

Invisible Chronic Illness Awareness Week

Some Facts About the Chronically Ill

Nearly half of all uninsureds report having a chronic health condition.

- 1.2 million Americans with diabetes report that they are uninsured, and more than half of these report having an unmet need for health care or prescription drugs.
- 3.6 million Americans report having arthritis-related illnesses but have no health insurance, and again, more than half of these report having an unmet need for health care or prescription drugs.
- More than 1.7 million Americans with heart disease are uninsured, as are 2 million adults with asthma.

And as one would expect, the statistics show that the chronically ill do not get the health care they need.

- Nearly 38 percent of chronically ill adults indicate that they have skipped medical treatment or did not fill a prescription, as compared with 22 percent of healthy people.
- According to a RAND study, only 20 to 25 percent of diabetics receive critical glucose monitoring tests.
- Two-thirds of patients with high blood pressure receive recommended care
- Fewer than half of patients with heart disease receive proper medication
- Fewer than half of schizophrenic patients receive appropriate medication.
- Over 27 percent of the uninsured with chronic conditions report that they have not seen a doctor in 12 months.
- Thirty-eight percent of the chronically ill uninsured lack a usual source of care, and those who do rely less on private doctors (as opposed to clinics) than the insured.
- Almost half of the uninsured chronically ill forego needed medical care or prescription drugs.
- Despite foregoing care, the uninsured chronically ill face an average of \$2,000 in out-of-pocket expenses for health care in a 12-month period.
- In 2003, of the 3 million uninsured chronically ill, 42 percent went without needed care, 65 percent delayed care, and 71 percent failed to get needed prescription drugs, all because of cost concerns.