

BRFSS Brief

Number 1309

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, 2011

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 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend 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 and also participate in muscle strengthening activities on two or more days per week.² The New York State Prevention Agenda 2013-2017 established a goal to increase the percentage of adults who participate in leisure-time physical activity (LTPA) by 5% among all adults and by 10% among adults with less than a high school education and those living with disabilities.³

KEY FINDINGS

Three of four adults (73.7%) in New York State (NYS) participate in regular leisure-time physical activity (LTPA). Adults living with disabilities and those with less than a high school education were significantly less likely to report regular LTPA. Half of all NYS adults (51.5%) were estimated to have met the recommendations for aerobic activity, but only 30% met the recommendations for muscle strengthening physical activity and only 21.5% were estimated to have met both the aerobic and muscle strengthening recommendations. Although regular aerobic and muscle strengthening activities are of particular importance to health and wellness for older adults and those living with disabling conditions like arthritis, only 16.6% of adults 65 years of age and older and only 14% of adults living with disabilities are estimated to achieve recommended amounts of these types of physical activity weekly.

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 (asked twice)

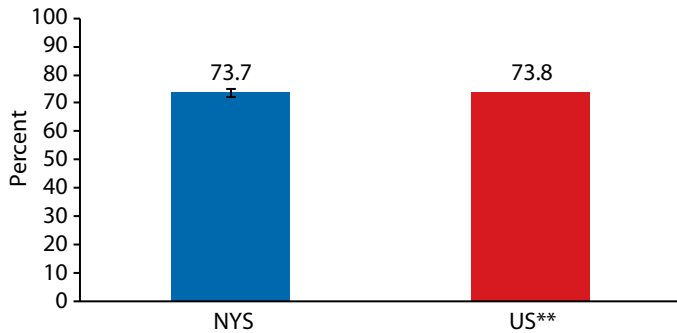
1. What (other) type of physical activity or exercise did you spend the most time doing during the past month?
2. How many times per week or per month did you take part in this activity during the past month?

3. And when you took part in this activity, for how many minutes or hours did you usually keep at it?

Muscle strengthening activity

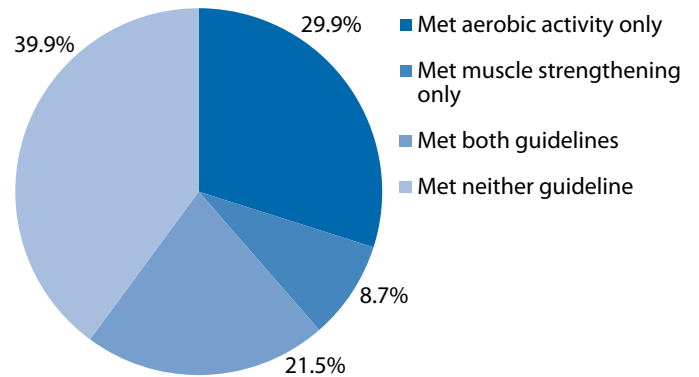
During the past month, how many times per week or per month did you do physical activities or exercises to STRENGTHEN your muscles? Do NOT count aerobic activities like walking, running, or bicycling. Count activities using your own body weight like yoga, sit-ups or push-ups and those using weight machines,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

Figure 1. Any leisure-time physical activity* among New York State and U.S. adults, BRFSS 2011



* 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.

Figure 2. Adequate physical activity* among New York State adults, BRFSS 2011

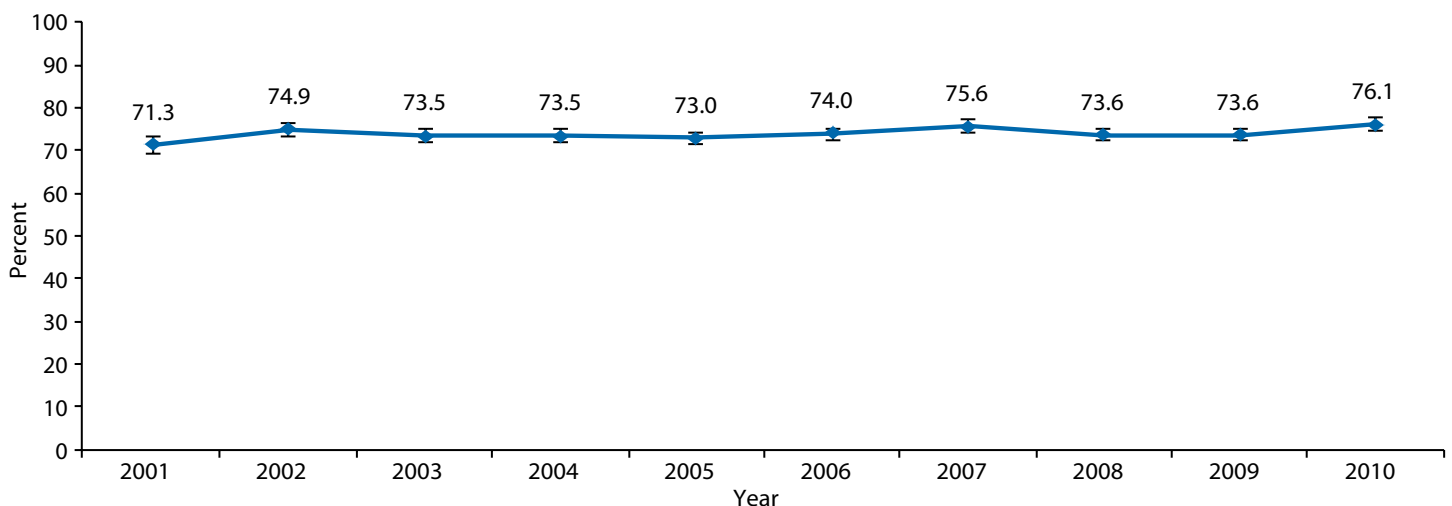


* Among all adults, the proportion who reported that they do either physical activity for at least 150 minutes per week, vigorous physical activity for at least 75 minutes per week, or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous physical activity and also participate in muscle strengthening activity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

Changes to BRFSS Methodology

Beginning in 2011, BRFSS data includes data from interviews completed by people with cell phones in addition to interviews completed by people with landlines. The data also reflect changes in how the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) weight the data. Weighting ensures that the data collected are as representative of New York's population as possible. The new method of weighting enables more demographic information about the respondents to be incorporated into the weighting. While these two changes improve the accuracy of the BRFSS, they may result in prevalence estimates that are significantly different from those previously calculated. **Because of the differences in data collection, it is not appropriate to compare 2011 data to prior years and the BRFSS 2011 prevalence data should be considered a baseline year for data analysis.**

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, 2011 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=7735]	73.7	72.3-75.1	51.5	49.8-53.1	30.1	28.6-31.7	21.5	20.1-23.0
Sex								
Male	76.1	73.9-78.1	53.7	51.1-56.2	35.2	32.8-37.7	24.9	22.7-27.3
Female	71.6	69.7-73.4	49.4	47.3-51.5	25.4	23.7-27.3	18.4	16.8-20.0
Age (years)								
18-24	83.1	78.0-87.2	61.0	54.4-67.2	43.8	37.3-50.5	33.2	27.0-40.0
25-34	75.6	71.8-79.0	47.6	43.5-51.8	34.4	30.5-38.6	22.2	18.8-26.2
35-44	73.7	70.0-77.2	50.5	46.6-54.4	32.6	29.1-36.3	24.4	21.2-27.8
45-54	74.4	71.1-77.4	52.4	48.9-55.8	26.4	23.6-29.5	18.7	16.3-21.3
55-64	71.9	68.7-74.8	49.9	46.5-53.3	25.0	22.4-27.8	17.6	15.4-20.0
≥ 65	66.4	63.7-69.1	50.8	47.9-53.6	21.9	19.8-24.2	16.6	14.7-18.7
Race/ethnicity								
White, non-Hispanic	76.3	74.6-77.9	54.5	52.5-56.5	30.2	28.4-32.1	22.1	20.4-23.9
Black, non-Hispanic	71.2	66.9-75.2	46.4	41.8-51.2	33.3	28.9-37.9	23.5	19.5-28.2
Hispanic	68.0	63.8-71.9	47.3	42.8-51.8	27.9	23.9-32.2	19.1	15.6-23.1
Other, non-Hispanic	70.1	64.1-75.6	47.6	41.4-53.8	29.8	24.6-35.5	20.6	16.2-26.0
Annual household income								
<\$15,000	66.3	61.6-70.8	44.5	39.5-49.5	22.7	18.6-27.5	16.7	12.8-21.6
\$15,000-\$24,999	64.7	60.5-68.6	43.9	39.7-48.3	24.7	21.1-28.8	15.5	12.4-19.1
\$25,000-\$49,999	71.0	67.9-74.0	49.1	45.6-52.6	29.4	26.4-32.6	20.3	17.7-23.2
\$50,000+	81.4	79.4-83.3	58.6	56.1-61.0	35.0	32.7-37.4	26.2	24.0-28.4
Missing ^f	72.3	68.3-75.9	48.6	43.7-53.4	29.3	24.9-34.2	20.4	16.1-25.5
Educational attainment								
Less than high school (HS)	59.0	54.0-63.7	38.5	33.5-43.7	21.5	17.4-26.3	12.7	9.3-17.1
High school or GED	69.2	66.3-71.9	47.7	44.4-51.0	25.1	22.3-28.2	17.5	15.0-20.3
Some college	75.6	72.9-78.2	52.0	48.6-55.3	32.8	29.7-36.2	23.7	20.7-26.9
College graduate	83.6	81.9-85.2	60.7	58.4-62.9	36.5	34.3-38.7	27.5	25.5-29.7
Disability^g								
Yes	64.8	61.9-67.5	41.5	38.5-44.5	22.7	20.2-25.4	14.0	11.9-16.5
No	76.5	74.8-78.1	54.5	52.6-56.5	32.5	30.7-34.3	23.9	22.2-25.7
Weight status								
Neither overweight nor obese	78.4	76.1-80.5	58.0	55.2-60.6	37.0	34.4-39.8	27.6	25.1-30.2
Overweight	76.3	73.8-78.5	54.2	51.4-57.0	30.0	27.5-32.7	22.2	19.9-24.8
Obese	65.6	62.4-68.5	40.1	37.0-43.2	21.2	18.7-24.0	13.2	11.1-15.6
Region								
New York City (NYC)	72.0	69.9-74.0	49.8	47.5-52.1	30.0	27.9-32.2	21.0	19.1-22.9
NYS exclusive of NYC	75.0	73.1-76.8	52.7	50.4-54.9	30.2	28.2-32.4	21.9	20.0-24.0

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

References

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). 2008 Physical activity guidelines for Americans. Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008. <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/Report/pdf/CommitteeReport.pdf>.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). 2008 Physical activity guidelines for Americans. Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008. <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/pdf/paguide.pdf>
3. New York State Prevention Agenda Preventing Chronic Diseases Action Plan available at: http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2013-2017/docs/prevent_chronic_diseases.pdf

Program Contributions

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Bureau of Community Chronic Disease Prevention

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