



Adults with Disabilities: Population in Focus Report

**Vermont Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance
System (BRFSS), 2024**

March 2026

Introduction – Adults with Disabilities

The Vermont Department of Health recognizes that many social, economic and environmental inequities made worse by structural oppression, marginalization and racism influence the data we collect and report. We are continuously working to better collect and share data that reflect the lived experiences of all Vermonters. If you have questions or concerns on how this data was sourced or analyzed that are not addressed in the report, please refer to our [BRFSS Webpage](#). For more information on different data sources managed by the Health Department, including what indicators are available and who to contact to find out more, please check our [Data Encyclopedia](#). 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 2024 BRFSS, disability indicators included serious difficulty with one or more of the following:

- 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 2024, 26% of Vermonters reported having any disability.

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 by approximately 7,000 adults each year, from across the state. 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. Results are weighted to be representative of the entire adult population.

Throughout this report, all estimates reported represent percentages. To ensure statistical reliability and decrease instances of data suppression, estimates represent the average of 2 years of data combined. 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. All comparisons are made to the overall statewide estimate, and statistically significant differences are noted. 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>

Demographics

Disability Status	N	%
Any disability	1,602	26
No disability	4,626	74

Disability Type	N	%
Blind or difficulty seeing	225	3
Difficulty concentrating or remembering	620	12
Difficulty walking or climbing stairs	690	10
Difficulty dressing or bathing	178	3
Difficulty doing errands alone	366	7
Deaf or have serious difficulty hearing	513	6

BRFSS 2024 results

N = Unweighted number of respondents; % = Weighted percent

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Health Status Indicators

	VT	Disability	No Disability
General health fair or poor	14	33*	7*
Health insurance coverage (ages 18-64)	94	94	94
Have a personal health care provider	90	92	90
Delayed health care due to cost, past year	8	12*	6

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

. = Too few responses to report; * = Statistically different compared to VT overall

Quality of Life

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Physical health not good	13	32*	6*
Mental health not good	15	32*	9*
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with life	5	13*	3*
Always or usually lonely	5	13*	3*
Rarely or never receives social and emotional support	6	13*	4*

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

. = Too few responses to report; * = Statistically different compared to VT overall

Chronic Conditions

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Arthritis	30	47*	24*
Asthma	12	20*	9*
Cancer (non-skin)	10	12*	9
Cardiovascular disease	9	17*	7*
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)	6	13*	3*
Depressive disorder	26	44*	21*
Diabetes	9	16*	6*
Kidney disease	3	6*	2*
Skin cancer	7	8	7
Subjective cognitive decline (ages 45+)	16	33*	9*

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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Vermont Department of Health

Risk Factors and Behaviors

	VT	Disability	No Disability
No leisure time physical activity	16	27*	12*
Rates neighborhood as unsafe or extremely unsafe	4	9*	2*
Employment insecurity	8	14*	7
Food insecurity	8	17*	5*
Housing insecurity	7	15*	5*
Transportation insecurity	5	14*	2*
Participated in a high-risk behavior for HIV^	5	8	4
Considered suicide past year	5	10*	3*

^High-risk behaviors include any of the following: intravenous drug use, treatment for a sexually transmitted disease, gave or received sex for drugs or money, and anal sex without a condom.

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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Substance Use – Alcohol and Cannabis

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Drink any alcohol, past month	62	49*	66*
Binge drinking, past month	17	14	18
Heavy drinking, past month	8	8	8

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Cannabis use, past 30 days	25	27	24
Driving under the influence of cannabis, past month	19	19	20

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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Substance Use - Tobacco

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Current cigarette smoking	11	17*	8
Current e-cigarette use	6	9	5
Current smokeless tobacco use	2	3	2
Attempted to quit smoking, past year	52	50	53

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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Preventative Behaviors and Screenings

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Routine doctor visit	78	79	78
Had HIV screening, ever	39	43	37
Had HIV screening, past year	6	6	6
Breast cancer screening (females ages 40-74)	75	71	77
Colorectal cancer screening (ages 45-75)	76	75	76
Birth control use (females ages 18-49)^	88	89	88
Had water source tested for arsenic, past 5 years^^	45	42	46

^Questions were asked among females ages 18-49 who a) were not currently pregnant or did not know or refused to answer if they were pregnant, and b) never had a hysterectomy or did not know or refused to answer if they had a hysterectomy.

^^Includes only homeowners with a private water source as their main water source.

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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Immunizations

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Flu shot, past year (ages 65+)	73	70	74
Pneumonia shot (ages 65+)	71	71	71

All numbers are percentages.

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Oral Health

	VT	Disability	No Disability
Dentist visit, past year	70	58*	75*
Had at least 1 tooth extracted (ages 45-64)	42	62*	36*

All numbers are percentages.

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Vermont Department of Health

For Questions and More Information

Email: AHS.VDHBRFSS@Vermont.gov

Web: www.healthvermont.gov/brfss

Social: @HealthVermont