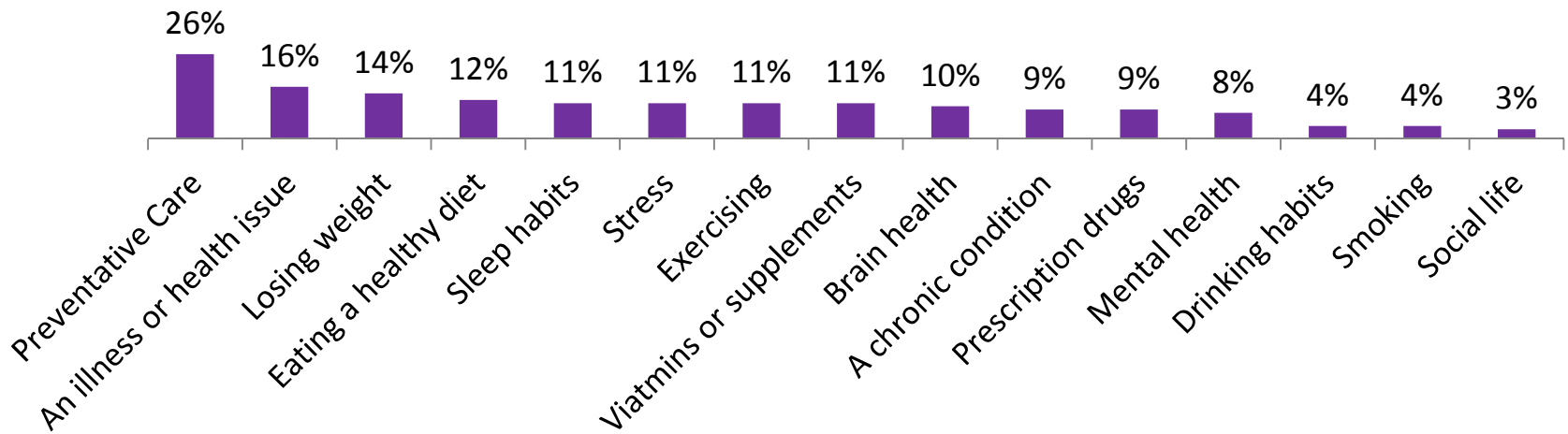
BY GENDER

	Men	Women
Stress	18%	27%
Mental health	12%	18%

FINDINGS: CONVERSATIONS WITH DOCTORS

Among those who have not discussed a topic with their doctor, there is little interest in doing so – with the exception of preventative care.

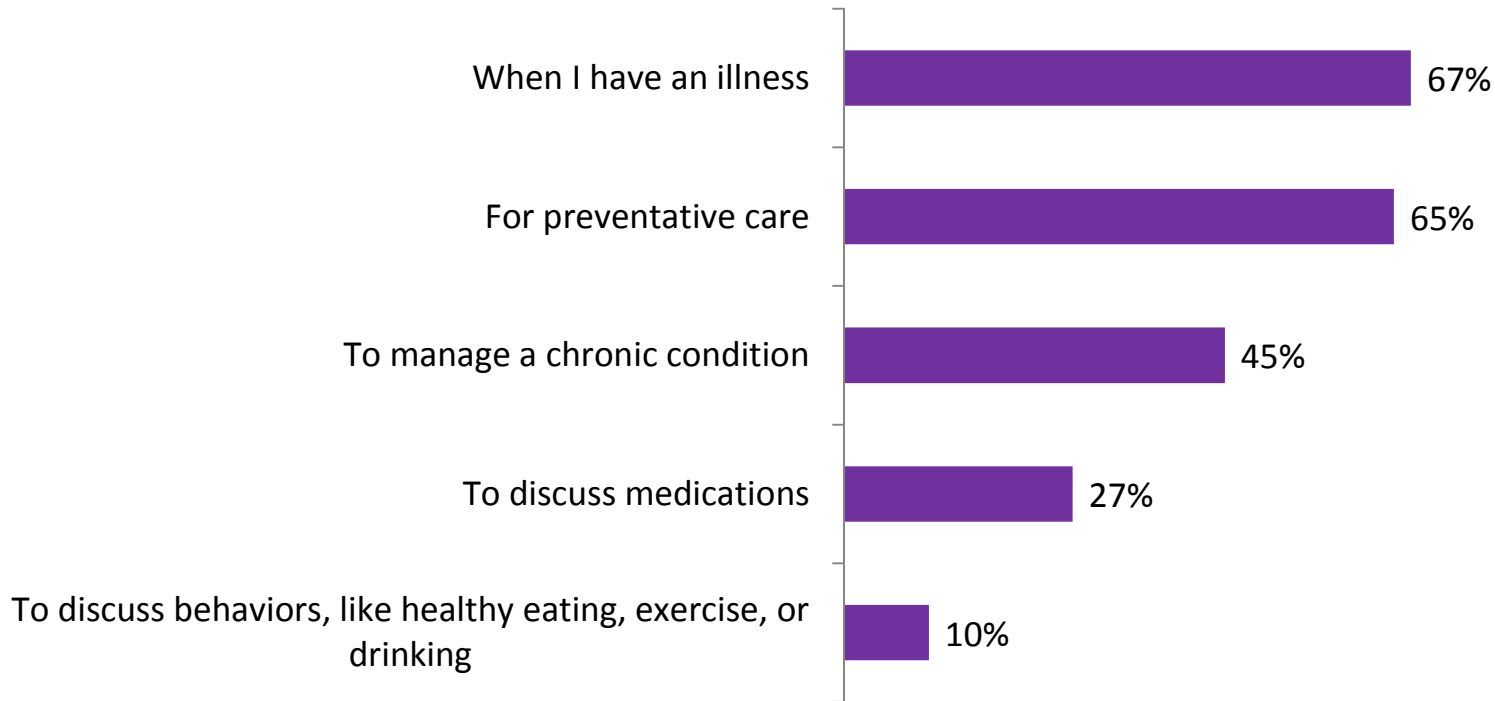
Want to discuss with doctor (Among those who have not done so in past two years)



FINDINGS: APPOINTMENTS WITH DOCTORS

The most common reasons consumers cite for seeing a doctor are to treat an illness, for preventative care, and to manage a chronic condition. Few visit a doctor to discuss behaviors like healthy eating, exercise, or drinking.

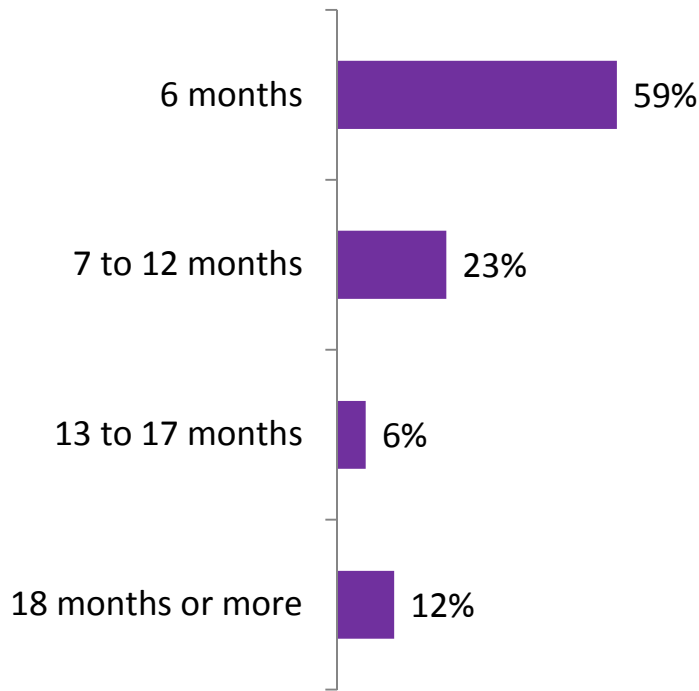
When do you visit a doctor?



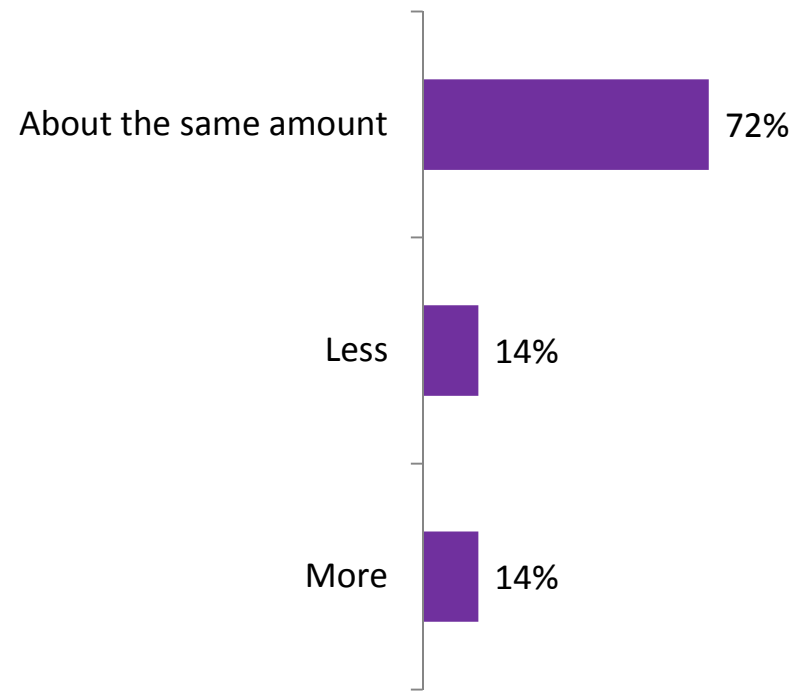
FINDINGS: APPOINTMENTS WITH DOCTORS

Most consumers see a doctor at least once a year, with a majority seeing a doctor every six months. Most do not wish they could see a doctor more or less frequently.

How often do you visit a doctor? Every...



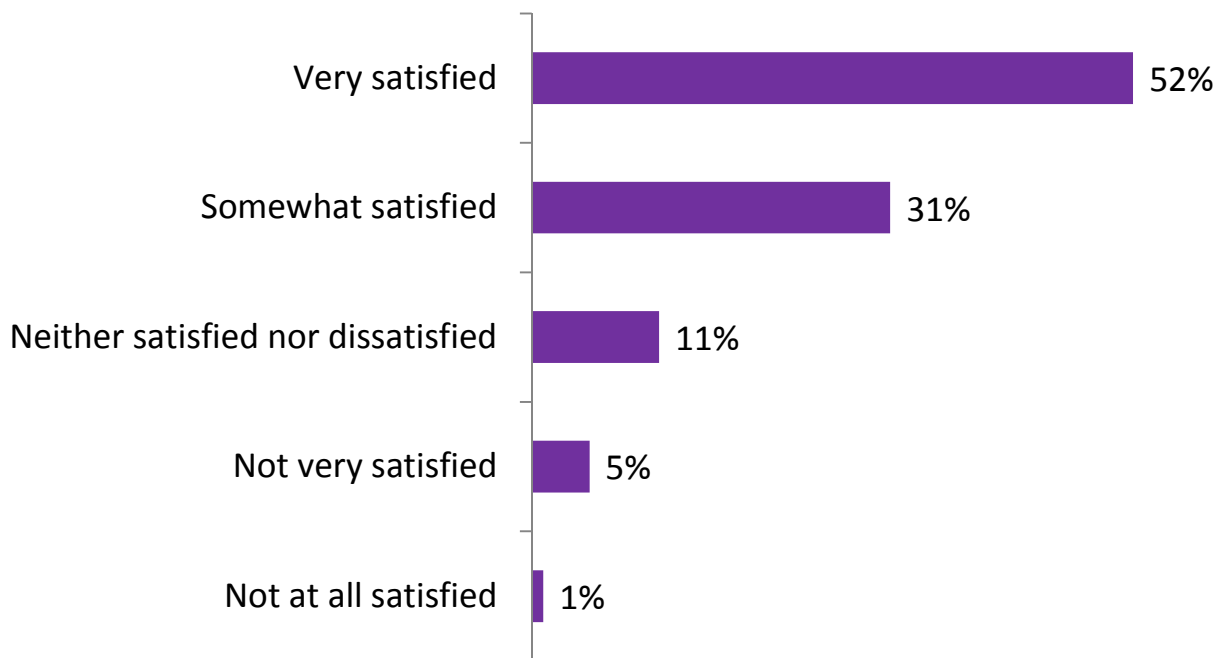
Do you wish you could see a doctor...



FINDINGS: APPOINTMENTS WITH DOCTORS

Most consumers are satisfied with the amount of time their doctor spends with them during a visit, including half who are “very” satisfied.

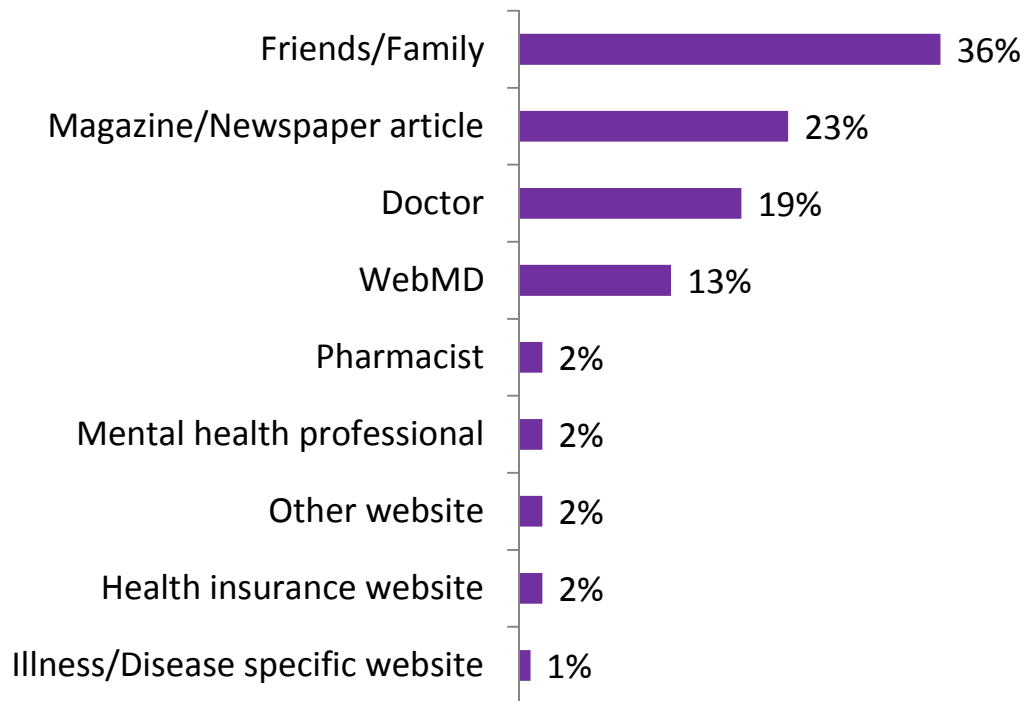
How satisfied are you with the amount of time your doctor spends with you during a visit?



FINDINGS: RESOURCES

Consumers are divided when it comes to where they turn most often for information about health and wellness: About a third use friends/family, roughly a quarter use print articles, a fifth use doctors, and just over one in ten use WebMD.

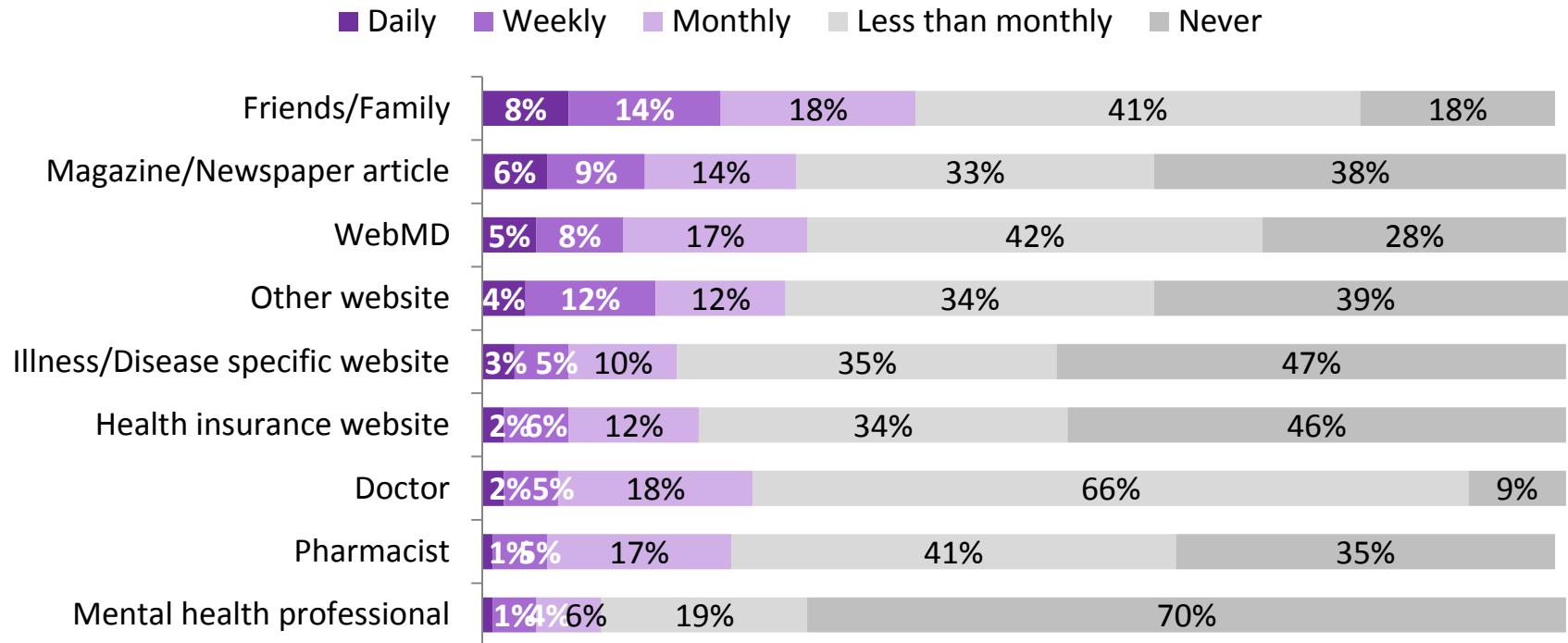
Which resource do you use most often for information about health and wellness?



FINDINGS: RESOURCES

The frequency with which consumers use resources for information about health and wellness also varies. Friends/family, print articles, and websites other than WebMD, and WebMD are the resources consumers most often use at least weekly.

How often do you use...for information about health and wellness



FINDINGS: SOURCES OF QUALITY CARE

Most consumers strongly agree they can receive quality care from doctors. Most also agree, more tepidly, they can receive quality care from nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, and nurses. Few agree they can receive quality care from health coaches.

You can receive quality care from...

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

