BRFSS Brief

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an annual statewide telephone survey of adults developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and administered by the New York State Department of Health. The BRFSS is designed to provide information on behaviors, risk factors, and utilization of preventive services related to the leading causes of chronic and infectious diseases, disability, injury, and death among the noninstitutionalized, civilian population aged 18 years and older.

Cardiovascular Disease
New York State Adults, 2010

Introduction and Key Findings

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a group of diseases involving the circulatory system and includes strokes and diseases of the heart. Heart disease and stroke are major causes of disability. CVD is the leading cause of death in New York state (NYS), accounting for almost 40 percent of all deaths statewide.[1,2] CVD is also the leading cause of preventable death in people less than 65 years of age.[3] **Coronary heart disease** (CHD), the most common type of CVD, occurs when plaque builds up and narrows the arteries that supply blood to the heart. **Heart attack** (also called acute myocardial infarction) occurs when an artery becomes completely blocked, resulting in lack of blood flow to the heart. **Angina** refers to pain or discomfort in the chest that occurs when some part of the heart does not receive enough blood and is a common symptom of CHD. **A stroke** (cerebrovascular disease) occurs when a clot blocks the blood supply to the brain or when a blood vessel bursts causing internal bleeding in the brain. When the heart is no longer able to pump enough blood out to the rest of the body, this is **heart failure**.

Never starting to smoke or quitting, being physically active, eating a healthy diet, maintaining a healthy weight, and being tested and treated for high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol and diabetes are all actions that can prevent CVD.
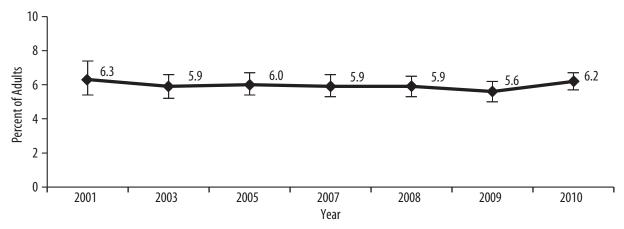
The percentage of adults in NYS who reported that they had had a heart attack, angina/CHD, or stroke has remained stable since 2001 (Figures 1-3). This percentage represents almost 1,162,000 adults in NYS. The proportion of adults reporting having had a heart attack, angina/CHD or stroke approximately doubled for each decade of life; by age 65 and older, nearly a quarter of adults reported some type of CVD (Table 1). Men were more likely to report having had a heart attack or angina/CHD, while women were more likely to report having had a stroke. People who are high school graduates and those with less than high school educations were also significantly more likely to report some type of CVD than those who are college graduates or reported some college education.

BRFSS Questions

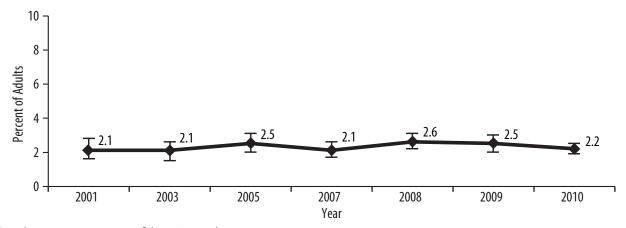Has a doctor, nurse, or other health professional ever told you that you had any of the following?

1. [Ever told] you had a heart attack, also called a myocardial infarction?
2. [Ever told] you had angina or coronary heart disease?
3. [Ever told] you had a stroke?

Figure 1. Prevalence of heart attack or angina/CHD among New York State adults, by BRFSS survey year
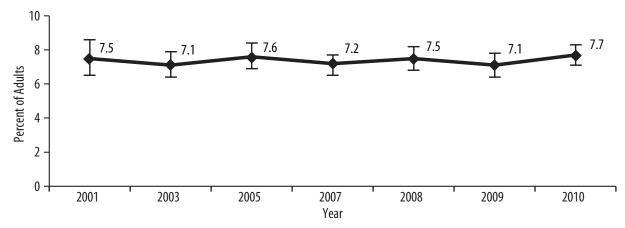

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 2. Prevalence of stroke among New York State adults, by BRFSS survey year

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 3. Prevalence of cardiovascular disease (heart attack, angina/CHD, stroke) among New York State adults, by BRFSS survey year

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

History of cardiovascular disease (self-reported heart attack, angina/CHD, or stroke) among New York State adults: 2010 BRFSS

	Heart attack		Angina/CHD		Heart Attack or Angina/CHD		Stroke		Heart attack, angina/CHD, or stroke	
	%[a]	95% CI[a]	%[a]	95% CI[a]	%[a]	95% CI[a]	%[a]	95% CI[a]	%[a]	95% CI[a]
New York State (NYS) [n=8,950]	3.9	3.5-4.3	4.4	4.0-4.8	6.2	5.7-6.7	2.2	1.9-2.5	7.7	7.1-8.3
Sex										
Male	5.0	4.3-5.7	5.4	4.7-6.2	7.6	6.8-8.5	1.9	1.5-2.4	8.9	8.0-9.9
Female	3.0	2.5-3.5	3.4	3.0-3.9	4.9	4.4-5.5	2.5	2.1-3.0	6.6	5.9-7.3
Age (years)										
18-24	0.4*	0.1-2.7	0.0*	—	0.4*	0.1-2.7	0.0*	—	0.4*	0.1-2.7
25-34	0.7*	0.2-2.1	0.2*	0.04-0.8	0.7*	0.2-2.1	0.7*	0.3-1.8	1.4*	0.7-2.9
35-44	0.6*	0.3-1.2	1.1*	0.6-2.1	1.4*	0.8-2.3	0.9*	0.4-2.0	2.2*	1.3-3.4
45-54	3.5	2.6-4.6	2.8*	2.0-3.8	4.5	3.5-5.7	2.0	1.4-2.8	6.0	4.8-7.3
55-64	6.0	4.9-7.3	6.0	4.9-7.4	8.9	7.5-10.5	2.6	1.9-3.4	10.5	9.1-12.2
65+	11.8	10.4-13.4	15.0	13.5-16.6	19.8	18.1-21.6	6.3	5.4-7.3	23.6	21.9-25.5
Race/ethnicity										
White, non-Hispanic	4.3	3.8-4.8	4.7	4.3-5.3	6.7	6.1-7.3	2.3	2.0-2.7	8.3	7.6-9.0
Black, non-Hispanic	3.2*	2.1-4.6	4.3	3.0-6.0	6.1	4.5-8.1	2.4*	1.5-3.6	7.9	6.1-10.1
Hispanic	3.4*	2.3-4.9	2.7*	1.9-4.0	4.5	3.3-6.2	1.6*	1.0-2.6	5.4	4.0-7.2
Other, non-Hispanic	2.2*	1.1-4.1	3.3*	1.9-5.6	4.0*	2.4-6.4	1.7*	0.7-4.3	5.1*	3.2-8.2
Annual household Income										
<$15,000	7.0	5.4-9.0	7.5	5.8-9.5	10.3	8.4-12.6	4.1	2.9-5.8	12.5	10.3-15.1
$15,000-$24,999	5.9	4.7-7.5	5.1	4.1-6.4	8.1	6.6-9.8	4.3	3.2-5.6	11.0	9.2-13.0
$25,000-$34,999	5.2	3.7-7.3	5.7	4.2-7.7	8.2	6.2-10.6	2.8*	1.8-4.3	10.0	7.9-12.6
$35,000-$49,999	4.7	3.5-6.3	6.4	4.9-8.2	8.5	6.8-10.6	2.6*	1.8-3.6	10.0	8.2-12.1
$50,000-$74,999	3.3*	2.3-4.7	3.6	2.7-4.8	5.1	3.9-6.7	1.4*	0.9-2.1	6.2	4.9-7.9
$75,000 and greater	1.9	1.5-2.6	2.7	2.1-3.4	3.6	2.9-4.4	0.8*	0.5-1.2	4.2	3.5-5.1
Missing[b]	4.4	3.5-5.5	4.6	3.6-5.8	6.7	5.5-8.1	2.6*	1.7-4.0	8.6	7.1-10.5
Educational attainment										
Less than high school (HS)	7.8	5.9-10.3	5.8	4.4-7.8	10.4	8.2-13.1	5.2*	3.4-8.0	13.9	11.1-17.4
High school or GED	5.6	4.7-6.6	5.5	4.7-6.5	8.1	7.0-9.3	3.0	2.4-3.7	9.9	8.7-11.3
Some college	3.6	2.9-4.6	3.8	3.1-4.7	5.7	4.7-6.8	1.9	1.5-2.5	7.0	5.9-8.2
College graduate	2.4	1.9-2.9	3.8	3.2-4.5	4.6	3.9-5.3	1.3	1.0-1.7	5.6	4.9-6.4
Disability[c]										
Yes	8.4	7.3-9.7	10.5	9.3-11.9	13.6	12.2-15.2	6.4	5.4-7.6	17.7	16.0-19.5
No	2.6	2.2-3.0	2.6	2.2-3.0	4.1	3.6-4.6	1.0	0.8-1.2	4.8	4.3-5.4
Health care coverage[d]										
Yes	4.1	3.7-4.5	4.8	4.3-5.2	6.6	6.1-7.2	2.3	2.0-2.7	8.2	7.6-8.8
No	2.9*	1.7-4.8	1.7*	0.9-2.9	3.3*	2.1-5.2	1.2*	0.7-2.1	4.2*	2.8-6.1

a % = weighted percentage; CI = confidence interval.

b "Missing" category included because more than 10% of the sample did not report income.

c All respondents who report activity limitations due to physical, mental, or emotional reasons OR have health problems that require the use of special equipment.

d Includes health insurance, prepaid plans such as HMOs, and government plans such as Medicare.

*Estimates based on fewer than 50 observations.

References

1. Cardiovascular Disease Mortality in New York State, Results from the New York State Vital Records Death Statistics and the Bureau of Vital Statistics New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Available at: http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/cardiovascular/heart_disease/docs/cvd_mortality.pdf Accessed September 3, 2012.

2. Miniño AM, Murphy SL, Xu J, Kochanek KD. Deaths: Final data for 2008 [PDF-2.9M]. *National Vital Statistics Reports; vol 59 no 10*. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2011.

3. Roger VL, et al. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics – 2012 Update. *A Report From the American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee.* Circulation. 2012;125(1):e2-e220. Available at: http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/early/2011/12/15/CIR.0b013e31823ac046 Accessed September 4, 2012.

Program Contributions

New York State Department of Health
Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research
Bureau of Community Chronic Disease Prevention

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