

Chapter 8

The Chiropractic Patient in Australia

In this chapter, information gathered from Pages 4-8 of the job analysis survey is explored. This portion of the survey relates to the chiropractic patient as perceived by the practitioner/respondent.

The survey asked that practitioners describe their patients in terms of gender, age, place of birth, occupation, and condition. A typical patient is an individual who enters a chiropractor's office complaining of some specific pain symptomatology: a headache of one type or another; a pain in the middle or lower back, neck, shoulder, arm, leg, or other area, all of which may or may not be concurrent with a spinal subluxation or other joint dysfunction. As a result of proper history taking, physical examination, neuromusculoskeletal examination, and other diagnostic procedures, a diagnosis is made which may or may not include a subluxation.

In completing the portion of the survey relating to the patient, the respondent chiropractors were asked to estimate the distribution of patients in each of the indicated categories.

A five-point scale combining percentages with a corresponding label for each segment of the scale was used. The responses in each category were averaged. The results appear in Table 8.1 and in charts throughout this chapter.

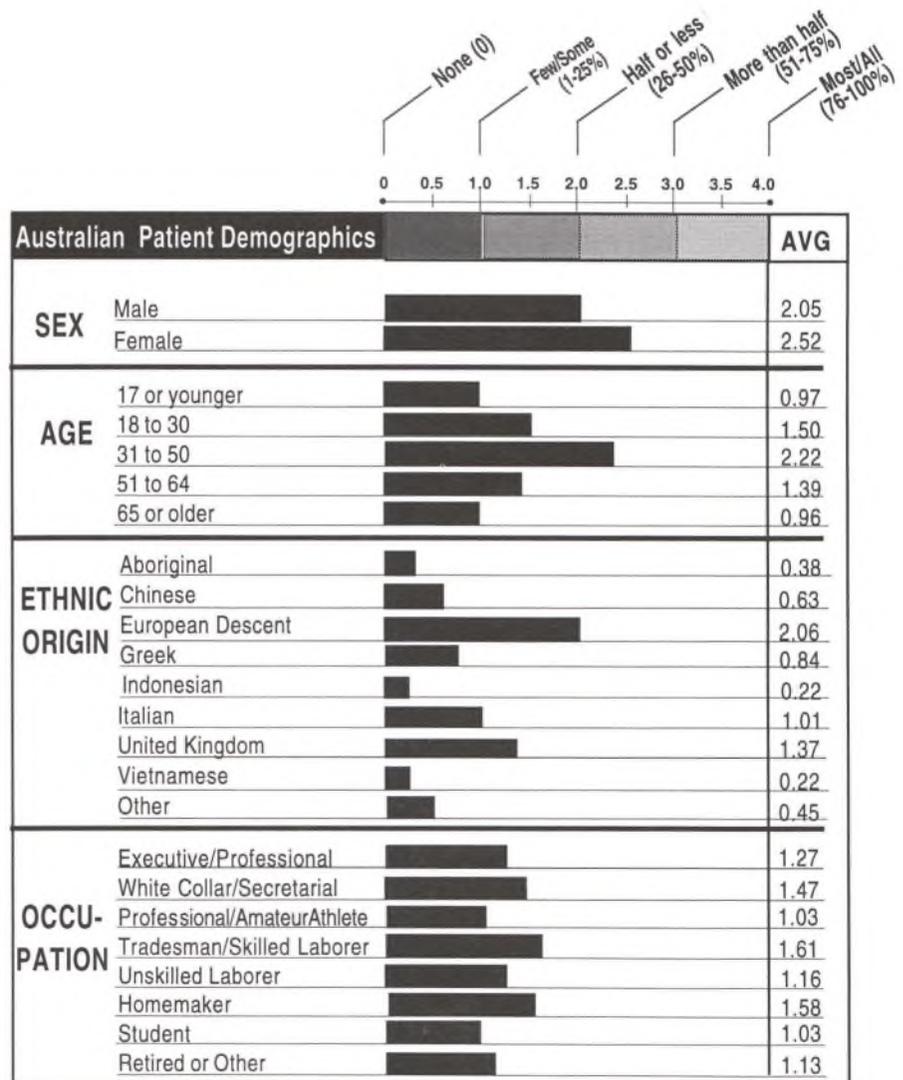


TABLE 8.1

Sex/Gender of Patients

Chiropractors estimated that more than half of their patients are female (55.2%) while fewer than half (44.8%) are male (Figure 8.1). In comparison with data from the *United States Job Analysis of Chiropractic*, 59.3% of chiropractic patients are female and 40.7% are male.

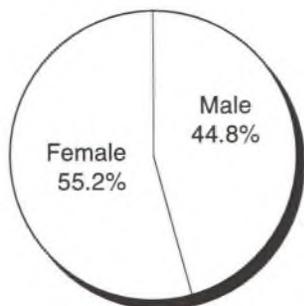


FIGURE 8.1
Patient Gender*

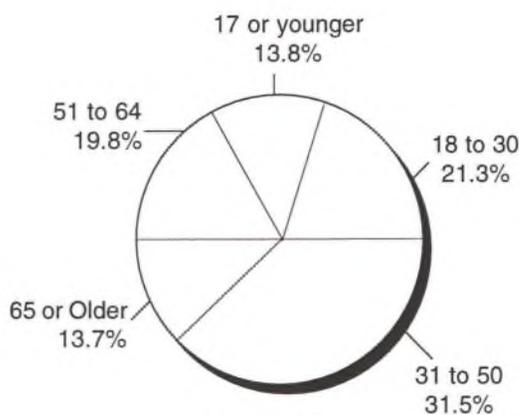


FIGURE 8.2
Patient Age*

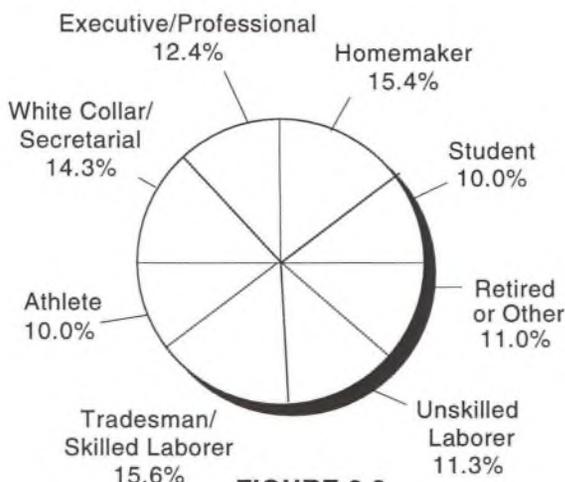


FIGURE 8.3
Patient Occupation*

* See page 70 for explanation of percentages.

Age of Patients

In relation to age, 13.8% of patients were age 17 or younger; 21.3% were 18 to 30; 31.5% were 31 to 50; 19.8% were 51 to 64; and 13.7% were 65 or older (Figure 8.2).

Ethnic Origin

Overall, 28.8% of the patients were of European descent (Table 8.1). This was followed by the United Kingdom (19.1%), Italian (14.1%), Greek (11.7%), Chinese (8.8%), Other (6.2%), Aboriginal (5.3%), Vietnamese (3.1%), and Indonesian (3.0%).

Patient Occupation

Concerning patient occupation, no single occupational group is one which chiropractors treat predominately. All groups are represented and no single occupational group appears to represent more than 15.6% of chiropractic practice (Figure 8.3).

Patient Conditions

Following the section on patient demographics, chiropractors were asked to consider their practices during the past two years

and indicate how often they had seen patients with the **presenting and/or concurrent** conditions listed. A zero-to-four rating scale was used. The list of conditions presented on the survey form and reflected in this report was not meant to be all-inclusive. Listed below are conditions in descending order of the frequency with which they were seen by survey respondents.

Frequency of Presenting and Concurrent Patient Conditions	
ROUTINELY SEEN	Spinal subluxation/joint dysfunction
	Headaches
OFTEN SEEN	Osteoarthritis/degenerative joint disease
	Extremity subluxation/joint dysfunction
	Muscular strain/tear
	Peripheral neuritis or neuralgia
	Vertebral facet syndrome
	High or low blood pressure
	Tendinitis/tenosynovitis
	Scoliosis
	Hyperlordosis of cervical or lumbar spine
	Allergies
	Asthma, emphysema or COPD
	Kyphosis of thoracic spine
	Intervertebral disc syndrome
	Sprain or dislocation of any joint
	Respiratory viral or bacterial infection
	Obesity
	Acne, dermatitis or psoriasis
	Menstrual disorder
SOMETIMES SEEN	Articular joint congenital/developmental anomaly
	Radiculitis or radiculopathy
	Pregnancy
	Osteoporosis/osteomalacia
	Nutritional disorders
	Upper respiratory or ear infection
	Skeletal congenital/developmental anomaly
	TMJ syndrome
	Eye or vision disorder
	Bursitis or synovitis
	Carpal or tarsal tunnel syndrome
	Thoracic outlet syndrome

TABLE 8.2 (Continued on next page)
Presenting and Concurrent Patient Conditions

Frequency of Presenting and Concurrent Patient Conditions

SOMETIMES SEEN (CONT.)

- Ear or hearing disorder
- Occupational or environmental disorder
- Systemic/rheumatoid arthritis or gout
- Hiatus or inguinal hernia
- Gastrointestinal bacterial or viral infection
- Psychological disorders
- Loss of equilibrium
- Diabetes
- Integument bacterial or fungal infection
- Eating disorders
- Hemorrhoids
- Colitis or diverticulitis
- Ulcer of stomach, intestine or colon
- Infection of kidney or urinary tract
- Angina or myocardial infarction
- Peripheral artery or vein disorder
- Skin cancer
- Disorder of throat or larynx
- Thyroid or parathyroid disorder
- Muscular atrophy

RARELY SEEN

- Herpes simplex or zoster
- Prostate disorder
- Non-cancerous disorder of breast
- Disorder of nose or sense of smell
- Anemia
- Immunological disorder
- Female infertility
- Murmur or rhythm irregularity
- Fracture
- Spinal canal stenosis
- Pigment disorders
- Adrenal disorder
- ALS, multiple sclerosis or Parkinson's
- Kidney stones
- Cranial nerve disorder
- Endocrine or metabolic bone disorder
- Vertebrobasilar artery insufficiency

**TABLE 8.2 (Continued on next page)
Presenting and Concurrent Patient Conditions**

Frequency of Presenting and Concurrent Patient Conditions	
RARELY SEEN (CONT.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendicitis, cholecystitis or pancreatitis Stroke or cerebrovascular condition Male infertility or impotency Muscular dystrophy Aseptic necrosis or epiphysitis Tumor of breast or female reproductive system Cardiovascular congenital anomaly Hereditary disorder Arterial aneurysm Tearing or rupture of nerve/plexus Measles/German measles Chickenpox Pituitary disorder Joint tumor or neoplasm Bone tumor Chronic kidney disease or failure Mumps Bacterial infection of joint Whooping cough Atelectasis or pneumothorax Parasitic disorder Tumor of gastrointestinal tract Thymus or pineal disorder
VIRTUALLY NEVER SEEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tumor of lung or respiratory passages Brain or spinal cord tumor Cancer of the marrow or lymphatic system Herpes II Polycythemia Endocrine tumor Tumor of eye, ear, nose or throat Chlamydia Male reproductive congenital anomaly Tumor of male reproductive system AIDS-related complex Muscle tumor Tumor of the kidney or bladder Venereal warts Gonorrhea Syphilis

TABLE 8.2
Presenting and Concurrent Patient Conditions

Articular/Joint

Articular/Joint conditions were considered first by respondents (Table 8.3). Spinal subluxations or joint dysfunctions and osteoarthritis/degenerative joint disease were seen routinely in chiropractors' offices. Articular/Joint conditions such as extremity subluxation/joint dysfunction, vertebral facet syndrome, sprain or dislocation of any joint, hyperlordosis of cervical or lumbar spine, scoliosis, and intervertebral disc syndrome were frequently seen. Most other conditions in the Articular/Joint area were often seen. Only four of the conditions listed in this area were rarely seen.

Neurological

Neurological conditions were considered next (Table 8.3). Patients presenting with headaches were seen routinely in chiropractors' offices. Peripheral neuritis or neuralgia was often seen. Other related conditions were seen sometimes, rarely or never.

Skeletal

The next section involved Skeletal conditions (Table 8.4). Osteoporosis/osteomalacia and congenital developmental anomalies were sometimes seen. According to response data, all other skeletal conditions were rarely seen.

Muscular

In the Muscular section, muscular strains/tears were often seen, as was tendinitis/tenosynovitis (Table 8.4). Other muscular conditions were seen sometimes, rarely or never.

Cardiovascular

In the Cardiovascular section, high or low blood pressure was often seen (Table 8.4). All other conditions were sometimes or rarely seen.

Respiratory

In the Respiratory section, asthma, emphysema or COPD and viral or bacterial infection, were often seen (Table 8.4). The other conditions were sometimes, rarely or never seen.

Integument

In the section addressing Integument conditions, it was noted that acne, dermatitis or psoriasis was often seen (Table 8.4). All other conditions were sometimes, or rarely seen.

Gastrointestinal

In the Gastrointestinal area, hernias, bacterial or viral infections, ulcers, colitis, diverticulitis, and hemorrhoids were sometimes seen (Table 8.5). Patients having the other conditions listed were rarely seen.

Renal/Urological

In the Renal/Urological area, infections of the kidney or urinary tract were sometimes seen (Table 8.5). Other conditions listed were rarely or never seen.

Male Reproductive

In the Male Reproductive area, patients presenting with concurrent conditions in this area were rarely or never seen in most chiropractic offices (Table 8.5).

Female Reproductive

In the Female Reproductive area, menstrual disorders were often seen, and pregnancy was sometimes seen. Other conditions listed were rarely seen (Table 8.5).

Hematological/Lymphatic

In the Hematological/Lymphatic area, anemia, immunological, and hereditary disorders were rarely seen (Table 8.5); other conditions were generally never seen in the typical chiropractor's office.

Endocrine/Metabolic

In the Endocrine/Metabolic area, obesity was often seen in chiropractors' offices; thyroid or parathyroid disorders, and diabetes were sometimes seen (Table 8.6). Other conditions were rarely or never seen.

Childhood Disorders

In the area of Childhood Disorders, upper respiratory or ear infections were sometimes seen (scoliosis and congenital/developmental anomalies are listed with Articular/Joint conditions). All other conditions were rarely seen in a chiropractor's office (Table 8.6).

Venereal

In the Venereal area, the conditions listed were typically never seen in a chiropractor's office (Table 8.6).

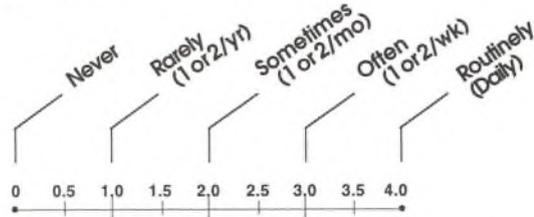
EENT (eye, ear, nose, and throat)

In the EENT (eye, ear, nose, and throat) section, eye or vision disorders were sometimes seen, as were ear or hearing disorders. Disorders of the nose, throat, and larynx were rarely seen. Tumors of the eye, ear, nose, or throat were typically never seen (Table 8.6).

Miscellaneous

In the miscellaneous section, allergies were often seen. Nutritional, psychological, and eating disorders were sometimes seen (Table 8.6). The other area listed, AIDS-related complex, was typically never seen in a chiropractic practice.

The following tables present the frequency of presenting and concurrent conditions as they were rated on a zero-to-four scale.



Presenting and Concurrent Condition: Articular/Joint	0	1	2	3	4	AVG
Spinal subluxation/joint dysfunction						3.97
Extremity subluxation/joint dysfunction						3.41
Sprain or dislocation of any joint						2.72
Vertebral facet syndrome						3.09
Intervertebral disc syndrome						2.82
Thoracic outlet syndrome						2.07
Hyperlordosis of cervical or lumbar spine						2.89
Kyphosis of thoracic spine						2.83
Aseptic necrosis or epiphysitis						0.87
Scoliosis						2.96
Congenital/developmental anomaly						2.46
Osteoarthritis/degenerative joint disease						3.55
Systemic/rheumatoid arthritis or gout						2.00
Bacterial infection of joint						0.63
Bursitis or synovitis						2.12
Carpal or tarsal tunnel syndrome						2.10
TMJ syndrome						2.27
Joint tumor or neoplasm						0.73
Spinal canal stenosis						1.25

Presenting and Concurrent Condition: Neurological	0	1	2	3	4	AVG
Headaches						3.84
Peripheral neuritis or neuralgia						3.21
ALS, multiple sclerosis or Parkinson's						1.15
Tearing or rupture of nerve/plexus						0.80
Stroke or cerebrovascular condition						1.06
Vertebrobasilar artery insufficiency						1.10
Cranial nerve disorder						1.12
Radiculitis or radiculopathy						2.38
Loss of equilibrium						1.92
Brain or spinal cord tumor						0.48

TABLE 8.3
Frequency of Articular/Joint, and Neurological Conditions

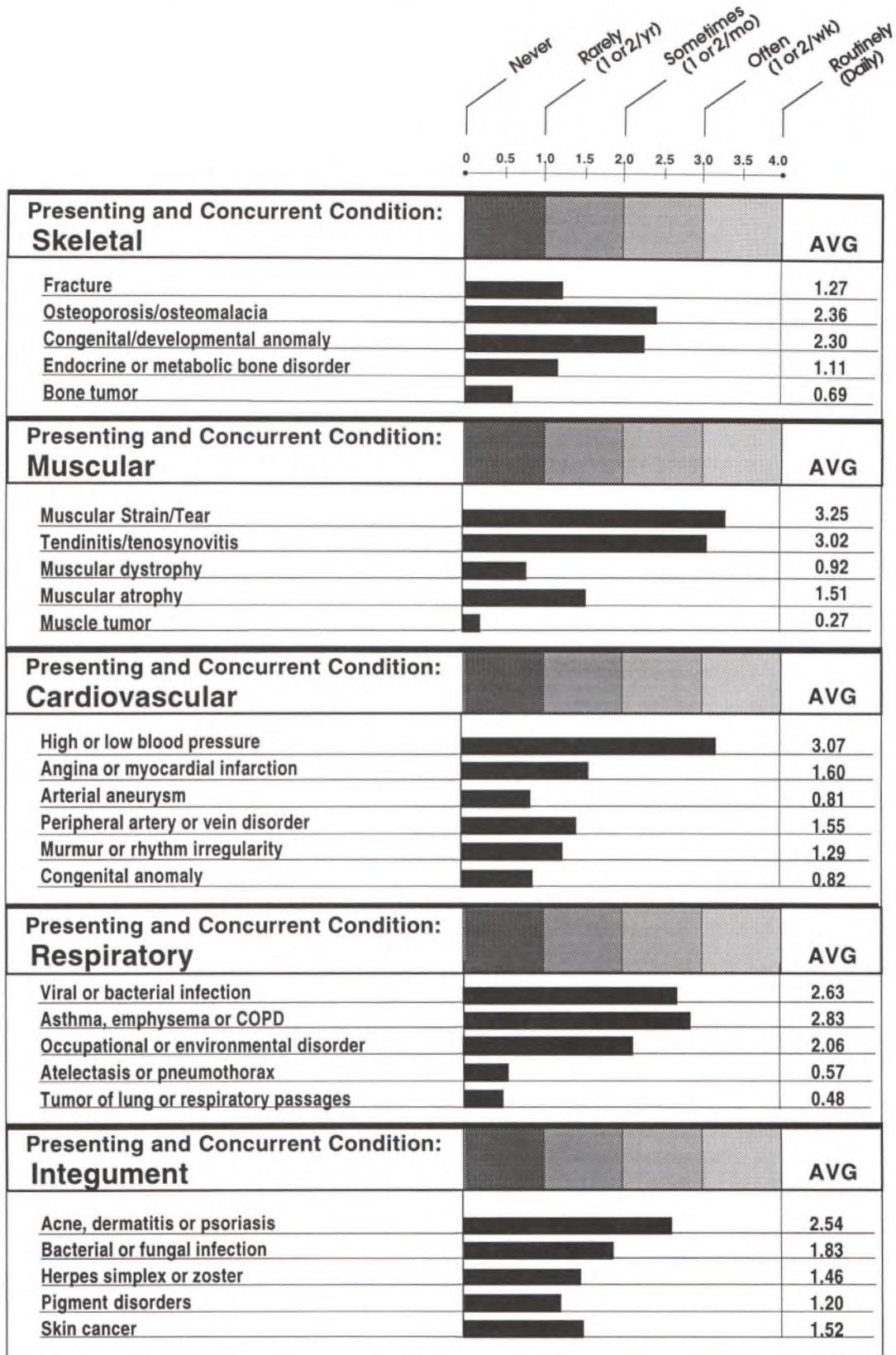


TABLE 8.4
Frequency of Skeletal, Muscular, Cardiovascular, Respiratory,
and Integument Conditions

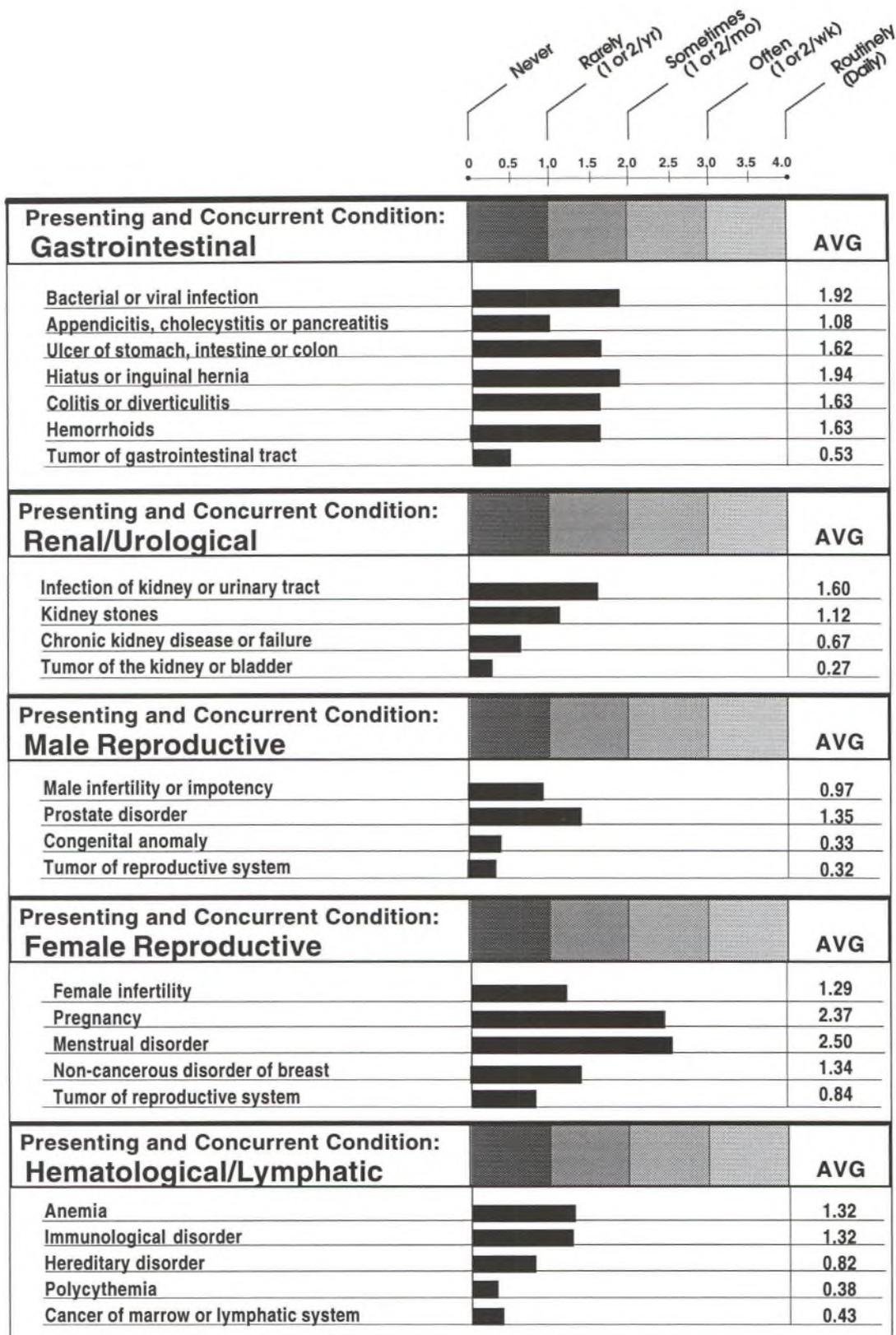


TABLE 8.5
Frequency of Gastrointestinal, Renal/Urological, Male Reproductive, Female Reproductive, and Hematological/Lymphatic Conditions

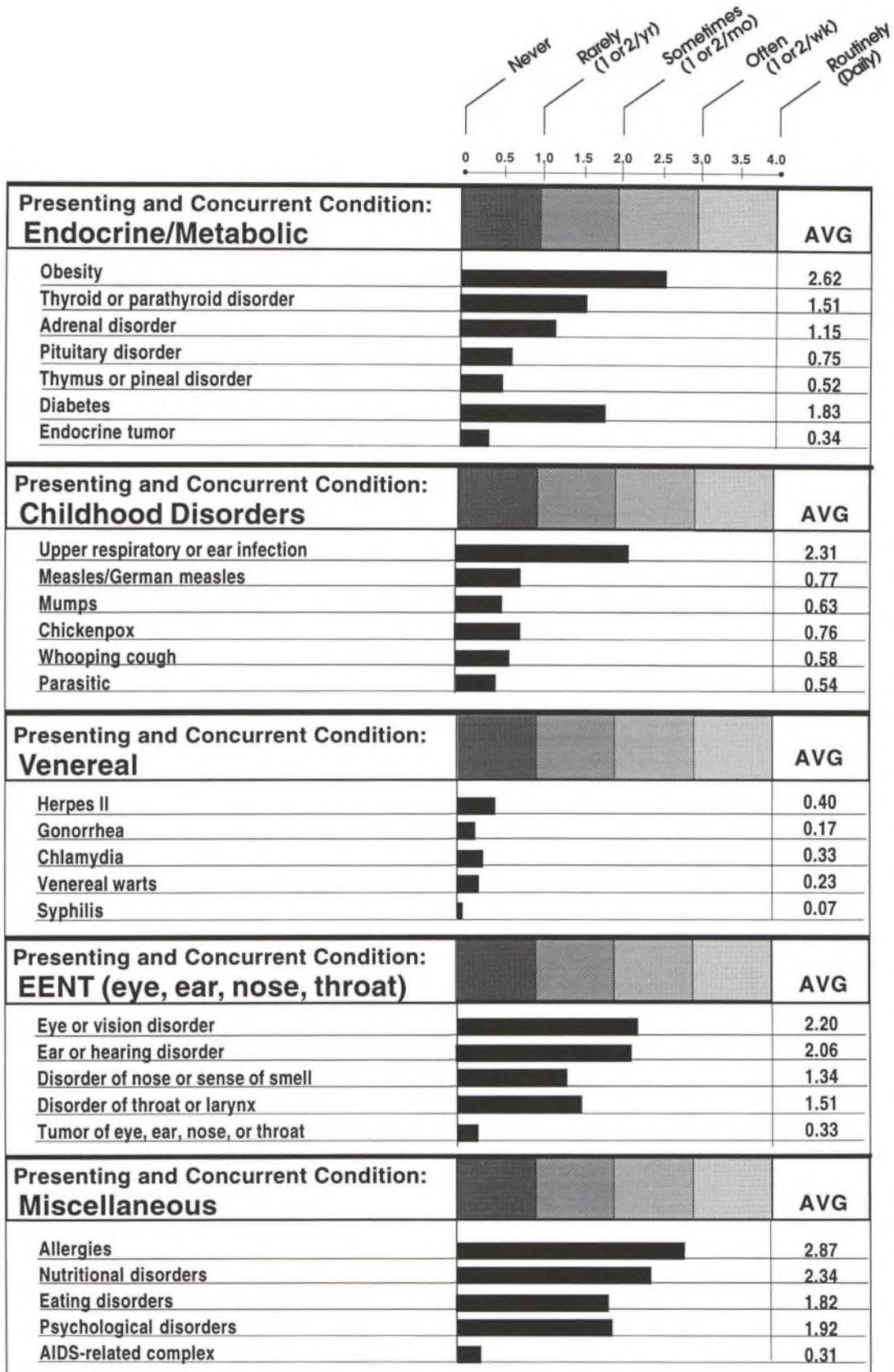


TABLE 8.6
Frequency of Endocrine/Metabolic, Childhood Disorders, Venereal, EENT, and
Miscellaneous Conditions