

Physical Health among Florida Adults with Arthritis

Florida Department of Health

INTRODUCTION

Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States, limiting the activities of nearly 19 million adults. Approximately one in every five adults has arthritis or chronic joint symptoms.

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. The BRFSS collects data on arthritis by asking respondents if they were told by a doctor that they had arthritis. In 2005, Florida BRFSS surveyed 8,190 adults statewide with a response rate of 49.4%. Among the respondents, 2,856 reported having arthritis. 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 compare the physical health status of people with and without arthritis. Prevalence data, behavioral factors related to poor physical health, and information on arthritis management are provided to create a more comprehensive snapshot of the burden of arthritis in Florida. Poor physical health is defined as respondents who reported that their physical health was not good on 14 or more days during the past 30 days.

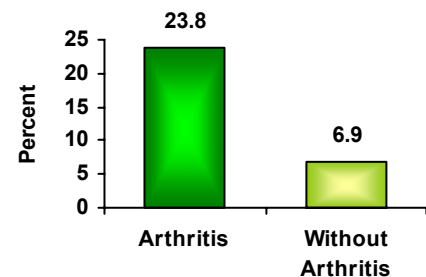
RESULTS

1. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health by Arthritis Status

Adults with arthritis were approximately three times more likely to have poor physical health (23.8%) than adults who did not have arthritis (6.9%) (Figure 1).

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.

Figure 1. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health by Arthritis Status, Florida, 2005



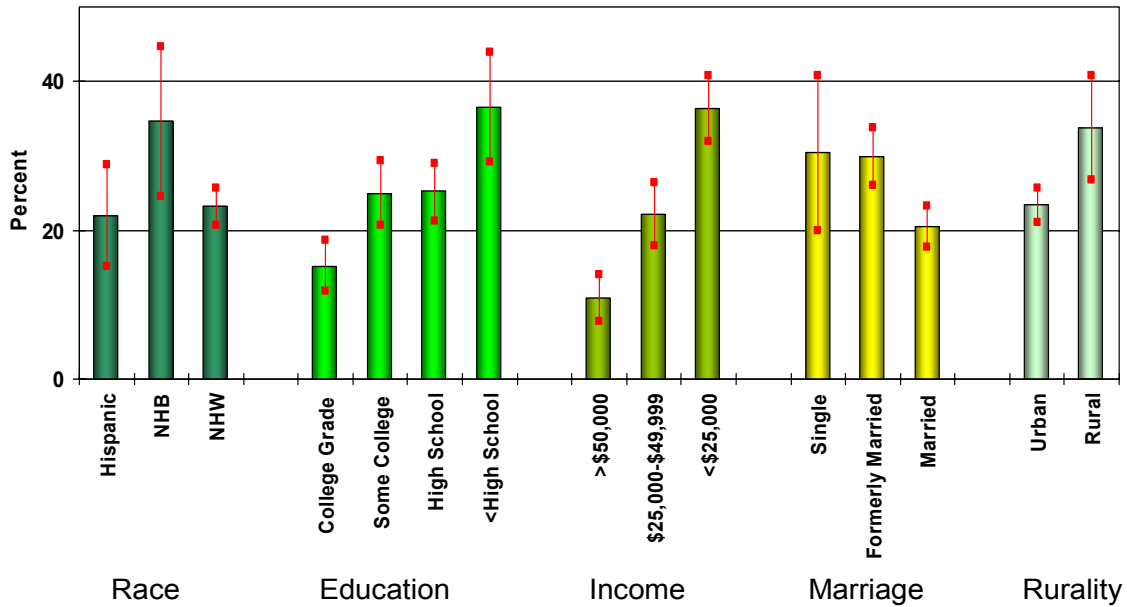
2. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health among People with Arthritis (Figure 2)

Compared to their counterparts, the prevalence of poor physical health among people with arthritis was higher among:

- Non-Hispanic Blacks (35%).
- Adults who have less than a high school education (37%).
- People whose annual household income is less than \$25,000 (36%).
- Adults who were formerly married (including divorced, widowed, and separated) (30%).
- People who live in rural areas (34%).

There were no significant differences in the prevalence of poor physical health by sex or age group among adults with arthritis.

Figure 2. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health among People with Arthritis, Florida, 2005

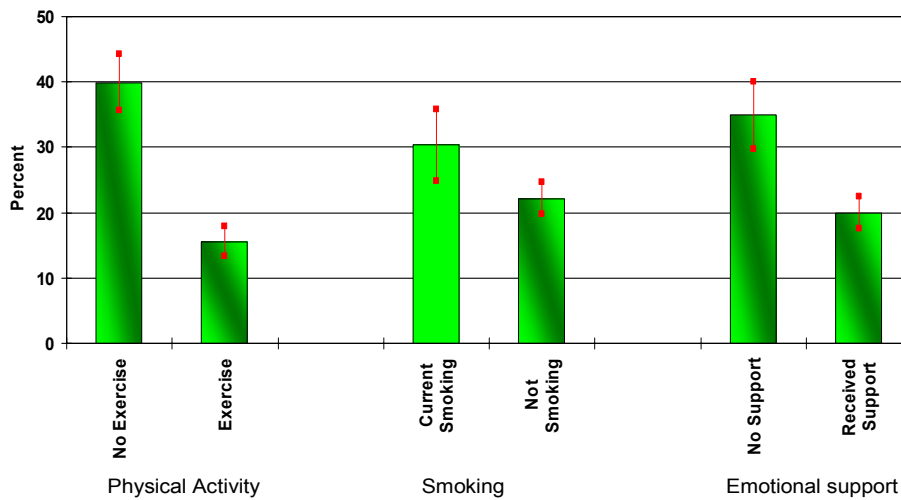


3. Behavioral Factors and Poor Physical Health among Adults with Arthritis (Figure 3)

Among people with arthritis, the prevalence of poor physical health was higher among:

- Those who did not engage in any exercise or physical activity (40%) than among those who participated in any exercise (15%).
- Current smokers (30%) than among non-current smokers (22%).
- People who did not receive emotional support (35%) than among people who received emotional support (20%).

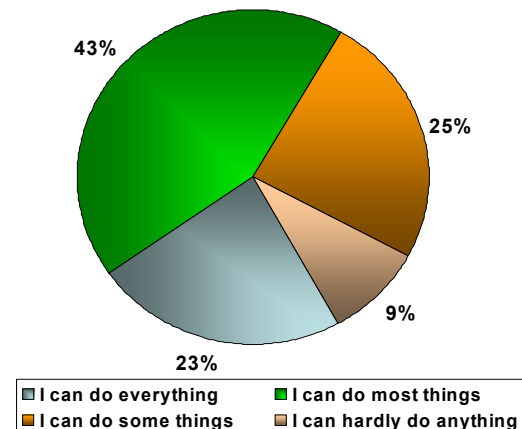
Figure 3. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health by Behavioral Factors among People with Arthritis, Florida, 2005



4. Physical Limitations

The BRFSS survey asked respondents with arthritis to classify their level of physical limitation in one of four categories. Approximately 32% of people with arthritis reported physical limitations (either “I can hardly do anything,” or “I can do some things”). Among adults with arthritis, those who reported poor physical health were twice as likely (70%) to report physical limitations than the total adult population with arthritis (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Physical Limitation among Adults with Arthritis, Florida, 2005



5. Doctor’s Advice for Arthritis Management

Among adults with arthritis, 36% were advised by their doctors that losing weight may help their arthritis, 59% were told to increase physical activity or exercise, and 13% took an educational course or class to learn how to manage problems related to arthritis.

The prevalence of receiving doctor’s advice for arthritis management was similar among people with arthritis who had poor physical health: 42% were advised to lose weight, 58% were told to increase physical activity, and 16% took an educational course.

Table 1. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health among Florida Adults with Arthritis, 2005

	Prevalence	95 percent C.I.		
Total	23.8	21.6	26.1	
Sex				
Male	22.3	18.7	25.9	
Female	24.9	22.1	27.7	
Race/ethnicity				*
NHW	23.2	20.7	25.6	
NHB	34.7	24.6	44.7	
Hispanic	22.0	15.1	28.8	
Age				
18-44	21.9	15.5	28.3	
45-64	23.1	19.7	26.4	
65 +	25.5	22.2	28.8	
Education				*
<high school	36.5	29.1	44.0	
High school	25.2	21.3	29.0	
Some college	25.0	20.7	29.4	
College	15.2	11.8	18.7	
Household Income				*
<\$25,000	36.4	31.9	40.8	
\$25,000-\$49,999	22.1	17.9	26.3	
>\$50,000	10.8	7.8	13.9	
Marital Status				*
Married	20.4	17.6	23.1	
Divorced, widowed, separated	29.8	25.9	33.7	
Single	30.4	19.9	40.8	
Region				*
Rural	33.8	26.7	40.8	
Urban	23.4	21.1	25.7	

Table 2. Prevalence of Poor Physical Health among Florida Adults with Arthritis by Behavioral Factors, 2005

	Prevalence	95 percent C.I.		
Exercise				*
No Exercise	39.9	35.6	44.4	
Exercise	15.6	13.3	17.9	
Cigarette Smoking				*
Current smoking	30.4	24.8	35.9	
Not current smoking	22.2	19.8	24.6	
Body Weight				
Overweight or obese	24.3	21.5	27.0	
Normal weight	23.8	19.8	27.9	
Receiving Emotional Support				*
No	34.9	29.7	40.1	
Yes	20.0	17.6	22.4	

* P value less than 0.05

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