



VERMONT BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM SURVEY (BRFSS)

Adults with Disabilities



Introduction and Methodology

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a telephone survey conducted annually among adults aged 18 and older. The Vermont BRFSS is completed by the Vermont Department of Health in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). All U.S. states, Washington D.C., and most U.S. territories participate in the BRFSS. BRFSS surveys are completed among around 7,000 adults each year, from across the state. Results are weighted to be representative of the entire adult population.

The Vermont Department of Health acknowledges that data presented in this report are driven by complex upstream factors, including social, economic, and environmental inequities. We are continually working to further incorporate information highlighting the social determinants of health and informed by the communities and partners we seek to serve. This report focuses on health-related factors and behaviors experienced by adults who self-reported having any disability and adults who reported having no disability, compared to the overall statewide rate. In the 2022 BRFSS, disability indicators included serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, concentrating or making decisions, hearing, seeing, dressing, or bathing, or because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, having difficulty doing errands alone.

Overall, in 2022, 27% of Vermonters reported having any disability. It should be noted that completion of the BRFSS depends on a participant's ability to independently complete an over-the-phone survey with a personal cellphone or on a landline phone in a private residence. Adults who are incarcerated, living in group housing, without a personal phone, or who have hearing impairments or other physical, emotional, or cognitive disabilities that preclude their ability to independently complete such a survey may not be adequately represented in this data.

Throughout this report, all estimates reported represent percentages. Statistically significant differences are noted. Statistical significance is calculated by comparing the 95% confidence intervals of two or more values. A 95% confidence interval is a range of values and can vary due to the size of a particular population or how consistently participants responded to an item. Sometimes, when comparing the responses of two or more groups, the overall percentage may look very different, but the two numbers are not statistically different. Other times, the two values may be very close but differ statistically. While this report notes statistical differences, we encourage you to consider meaningful differences: does the disparity merit a targeted intervention, show a real change in health, or otherwise mean something important to the community (statistics aside).

For more information on the BRFSS and to see other reports, please visit the Vermont Department of Health BRFSS webpage at: <https://www.HealthVermont.gov/BRFSS>

Disability Status	N	%
Any Disability	2088	27
No Disability	6059	73

N = Unweighted number of respondents; % = Weighted percent

	VT	Disability	No Disability
General health fair or poor	14	35 *	7
Health insurance coverage (age 18-64)	95	93	95
Have a personal health care provider	89	92	89
Delayed healthcare due to cost	6	10 *	5

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Physical health not good	11	28 *	5
Mental health not good	16	33 *	10
Sleep less than 7 hours/night	62	62	63

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Rarely or never receive social/emotional support needed	8	15 *	5
Very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with life, generally	6	15 *	3
Always or usually feel socially isolated	7	16 *	5
Always or usually feel stress	13	25 *	8
Experienced physical symptoms as a result of how treated based on race	2	4	1

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Lost employment or had hours reduced	10	14 *	8
Always or almost always, food bought didn't last and didn't have money to buy more, past year	7	16 *	4
Received supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) benefits on EBT	10	19 *	6
Not able to pay mortgage, rent or utility bills, past year	7	14 *	5
Utility company threatened to shut off services, past year	5	10 *	4
Lack of reliable transportation, past year	6	13 *	3

	VT	Disability	No Disability
No leisure time physical activity	20	35 *	14
At elevated risk for HIV transmission	6	7	5
Seriously considered suicide, past year	6	12 *	3

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Arthritis	29	48 *	22
Asthma	13	18 *	11
Cancer (non-skin)	10	14 *	9
Skin cancer	6	8 *	5
Cardiovascular disease	9	18 *	6
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	7	16 *	4
Ever diagnosed with pre-diabetes	9	16 *	7
Diabetes	8	15 *	6
Hypertension	32	45 *	27
Kidney disease	3	8 *	1
High blood cholesterol	32	45 *	28
Depressive disorder	25	43 *	19
Subjective cognitive decline	10	23 *	4
Long-term covid symptoms	16	25 *	13

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Drank any alcohol, past month	61	48 *	66 *
Binge drinking, past month	18	15	19
Heavy drinking, past month	10	9	10

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Current cigarette smoking	13	19 *	11
Attempted to quit smoking, past year	44	48	41
Current e-cigarette use	6	8	5
Cannabis use, past 30 days	24	29 *	22

Preventative Behaviors and Screenings

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Routine doctor visit	75	80 *	73
Ever tested for HIV	37	40	36
Used birth control last time had sex to prevent pregnancy	87	87	87
Meets colorectal cancer screening recommendations (age 45-75)	70	69	69
Screened for breast cancer, (women age 50-74)	76	66 *	79

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Visited a dentist, past year	68	56 *	73 *
Any teeth extracted (age 45-64)	42	68 *	35

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Flu shot, past year (age 65+)	75	77	74
Pneumonia shot, ever (age 65+)	71	73	70
Tetanus shot, past ten years	79	76	80