

Access to Medical Care Among Adults with Diabetes in Florida, 2002



Bureau of Epidemiology
April 2005

Diabetes is an ongoing and life-long disease that can be self-managed with the assistance of a health care provider. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) has developed the Standards of Medical Care for Patients with Diabetes, which guides health care providers and patients through the complex process of managing diabetes¹. To control glycemic level, a person with diabetes may need access to supplies like blood glucose test strips and insulin. Usually, people with diabetes are able to get these medications and supplies covered through their health insurance policies. Unfortunately, many people with diabetes do not have health insurance coverage. In addition to a lack of health care coverage, many diabetes patients are unable to get medical care due to a variety of reasons. Long distances to medical facilities, lack of knowledge on diabetes care, and long wait times for appointments are only a few of the reasons adults with diabetes are unable to receive necessary medical care.

The focus of this report is the inability to get needed medical care² in the past 12 months among adults with diagnosed diabetes³ in Florida. Data from the 2002 Florida County Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey were used for this analysis and are based on a sample size of 34,551 respondents, of whom 3,582 reported being told by their doctors that they have diabetes, which is the definition of "diabetes" used for this report.

There is no statistically significant difference in the prevalence of inability to receive medical care between adults with diagnosed diabetes (11.1 percent) and adults without diagnosed diabetes (8.4 percent). (See Table 1.)

Access to medical care among adults with diagnosed diabetes:

Among people with diagnosed diabetes, differences in the prevalence of inaccessible medical care were found by age group, racial/ethnic group, educational attainment and income.

A greater proportion of adults with diabetes between the ages 18 and 44 years (20.4 percent) and adults 45 to 64 years of age (16.0 percent) were not able to receive medical care compared to adults ages 65 years and older (3.9 percent). (See Figure 1.)

Among racial/ethnic groups, Hispanics with diabetes (38.0 percent) are more likely not to receive needed medical care than non-Hispanic Whites (7.6 percent). Specifically, non-Hispanic White men are significantly less likely not to have received care (6.5 percent) than Hispanic men (47.2 percent).

Adults with diabetes who have less than a high school education (24.3 percent) are significantly more likely to be unable to receive medical care than diabetes patients with a high school diploma/GED (8.7 percent) and adults with 1 or more years of college (8.0 percent). (See Figure 2.)

Among adults with diabetes who have an annual household income of more than \$50,000, the prevalence of not receiving needed medical care (2.4 percent) is significantly less than among adults who have annual household incomes less than \$25,000 (17.7 percent). (See Figure 2.)

Finally, the prevalence of being unable to access medical care among adults with diabetes does not differ significantly by gender or marital status.

Among adults with diabetes who did not receive needed care (n=347), the main reason given was cost, which includes no insurance (51.4 percent).

Figure 1: Prevalence of the Inability to Get Medical Care Among Adults with Diabetes, FL, 2002

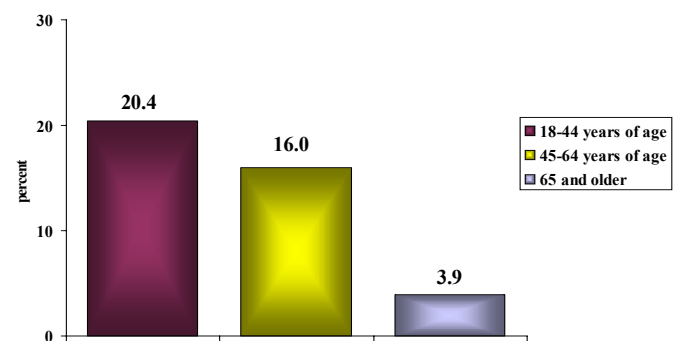
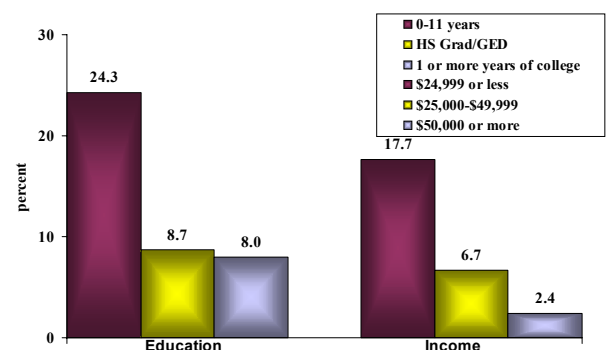


Figure 2: Prevalence of the Inability to Get Medical Care Among Adults with Diabetes, FL, 2002



Conclusion: The inability to get medical care in the past year is not significantly different for adults without diabetes than for adults with diabetes. Among adults with diabetes, Hispanic men, young and middle-aged adults, those with less than a high school education, and those with annual incomes less than \$25,000 are less likely to be able to get medical care than are non-Hispanic White men, adults aged 65-years and older, adults with a high school diploma/GED or beyond, and those with annual incomes exceeding \$50,000.

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

The BRFSS survey is a telephone survey of civilian, non-institutionalized adults (age 18 and older) with telephones, designed to monitor trends in risk behaviors related to preventable chronic diseases and conditions. Respondents are asked about health status, including diabetes and blood pressure; health behaviors, such as nutrition, physical activity, tobacco, and alcohol use; use of screening services, such as mammography; and access to health insurance and health care.

The BRFSS data are weighted. Because the BRFSS is a random survey, the results from the county survey are slightly different from the results from the state survey. For more information on the Florida BRFSS, please visit our website at http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/brfss/index.htm. For the strengths and limitations of the BRFSS, please visit The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/brfss/.

¹To access the Diabetes Standards of Care, visit <http://www0.sw.org/dnet/manage/adastand2.htm>.

²Inability to get medical care is measured by the following question, "Was there a time in the past 12 months when you needed medical care, but could not get it?"

³Diabetes is assessed by the following question, "Have you ever been told by a doctor that you have diabetes?"

*Confidence intervals for Table 1 are constructed utilizing the SAS 9.1 version.

Table 1: Prevalence of adults with and without diabetes who were unable to get medical care in the past 12 months, Florida, 2002

	Adults Without Diabetes			Adults With Diabetes		
	%	95% CI*		%	95% CI*	
All	8.4	7.4	9.4	11.1	8.0	14.2
Sex						
Male	6.9	5.1	8.7	11.0	6.1	16.0
Female	9.7	8.6	10.8	11.1	7.6	14.7
Age group						
18-44	10.0	8.7	11.3	20.4	9.0	31.8
45-64	9.5	6.9	12.1	16.0	10.4	21.6
65+	3.4	2.5	4.2	3.9	2.0	5.8
Race/ethnicity						
White, non-Hispanic	6.7	6.0	7.4	7.6	5.5	9.7
Black, non-Hispanic	8.5	6.2	10.7	19.4	9.1	29.6
Hispanic	15.4	10.3	20.5	38.0	12.2	63.8
Marital status						
Never Married	10.7	6.5	14.9	5.7	0.9	10.5
Married/cohabitating	7.0	6.1	8.0	11.3	7.4	15.2
Divorced/ widowed/ separated	10.2	8.9	11.6	9.3	6.1	12.6
Education						
Less than high school	16.4	9.4	23.4	24.3	12.7	35.9
High School, GED	9.0	7.7	10.4	8.7	5.1	12.2
More than high school	6.8	5.9	7.7	8.0	4.7	11.2
Annual household income						
Less than \$25,000	15.4	12.3	18.5	17.7	11.8	23.6
\$25,000—\$50,000	7.8	6.4	9.1	6.7	1.5	11.9
More than \$50,000	3.8	2.9	4.8	2.4	0.5	4.3

**For more information about the BRFSS survey,
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