

*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.*

## Disability New York State Adults 2006

### Introduction

Disability due to physical, mental, or emotional problems is a major public health problem, resulting in reductions in quality of life and increasing dependence on the health-care system in New York State and the nation. Disabilities are disproportionately represented among the elderly and populations of lower socioeconomic status. As the number of people who survive life-threatening conditions increases, and as the population continues to age, quality of life issues associated with disability become of greater public health concern. The aging of the state's population and its accompanying burden of disease and disability have profound public health implications for the utilization of medical care, and for the need for supportive and long-term care. In the mid-1980s, there were about 28 million people in the United States aged 65 years and older. The U.S. Bureau of the Census has predicted over twice as many, 59 million, by the year 2025. In New York State, 2000 Census figures show nearly 2.4 million residents are 65 years and older. By the year 2025, this total is projected to increase by nearly one-third to over 3.2 million. As a result, the measurement and surveillance of the indicators of disability are critical to monitoring its impact on an aging population.

### BRFSS Questions

*The following questions are about health problems or impairments you may have.*

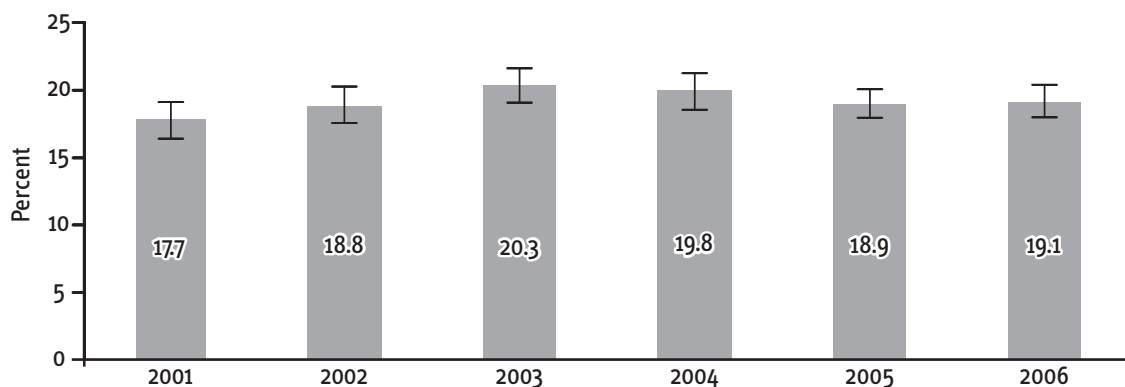
- 1. Are you limited in any way in any activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems?*
- 2. Do you now have any health problem that requires you to use special equipment, such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone?*

[If "yes" to either]

- 3. Because of any impairment or health problem, do you need the help of other persons with your personal care needs, such as eating, bathing, dressing, or getting around the house?*
- 4. Because of any impairment or health problem, do you need the help of other persons in handling your routine needs, such as everyday household chores, doing necessary business, shopping, or getting around for other purposes?*

Disability is defined as a "yes" response to either question #1 or #2. Responses to questions #3 and #4 identify the degree of disability, i.e., whether the person with a disability needs help in performing activities of daily living.

**Disability\* among New York State adults, by BRFSS survey year**



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

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

**Disability among New York State adults: 2006 BRFSS**

	Overall disability <sup>a</sup>		Degree <sup>b</sup> of disability			
	% <sup>e</sup>	95% CI <sup>e</sup>	Need help <sup>c</sup>		Need no help <sup>d</sup>	
			%	95% CI	%	95% CI
<b>New York State (NYS) [n=5,928]</b>	19.1	17.8-20.3	4.6	4.0- 5.2	14.5	13.4-15.6
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	17.2	15.3-19.0	3.2	2.3- 4.0	14.0	12.4-15.7
Female	20.8	19.2-22.3	5.8	5.0- 6.7	14.9	13.5-16.3
<b>Age (years)</b>						
18-24	10.6	6.4-14.8	2.2	0.1- 4.3	8.4	4.7-12.1
25-34	11.3	8.2-14.4	1.7	0.6- 2.7	9.6	6.7-12.6
35-44	14.7	12.3-17.0	3.8	2.3- 5.2	10.9	8.9-12.9
45-54	18.7	16.2-21.2	4.2	2.9- 5.4	14.5	12.2-16.8
55-64	25.9	22.8-29.0	6.3	4.6- 8.0	19.6	16.8-22.3
≥ 65	33.4	30.6-36.1	9.3	7.7-11.0	24.0	21.6-26.5
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>						
White non-Hispanic	21.0	19.6-22.4	4.8	4.2- 5.5	16.2	14.9-17.4
Black non-Hispanic	17.7	14.0-21.4	6.3	4.2- 8.4	11.4	8.2-14.5
Hispanic	13.3	10.0-16.6	3.5	1.9- 5.2	9.8	6.9-12.7
Other non-Hispanic	16.9	11.7-22.0	2.9	0.2- 5.5	14.0	9.4-18.6
<b>Annual household income</b>						
< \$15,000	32.9	27.6-38.2	10.9	7.7-14.1	22.0	17.5-26.4
\$15,000-\$24,999	24.8	21.2-28.5	7.7	5.7- 9.7	17.2	14.1-20.3
\$25,000-\$34,999	21.3	17.2-25.3	4.6	2.9- 6.3	16.7	12.9-20.4
\$35,000-\$49,999	16.5	13.4-19.6	3.0	1.8- 4.2	13.5	10.6-16.4
\$50,000-\$74,999	15.1	12.4-17.9	1.5	0.5- 2.4	13.7	11.0-16.3
≥ \$75,000	11.9	10.1-13.7	1.7	0.9- 2.5	10.0	8.6-11.8
Missing <sup>f</sup>	21.6	17.9-25.4	6.8	4.7- 8.9	14.9	11.5-18.2
<b>Educational attainment</b>						
Less than high school	25.4	20.8-30.0	8.5	6.1-11.0	16.9	12.8-20.9
High school or GED	21.1	18.7-23.5	5.1	3.9- 6.3	16.0	13.8-18.1
Some post-high school	19.5	17.0-22.0	5.7	4.2- 7.2	13.8	11.7-15.9
College graduate	15.2	13.5-17.0	2.1	1.5- 2.8	13.1	11.4-14.7
<b>Region</b>						
New York City (NYC)	16.5	14.4-18.6	4.5	3.3- 5.6	12.0	10.2-13.8
NYS exclusive of NYC	20.4	18.9-21.8	4.6	3.9- 5.3	15.8	14.4-17.1

<sup>a</sup> All respondents who report activity limitations due to physical, mental, or emotional problems OR have health problems that require the use of special equipment.

<sup>b</sup> Given a reported disability, status as needing help from others in activities of daily living.

<sup>c</sup> Because of impairment or health problem, need help of other persons with personal care needs OR in handling routine needs.

<sup>d</sup> Need no help of other persons either with personal care needs or in handling routine needs.

<sup>e</sup> % = weighted percentage; CI = confidence interval.

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

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