

BRFSS Brief

Number 1913

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.

Physical Activity

New York State Adults, 2017

Introduction and Key Findings

Participating in regular physical activity (PA) reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancer, and the risk of premature death.¹ Regular PA promotes wellness by aiding weight loss, preventing weight gain, strengthening muscles and bones, relieving arthritis pain, and improving mental health.¹

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans are updated every 10 years. In 2018 the guidelines recommended that adults participate in moderate-intensity aerobic physical activities for at least 150 minutes per week, vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activities for at least 75 minutes per week, or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activities. Adults should also participate in muscle strengthening activities on two or more days per week.²

The New York State Prevention Agenda 2019-2024 established a goal to increase participation in leisure-time physical activity (LTPA) to 77.4% among all adults, 58.7% among adults with less than a high school education, and 60.6% among adults with disability.³

Key Findings

Most adults (72.8%) in New York State (NYS) participate in regular leisure-time physical activity (LTPA). Regular participation in LTPA is lowest among adults who are Hispanic (62.9%), earn an annual household income less than \$25,000 (62.9%), have less than a high school education (55.6%), and those who are living with disability (59.3%). Significant improvement is needed to meet NYS's Prevention Agenda goal of increasing adult participation in LTPA.

Over one third of NYS adults (39.4%) were estimated to have met the recommendations for aerobic activity or for muscle strengthening activity. Only 19.8% of adults met both the aerobic and muscle strengthening guidelines. The prevalence of adults who met both the aerobic and muscle strengthening guidelines is lowest among adults who are Hispanic (14.8%), have less than a high school education (10.2%), are living with disability (13.0%), and those who have obesity (14.0%).

BRFSS questions

Leisure-time physical activity

1. During the past month, other than your regular job, did you participate in any physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise?

Aerobic activity (repeated)

1. What type of physical activity or exercise did you spend the most time doing during the past month?
2. How many times per week or per month did you take part in this activity during the past month?
3. And when you took part in this activity, for how many minutes or hours did you usually keep at it?

Muscle strengthening activity

During the past month, how many times per week or per month did you do physical activities or exercises to STRENGTHEN your muscles? Do NOT count aerobic activities like walking, running, or bicycling. Count activities using your own body weight like yoga, sit-ups or push-ups and those using weight machines, free weights, or elastic bands.

Figure 1. Any leisure-time physical activity* among New York State and US adults, BRFSS 2017

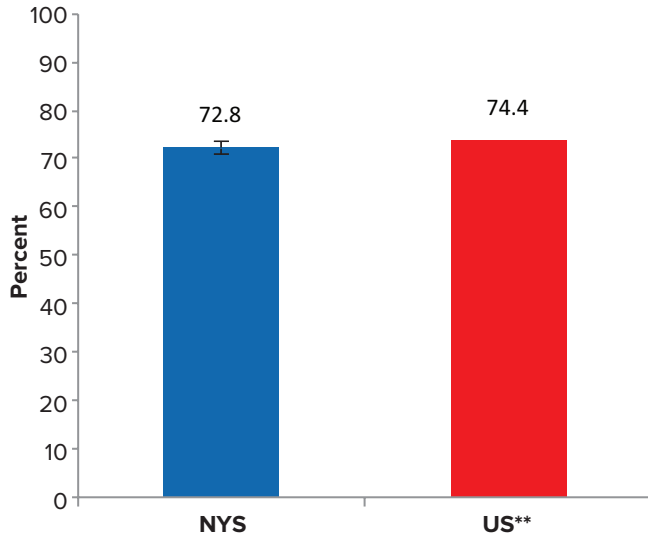
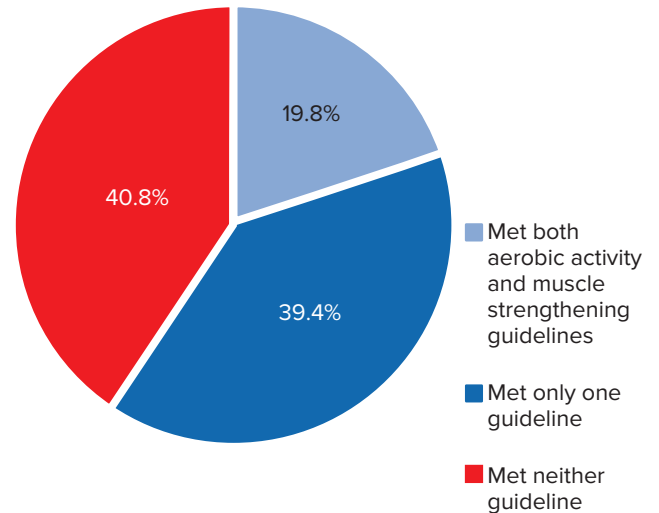


Figure 2. Adequate physical activity* among New York State adults, BRFSS 2017



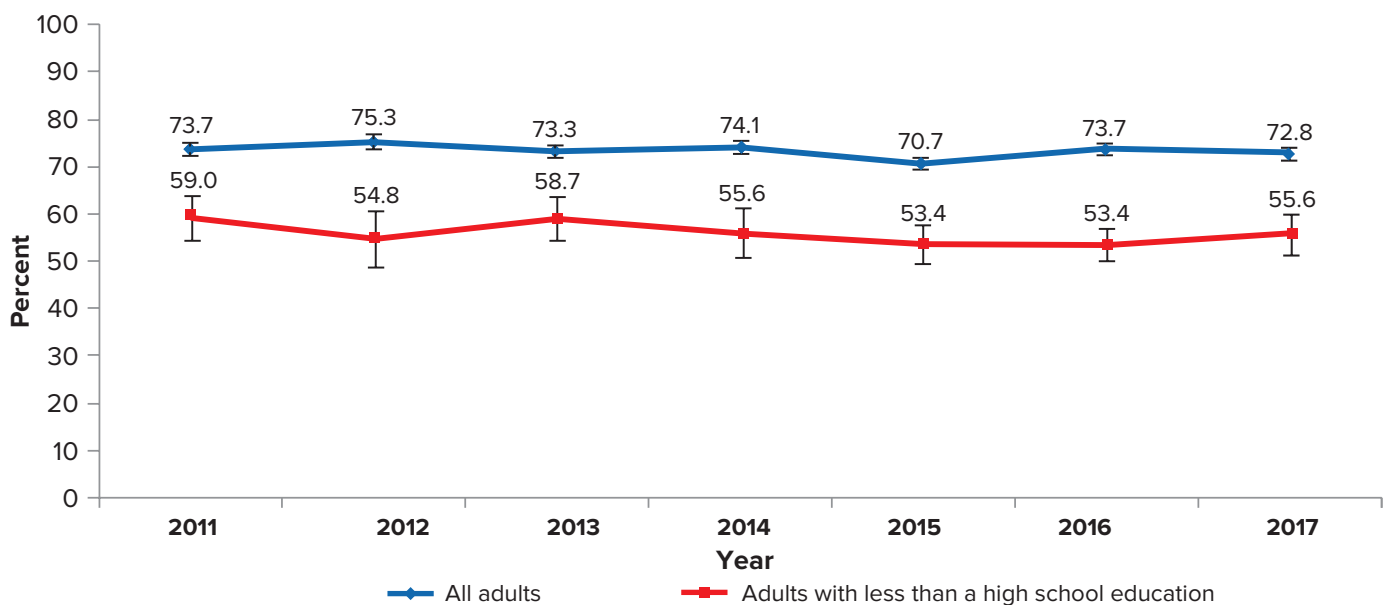
* Other than your regular job, participation during the past month in any physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise.

** Median percent; includes data from all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

* Among all adults, the proportion who reported that they do either physical activity for at least 150 minutes per week, vigorous physical activity for at least 75 minutes per week, or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous physical activity and also participate in muscle strengthening activity on two or more days per week.

Figure 3. Any leisure-time physical activity* among New York State adults, by BRFSS survey year



* Other than your regular job, participation during the past month in any physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise.

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Participation in levels of physical activity among New York State adults, 2017 BRFSS

	Adequate Physical Activity							
	LTPA ^a		Aerobic ^b		Muscle Strength ^c		Aerobic and Muscle Strength ^d	
	% ^e	95% CI ^e	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Total New York State (NYS) [n=12,249]	72.8	71.6-74.0	49.3	48.0-50.7	29.9	28.7-31.1	19.8	18.7-20.9
Sex								
Male	75.7	74.0-77.3	50.6	48.7-52.6	34.5	32.7-36.4	22.4	20.7-24.1
Female	70.3	68.6-71.9	48.1	46.3-50.0	25.5	24.0-27.1	17.4	16.0-18.8
Age (years)								
18-24	80.6	77.1-84.1	49.9	45.1-54.7	44.5	39.7-49.2	27.0	22.7-31.3
25-34	75.1	72.0-78.2	48.7	45.3-52.2	33.1	29.9-36.3	20.9	18.0-23.7
35-44	71.9	68.6-75.2	46.3	42.8-49.9	28.8	25.7-31.9	19.2	16.4-21.9
45-54	70.3	67.3-73.2	48.3	45.2-51.4	28.0	25.3-30.7	19.7	17.3-22.1
55-64	72.4	69.8-75.1	50.1	47.1-53.0	25.9	23.3-28.4	17.5	15.3-19.8
65+	69.2	66.9-71.5	52.8	50.3-55.3	24.0	22.0-26.0	17.4	15.6-19.2
Race/ethnicity								
White non-Hispanic	77.5	76.1-78.9	54.1	52.4-55.8	30.7	29.1-32.2	21.2	19.8-22.6
Black non-Hispanic	66.5	62.9-70.1	42.5	38.7-46.4	31.6	28.2-35.1	19.4	16.4-22.4
Hispanic	62.9	59.8-66.0	39.2	36.1-42.4	24.4	21.7-27.1	14.8	12.6-17.0
Other non-Hispanic	71.7	67.1-76.3	47.9	42.8-53.1	31.6	26.9-36.3	20.2	16.0-24.4
Annual household income								
<\$25,000	62.9	60.3-65.5	40.2	37.5-42.9	24.4	22.0-26.7	15.0	12.9-17.0
\$25,000-\$49,999	69.3	66.5-72.1	47.3	44.2-50.4	23.0	20.6-25.5	15.1	12.9-17.2
\$50,000 and greater	81.0	79.4-82.6	56.4	54.5-58.4	36.5	34.6-38.4	25.1	23.4-26.8
Missing ^f	68.7	65.3-72.2	44.5	40.6-48.5	27.7	24.1-31.2	17.2	14.0-20.5
Educational attainment								
Less than high school (HS)	55.6	51.5-59.8	35.5	31.3-39.7	15.7	12.7-18.7	10.2	7.5-12.9
High school or GED	65.2	62.6-67.8	42.3	39.5-45.1	24.8	22.3-27.3	14.6	12.5-16.7
Some college	75.5	73.3-77.7	52.6	50.0-55.3	31.3	28.7-33.8	21.4	19.2-23.7
College graduate	83.9	82.5-85.3	57.9	56.0-59.8	38.4	36.6-40.3	26.3	24.6-28.0
Disability^g								
Yes	59.3	56.7-61.9	37.5	34.9-40.1	23.5	21.1-25.9	13.0	11.2-14.8
No	76.9	75.6-78.2	52.7	51.2-54.3	31.8	30.4-33.2	21.8	20.5-23.1
Weight status								
Neither overweight nor obese	77.2	75.2-79.1	54.1	51.8-56.4	35.3	33.1-37.5	24.3	22.3-26.2
Overweight	75.3	73.4-77.2	51.0	48.7-53.3	31.1	29.1-33.2	20.7	18.8-22.6
Obese	65.3	62.8-67.8	42.8	40.2-45.4	22.2	20.0-24.3	14.0	12.2-15.9
Region								
New York City (NYC)	70.8	68.8-72.7	48.4	46.2-50.5	29.6	27.7-31.5	19.8	18.0-21.5
NYS exclusive of NYC	74.3	72.9-75.8	50.0	48.3-51.7	30.1	28.5-31.6	19.8	18.4-21.2

a LTPA = Leisure-time physical activity during the past month.

b Prevalence of respondents who report engaging in at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity.

c Prevalence of respondents who report participating in muscle-strengthening physical activity at least 2 times per week.

d Met both the aerobic and muscle strengthening guidelines.

e %=weighted percentage; CI= Confidence Interval

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

g All respondents who reported having at least one type of disability (cognitive, mobility, vision, self-care, or independent living or deafness)

References

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). 2018 Physical activity guidelines for Americans. Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018.
<https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/report/>.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). 2018 Physical activity guidelines for Americans. Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018.
<https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/>.
3. New York State Prevention Agenda Preventing Chronic Diseases Action Plan available at:
https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2019-2024/chr.htm#FA2.

Program Contributions

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

Order Information

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