

IN 2004, A TELEPHONE SURVEY, THE BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVIELLANCE SURVEY, WAS COMPLETED IN BENTON AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES. BELOW ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THAT SURVEY

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Current Benton-Franklin Health Indicators

Health Status. Most respondents (54%) rated their health as excellent or very good, 32% rated it good and 13% rated it poor or fair. This question was also asked in the 1995 survey and these findings are comparable.

About one respondent in three (34%) said there was at least one day in the past month when their mental health was not good. This finding is similar to the level reported in 1995.

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption. One respondent in five (20%) reported eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Another 31% ate three to four servings and just under half (49%) said they ate two servings or less per day.

Health Care. One in ten respondents (10%) said that an adult in his or her household was unable to obtain needed health care in the past 12 months; 12% said that an adult in the household experienced difficulty or delay in obtaining care.

Among those respondents with children living at home, 5% said those children were unable to obtain the care they needed and 7% reported some difficulty or delay in obtaining care.

Blood Pressure. Overall, 26% of respondents said they were told by a health professional that they had high blood pressure, an increase over the 19% reporting high blood pressure in 1995. Most of those in this current survey who have been given this diagnosis (84%) are now taking medication for the condition.

Blood Cholesterol. Among all respondents, 73% reported having had their blood cholesterol checked. Over half (51%) said their blood cholesterol was checked in the past year, and 12% said it was checked within the past two years. Overall, 26% of residents said that their last blood cholesterol test showed it to be high.

A comparison of these findings with 1995 results showed a significant increase in the number of respondents who have ever had a cholesterol test (67% in 1995) and a significant increase in the number who say they have had a test during the last year (44%

in 1995). The proportion of respondents that have been told their cholesterol is high is unchanged from 1995.

Diabetes. Ten percent (10%) of respondents said they have been told by a doctor that they have diabetes. This is a significant increase this year in the number of persons who have been told they have diabetes, compared to 1995, when it was 3% of the surveyed adults.

Asthma. Of all 601 respondents asked whether a doctor had ever told them that they had asthma, 14% responded, “yes,” and 9% reported that they still have asthma.

Community Involvement. Asked whether they served on a committee for a local organization within the past year, 21% of respondents said “yes.” Three out of ten (29%) said they attended a public meeting on a town or school issue in the past year.

Voluntarism. More than half of all respondents (52%) said they performed volunteer work at least once during the past year. The mean number of times engaged in volunteer work among those who volunteered at least once was 35.3.

Social Activity. About three in five respondents (62%) said they agree with the statement, “I spend a lot of time visiting friends,” but 38% disagreed.

A large majority of residents (80%) acknowledged having entertained others in their homes at least once during the past year. Excluding those who said they didn’t entertain at home at all during the past year, respondents entertained an average of 22.3 times.

Perception of Trust. Those who said they generally agreed more with the statement, “Most people can be trusted,” slightly outnumbered those who agreed with this statement, “You cannot be too careful in dealing with people” (50% and 43%, respectively).

Overweight. Using the reported weights and heights for all respondents, the proportion of adults calculated to be overweight in the combined counties is 58%, including 35% classified as overweight and 23% as obese.

Tobacco. About one in six (17%) said they currently smoke cigarettes, including 14% who said they smoke cigarettes everyday. Cigarette use is unchanged this year from 1995 results.

Alcohol. Over half of the respondents (53%) said they consumed at least one drink of alcohol in the month prior to the survey. These results are similar to 1995.

Car Restraints. Almost all respondents (95%) said they “always” wear seat belts when in a car. This is a significant increase in the proportion of respondents who said they always wear seat belts in 1995—67%.

Bicycle Helmets. Among children age 1-15 who ride a bicycle, 52% of the parents said the child “always” wears a helmet, while 18% “never” do.

Hunger. About one in eight, or 12% of respondents said they had been concerned in the past month about having enough food for themselves or their families. Five percent (5%) said they had to skip meals because there wasn’t enough food, or money to buy food, and 1% said they experienced days during which they did not eat at all because of scarcity of food or money.

There is a significant increase in the proportion of respondents who say they are concerned about having sufficient food this year, as compared to 1995 (8%), while the other proportions who said they skipped meals or did not eat at all during the past month have not changed.

Physical Activity. Current state guidelines set by the Washington Department of Health recommend that residents engage in regular moderate activity of 30 minutes duration or more per day at least 5 days per week, and regular vigorous activity of 20 minutes duration or more per day at least 3 days per week.

Among all respondents 36% indicated that they meet the moderate activity guidelines and 28% reported activity that meets the vigorous activity guidelines.

Demographic Groups at Risk. Throughout the survey several demographic subgroups consistently reported information that puts them at risk for less than optimal health.

- Respondents with lower income and/or lower education levels were more likely to report poor health status, more diabetes, more alcohol use, less cholesterol testing, less social activity and less physical activity.
- Older adults (age 55 and over) were more likely to report poor health status, more high blood pressure and high cholesterol, more diabetes, and less physical activity.

- People of Hispanic descent reported poorer health status, poorer nutrition habits, less cholesterol testing, less use of children’s bike helmets, less social interaction, less trust in others, and less physical activity.
- People who are not employed (unemployed, homemakers, and students) were more likely to say they experienced health care access or delay problems, had poorer health status, less cholesterol testing, less social activity and felt less trust in others.
- Young people (age 18-24) also reported more health care access or delay problems, along with more cigarette and alcohol usage, particularly in the area of binge drinking.
- Men tended to be slightly more likely to be overweight and to have more alcohol use.

These findings serve as a snapshot of key health indicators for the adult residents of Benton and Franklin Counties early in 2004. The data will serve to identify progress since 1995, as well as concerns. The data will also be a benchmark for the Health Department’s Public Health Improvement Plan to measure against goals in the future.

Comparison of Benton-Franklin and Washington Health Indicators

Where possible, data from statewide surveys has been gathered to compare with the current Benton-Franklin survey data. Data was drawn from the most recent available state BRFSS surveys that had the very same questions included in the current survey. In order to more directly compare the findings, the Benton-Franklin data has been rebased, where necessary, to eliminate any “don’t know/refuse” responses, as the statewide data is based only on those who provided an answer. For this reason, some of the percentages for Benton-Franklin indicators will be slightly different than the percentages shown in the summary above or in the body of the report.

In general, the current data from the Benton-Franklin adults matches available data from adults statewide in terms of health status, blood pressure and asthma. The proportions of Benton-Franklin adults with good or poor health status, with high blood pressure and with asthma are no different than other adults living across Washington.

Health Status		
	B/F 2004	WA 2002
Would you say that in general your health is ...		
Excellent	18%	21%
Very Good	37%	36%

Good	32%	30%
Fair	10%	10%
Poor	3%	3%
Respondents who said there was at least one day in the past month when their mental health was not good	34%	35%
Blood Pressure		
	B/F 2004	WA 2001
Have you ever been told by a doctor, nurse or other health professional that you have high blood pressure?		
Yes	26%	24%
No	74%	76%
Asthma		
	B/F 2004	WA 2002
Have you ever been told by a doctor, nurse, or other health professional that you had asthma?		
Yes	14%	14%
No	86%	86%
Do you still have asthma?		
Yes	66%	64%
No	34%	36%

Benton-Franklin adults, however, were found to be more at risk than all Washington adults in these areas:

- Fewer Benton-Franklin adults report eating five or more servings of fruits or vegetables per day (20% vs. 25% statewide), or even 3-4 such servings per day (31% vs. 37% statewide).

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption		
	B/F 2004	WA 2000
Servings of fruits and vegetables per day		
5 or more servings	20%	25%
3-4 servings	31%	37%
1-2 servings	43%	35%
Never or less than 1 serving	6%	3%

- Fewer Benton-Franklin adults have ever had their blood cholesterol checked (74% vs. 78% statewide), but among those who have had it checked, more have done so in the past year (71% vs. 63%). Similar proportions, however, have been told that they have high blood cholesterol (26% and 29%, Benton-Franklin and statewide, respectively).

Blood Cholesterol		
	B/F 2004	WA 2001
Have you ever had your blood cholesterol checked?		
Yes	74%	78%
No	26%	22%
How long has it been since you last had your blood cholesterol checked?		
Past year	71%	63%
Past 2 years	16%	16%
Past 5 years	6%	12%
5+ years	7%	8%
Respondents who have been told their blood cholesterol is high	26%	29%

- More Benton-Franklin adults say they have been told they have diabetes (10%) than adults statewide (6%).

Diabetes		
	B/F 2004	WA 2002
Have you ever been told by a doctor that you have diabetes?		
Yes	10%	6%
No	89%	93%

Overweight		
	B/F 2004	WA 2002
Proportion of respondents computed to		

- While similar proportions of Benton-Franklin

be overweight or obese		
Overweight	37%	38%
Obese	25%	21%
Not Overweight	38%	41%

adults and adults statewide are overweight and “normal” (i.e., not overweight), a higher proportion of Benton-Franklin adults are obese (25% vs. 21% of adults statewide).

