



Physical Health Among Florida Adults

Florida Department of Health

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health in 1948 as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."⁽¹⁾ This statement has since been modified to include the ability to lead a "socially and economically productive life." Physical health is important to people because the state of their physical health affects all aspects of their lives.

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a state-based, random telephone survey of non-institutionalized adults designed to monitor risk behaviors, chronic illness, and access to health care. In 2006, the Florida BRFSS surveyed 10,726 adults statewide with a response rate of 51.2%. Among the respondents, 1,421 (10.5%) reported poor physical health. BRFSS survey data are adjusted, or "weighted," so that the resulting estimates can be generalized to all Florida adults.

The purpose of this report is to provide prevalence data, risk factors related to poor physical health, and information on disease-specific findings and prevention. Poor physical health is defined as respondents who reported that their physical health was not good on 14 or more of the past 30 days.

RESULTS

1. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health Among Florida Adults (Figures 1 and 2)

The overall prevalence of poor physical health was 10.5% in 2006. Compared to their counterparts, the prevalence of poor physical health among adults was significantly higher among:

- Females (12%).
- Non-Hispanic blacks (12%).
- Adults older than 65 years (16%).
- Adults who have less than a high school education (15%).
- People whose annual household income is less than \$25,000 (18%).
- Adults who were formerly married (including divorced, widowed, and separated) (18%).
- Adults who could not see a doctor when needed because of cost (19%).
- Adults who live in rural areas (14%).

There were no statistically significant differences in the prevalence of poor physical health among adults by healthcare coverage status. In addition, Hispanics had significantly better physical health than non-Hispanics. Younger adults age 18-44 had significantly better physical health than any other age group of people. Adults with a college degree had significantly better physical health than those adults with lower educational levels. The higher the salary, the better the physical health was significant. Single adults' physical health was much better than married adults or than divorced, widowed, or separated people.

Figure 1. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health Among Florida Adults, 2006

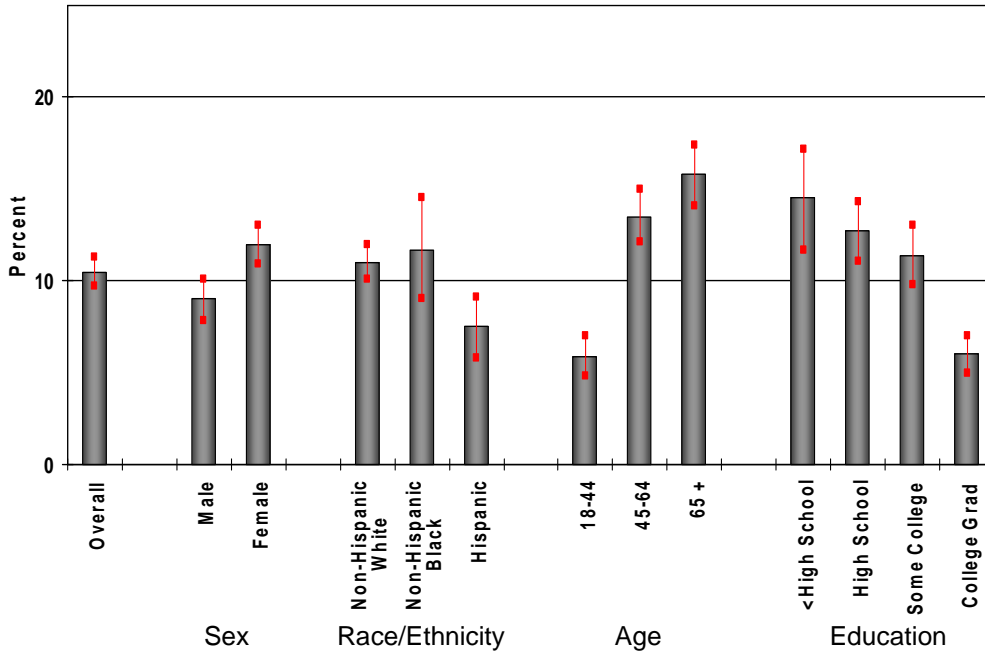
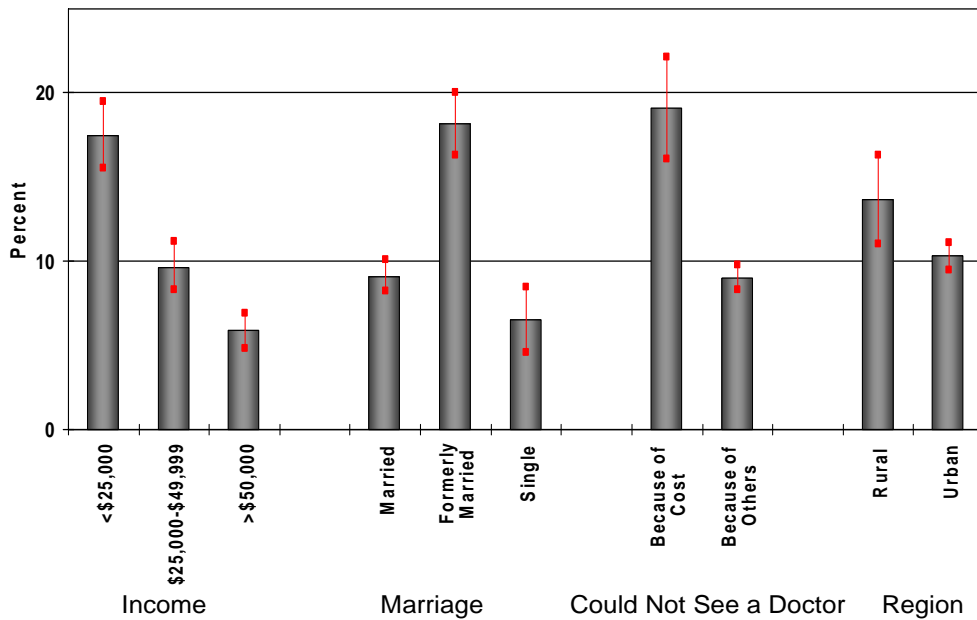


Figure 2. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health Among Florida Adults, 2006

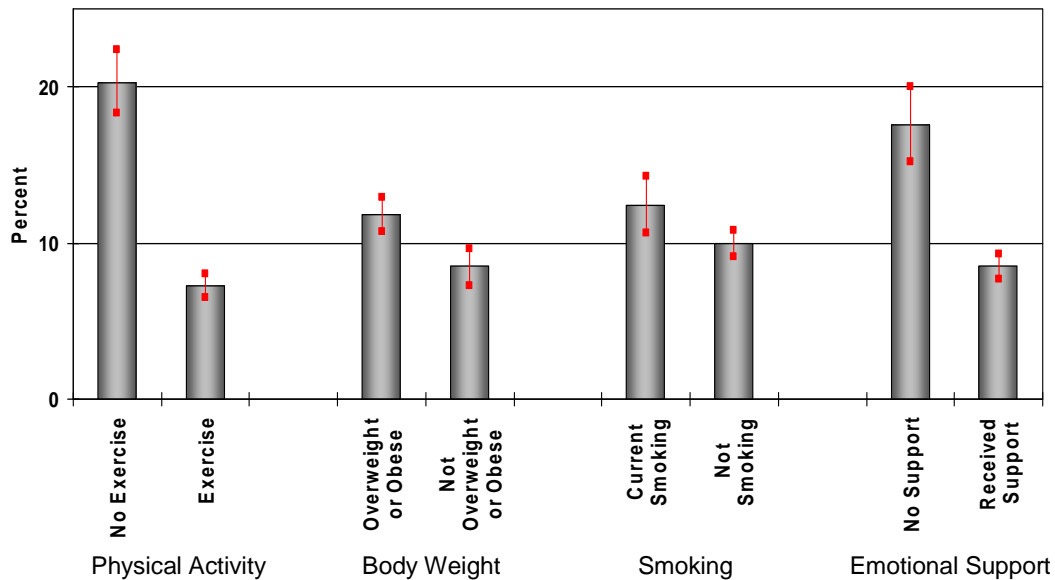


2. Risk Factors and Poor Physical Health Among Florida Adults (Figure 3)

A number of behavioral risk factors are associated with poor physical health. Among Florida adults, the prevalence of poor physical health was significantly higher among:

- Those who did not engage in any exercise or physical activity (20%) than among those who participated in any exercise (7%).
- Adults who were overweight or obese (12%) than among adults who were not overweight or obese (9%).
- Current cigarette smokers (12%) than among non-current smokers (10%).
- People who did not receive emotional support (18%) than among people who received emotional support (9%).

Figure 3. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health by Behavioral Factors Among Florida Adults, 2006



3. Chronic Diseases Related to Physical Health

Arthritis

Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States.⁽²⁾ The prevalence of having poor physical health among adults with arthritis (23.8%) was approximately three times higher than among adults who did not have arthritis (6.9%). On average, adults with arthritis experienced 7.1 days in which their physical health was not good during the past 30 days compared to an average of 2.3 days among adults without arthritis. Among adults with arthritis, the prevalence of poor physical health was higher among non-Hispanic blacks, adults with less than a high school education, adults whose annual household income was less than \$25,000, adults who were formerly married, and adults who lived in rural areas than their counterparts. There were no statistically significant differences in the prevalence rates of poor physical health among adults with arthritis by age group.

Current Asthma

Asthma is a chronic condition that affects approximately 14 million adults in the United States.⁽³⁾ The impact of asthma on quality of life is substantial. The prevalence of having poor physical health among adults with current asthma was approximately 2.7 times higher

than the prevalence among those who did not have current asthma (25% vs. 9.4%). On average, adults with current asthma experienced 7.2 days in which their physical health was not good during the past 30 days compared to an average of 3.1 days among adults without current asthma. Among adults with current asthma, the prevalence of poor physical health was higher among adults with less than a high school education, people with an annual household income less than \$25,000, and adults who could not afford to see a doctor compared to their counterparts.

Diabetes

Diabetes affects nearly 21 million people in the United States.⁽⁴⁾ The prevalence of having poor physical health among adults with diabetes (25.5%) was approximately three times higher than among adults who did not have diabetes (9.1%). On average, adults with diabetes experienced 7.7 days in which their physical health was not good during the past 30 days compared to an average of three days among adults without diabetes. Among adults with diabetes, the prevalence of poor physical health was higher among females, adults with less than a high school education, people whose annual household income was less than \$25,000, and adults who were formerly married compared to their counterparts.

Cardiovascular Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death and one of the major causes of disability in the United States.⁽⁵⁾ The prevalence of having poor physical health among adults with cardiovascular disease (31.5%) was approximately 3.5 times higher than among adults who did not have cardiovascular disease (9.2%). On average, adults with cardiovascular disease experienced 9.4 days in which their physical health was not good during the past 30 days compared to an average of three days among adults without cardiovascular disease. Among adults with cardiovascular disease, the prevalence of poor physical health was higher among adults whose annual household income was less than \$25,000, adults who were formerly married, and adults who lived in rural areas compared to their counterparts.

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure (hypertension) is called “the silent killer.” The prevalence of having poor physical health among adults with high blood pressure (19.3%) was two times higher than among adults without high blood pressure (8.7%). On average, adults with high blood pressure experienced six days in which their physical health was not good during the past 30 days compared to an average of 2.8 days among adults without high blood pressure. Among adults with high blood pressure, females, adults with less than a high school education, people whose annual household income was less than \$25,000, adults who could not afford to see a doctor when needed, and adults who lived in rural areas had a higher prevalence of poor physical health compared to their counterparts.

Reference

1. WHO. Constitution of the World Health Organization, Geneva, 1946. Accessed Page 20 of "NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH POLICY 2001-2005" on March 2001.
2. <http://www.cdc.gov/women/pubs/arthritis.htm> (Accessed: November 4, 2008).
3. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5135a1.htm> (Accessed: November 4, 2008).
4. <http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/fs051026.htm> (Accessed: November 4, 2008).
5. http://www.cdc.gov/DHDSP/announcements/american_heart_month.htm (Accessed: November 4, 2008).

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Table 1: Prevalence of Poor Physical Health Among Florida Adults, 2006

	Prevalence	95% C.I.		
Total	10.5	9.7	11.3	
Sex				*
Male	9.0	7.8	10.1	
Female	12.0	10.9	13.0	
Race/ethnicity				*
Non-Hispanic whites	11.0	10.1	12.0	
Non-Hispanic blacks	11.7	9.0	14.5	
Hispanic	7.5	5.8	9.1	^
Age				*
18-44	5.9	4.8	7.0	^
45-64	13.5	12.1	15.0	
65+	15.8	14.1	17.4	
Education				*
<High school	14.5	11.7	17.2	
High school	12.7	11.1	14.3	
Some college	11.4	9.8	13.0	
College	6.0	5.0	7.0	^
Household Income				*
<\$25,000	17.5	15.5	19.5	^
\$25,000-\$49,999	9.6	8.3	11.2	^
>\$50,000	5.9	4.8	6.9	^
Marital Status				*
Married	9.1	8.2	10.1	^
Divorced, widowed, separated	18.2	16.3	20.0	^
Single	6.5	4.6	8.5	^
Healthcare Coverage				
Yes	10.6	9.8	11.5	
No	10.1	8.1	12.2	
Can Not See a Doctor Because of Cost				*
Yes	19.1	16.1	22.1	
No	9.0	8.3	9.8	
Region				*
Rural	13.7	11.0	16.3	
Urban	10.3	9.5	11.1	

Table 2. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health Among Florida Adults by Risk Factors, 2006

	Prevalence	95% C.I.		
Exercise				*
No exercise	20.3	18.3	22.4	
Exercise	7.3	6.5	8.0	
Body Weight				*
Overweight or obese	11.8	10.7	12.9	
Normal weight	8.5	7.3	9.6	
Current Smoking				*
Yes	12.4	10.6	14.3	
No	10.0	9.1	10.8	
Receiving Emotional Support				*
No	17.6	15.2	20.0	
Yes	8.5	7.7	9.3	

* P value for Chi-square test less than 0.05

^ P value for pair wise comparison two-tailed t test less than 0.05