



report one

Healthy Australia

Seeking better options

2008

INSIGHTS INTO HEALTH BEHAVIOUR - HEALTHimals™ PROFILES

With over 9000 respondents the research is broadly reflective of the Australian community. The wealth of data has facilitated the creation of a series of innovative health profiles. Three psychological factors (control, vitality and health literacy) are used to generate a series of eight healthsumer personality profiles. These are referred to as HEALTHimals™ and are used as a basis for comparison.

HEALTHimals™ profiles are described as a means of understanding and profiling consumers' health management behaviour.

HEALTHimals™ offer insights for understanding healthsumers, raising awareness of health issues, better targeting of health messages and encouraging desirable health behaviour.

Active Positivist

Active Positivists are characterised by a high level of participation in their health care and health behaviour. They take control of their health destiny while valuing the opinion of health professionals and regarding them as partners in the process. Active Positivists are likely to be energetic and maintain a positive outlook toward health treatment, be willing to try alternatives and are persistent in seeking solutions. Their optimistic outlook should not be mistaken for naiveté.



Weary Detective

Weary Detectives assume personal responsibility for their health. They acknowledge the importance of health, engage in health related activities and are interested in seeking out health related information. At the same time they often dissatisfied with their prospects having tried a range of possible solutions with little success. Personal health seems like an endless crusade.



Comfortable Romantic

Comfortable Romantics actively participate in their healthcare management and have a high degree of trust in health professionals. They are involved and optimistic but are unlikely to be questioning of health professionals recommendations or treatments. Chances are, they will follow a course of action recommended to them and are likely to continue to follow recommendations when results are not obvious.



Apathetic Cynic

Apathetic Cynics typically have a low level of interest and participation in health matters. They feel restless but feel they have little say or control over their health. Apathetic Cynics hand over responsibility to health professionals, don't believe they can influence health outcomes and are unlikely to suggest alternative approaches. Apathetic Cynics have low levels of energy and are likely to have a sceptical view of health treatments. Their outlook is typically negative. They may actively seek information but are unlikely to use it. This can contribute to a state of anxiety and feelings of frustration.



Happy Unaware

Happy Unawares are characterised by a healthy disposition, high levels of satisfaction and vitality. This is coupled with a low degree of motivation, interest and responsibility for health. The predominant mindset may stem from a lack of exposure to health issues or conditions. The feeling is one of having 'nothing to worry about'. Personal health is often taken for granted.

Anxious Fatalist

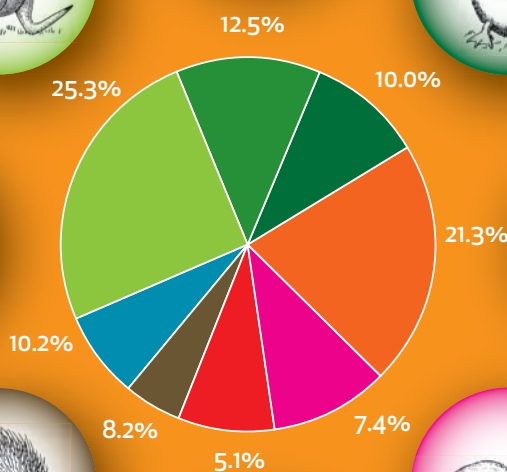
Anxious Fatalists spend plenty of time and energy thinking about their health. However, they are more likely to be pessimistic about their health outlook. With this in mind they don't enjoy learning about health issues or assume control of their health management. Despite their negativity, they see themselves as realists who don't see the point of investing in health since it won't make any difference.

Carefree Investigator

Carefree Investigators are more likely to be healthy, positive and interested in health but less likely to spend large amounts of time thinking about health or engaging in health-related activities. Carefree Investigators are largely satisfied with their health and confident in their ability to maintain it. If an issue arises they are likely to defer to their health professional and expect the issue to be dealt with.

Passive Worrier

Passive Worriers have a high level of interest in health matters and a confidence in their ability to understand their health. They can be resourceful in seeking out information and engaging professionals in discussion. But they are less likely to apply the information to their situation. They often have low levels of energy and are not good at assuming full responsibility for health. They are prone to collecting vast amounts of information and not applying it since 'nothing works for me'. The combination of information overload and disempowerment can contribute to a state of anxiety.



Ranking of the HEALTHimals™ according to their prevalence in the Ultrafeedback research.

| Profile | Control | Vitality | Literacy | % |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|----------|------|
| Active Positivist | High | High | High | 25.3 |
| Apathetic Cynic | Low | Low | Low | 21.3 |
| Weary Detective | High | Low | High | 12.5 |
| Happy Unaware | Low | High | Low | 10.2 |
| Comfortable Romantic | High | Low | High | 10.0 |
| Anxious Fatalist | High | Low | Low | 8.2 |
| Passive Worrier | Low | Low | High | 7.4 |
| Carefree Investigator | Low | High | High | 5.1 |

What is Healthy Australia?

Healthy Australia is the nation's first in depth investigation into how health consumers (*healthsumers*) feel about their health experience, the services they receive and how they look for health solutions.

It is based on the premise that healthsumers are more than just 'patients'. They are actively engaged in managing their health, seeking information and purchasing solutions. Encouraging greater individual responsibility for health is a key driver. Prevention is better than cure.

Healthy Australia is intended to serve as a reference for health professionals and provide decision support for those engaged in the provision of healthcare solutions.

SELECTED RESEARCH INSIGHTS

For 51% of respondents, health remains the same when compared with last year. By contrast, 91% of Active Positivists report feeling better or the same compared to 61% of Weary Detectives.

Sleeping well is vital, but sleep satisfaction, at 2.91 (on a 5 point scale) is the lowest scoring item across the entire survey.

Generation Y respondents tend to feel more anxious and irritable than Seniors and Baby boomers

Almost 30% of smokers are Apathetic Cynics compared with 16% of Active Positivists.

The four most important information sources are talking to GPs, the internet, TV and word of mouth.

GPs are the most trusted information source

The amount of health information available is not necessarily helping people maintain their health

Respondents are likely to remain with their current GP and loyalty increases with age.

Males have higher satisfaction ratings with fewer service experiences.

Of the 76% of respondents who had seen a GP in the past 12 months, 24% were being treated for depression (These respondents were also being treated for an average of 3.9 other conditions).

38% of respondents have used complementary therapies in the past year and 77% believe they have had a positive effect.

19% of respondents reported a surgical procedure in the past 12 months (79% related to treatment of a diagnosed condition).

20% of respondents reported a hospital stay in the past 12 months (elective surgery accounted for over half the hospital stays).

“The single most important factor in determining the perception of illness is not the disease itself but whether or not the sufferer has a sleep disorder”

“Illness perceptions are strongly linked with lifestyles, emotional wellbeing and attitudes”

“Seniors far exceed all other ages groups in health satisfaction”

“Only 41% of Generation Y reported high or very high satisfaction with health compared with 64% of seniors”

“UltraFeedback research challenges the assumption that baby boomers will place an unprecedented demand on health services”

“Satisfaction with health in rural areas is currently comparable with metropolitan areas even though services are not readily available”

“UltraFeedback’s responses suggest the impact of an overweight population will expand far beyond the well-publicised issue of diabetes”

“Healthsumers are sceptical of health information coming from government and industry”

“UltraFeedback data suggests the health demands arising from increasing obesity are likely to multiply”

“Healthsumers see themselves as active partners constructing their health information from a broad marketplace of sources”

“UltraFeedback data shows little evidence of a link between hypertension and other unhealthy lifestyle or motivation habits. In fact, some of our data suggests the contrary”

“...those with household incomes of less than \$25,000 were significantly more likely to have undergone a surgical procedure...”

