



# Older Adults: Population in Focus Report

Vermont Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2024

March 2026

# Introduction – Older Adults

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.

Since 2013, Vermont has experienced an increase in its older adult population, and it is projected that by 2030 one third of Vermonters will be over the age of 60. Overall, in 2024, 29% of Vermonters were aged 65 or older. This report focuses on health-related factors and behaviors experienced by adults aged 18-64, 65-79, and 80 and older, compared to the overall statewide rate. Breakdowns for health-related for individuals under 65, please visit the [2024 BRFSS Statewide Report](#).

# 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

Age	N	%
18-64	3755	72
65-79	2138	23
80+	528	6

N = Unweighted number of respondents; % = Weighted percent  
BRFSS 2024 results.  
Vermont Department of Health

# Health Status Indicators

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
General health fair or poor	14	13	15	18
Have a personal health care provider	90	87*	98*	97*
Delayed health care due to cost, past year	8	10*	2*	.

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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

# Quality of Life

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
Physical health not good	14	12	15	18
Mental health not good	15	18*	7*	5*
Has a disability	26	23	30*	44*
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with life	5	6	3*	.
Always or usually lonely	5	6	3*	.
Rarely or never receives social and emotional support	6	6	7	7

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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# Chronic Conditions

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
Arthritis	30	20*	54*	57*
Asthma	12	13	10	9
Cancer (non-skin)	10	6*	19*	25*
Cardiovascular disease	9	5*	18*	33*
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)	6	4*	10*	10*
Depressive disorder	26	30*	19*	12*
Diabetes	9	6*	18*	14*
Kidney disease	3	1*	6*	8*
Skin cancer	7	3*	14*	26*
Subjective cognitive decline (ages 45+)	16	15	16	23*

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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# Risk Factors and Behaviors

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
No leisure time physical activity	16	14	20*	25*
Rates neighborhood as unsafe or extremely unsafe	4	5	3	.
Employment insecurity	9	11	4*	.
Food insecurity	8	9	4*	4
Housing insecurity	7	9	3*	.
Transportation insecurity	5	6	3*	.
Participated in a high-risk behavior for HIV <sup>^</sup>	5	7	1*	.
Considered suicide past year	5	6	1*	.

<sup>^</sup>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	18-64	65-79	80+
Drink any alcohol, past month	62	65	58	50*
Binge drinking, past month	17	21*	7*	.
Heavy drinking, past month	8	9	6	.
Driving under the influence of alcohol, past month				

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
Cannabis use, past 30 days	25	31*	12*	3*
Driving under the influence of cannabis, past month	19	21	11*	.

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

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# Substance Use - Tobacco

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
Current cigarette smoking	11	12	7*	.
Current e-cigarette use	6	8*	1*	.
Current smokeless tobacco use	2	3	1*	.
Attempted to quit smoking, past year	52	53	51	.

All numbers are percentages.

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Vermont Department of Health

# Preventative Behaviors and Screenings

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
Routine doctor visit	78	73*	91*	93*
Had HIV screening, ever	39	45*	24*	11*
Had HIV screening, past year	6	8	2*	.
Had water source tested for arsenic past, 5 years <sup>^</sup>	45	52*	33*	40

	VT	18-64	65-74
Breast cancer screening (females ages 40-74)	75	72	83*

	VT	45-64	65-75
Colorectal cancer screening (ages 45-75)	76	71*	85*

All numbers are percentages.

BRFSS 2024 Results

<sup>^</sup>Includes only homeowners with a private water source as their main water source.

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# Immunizations

	VT	65-79	80+
Flu shot, past year (ages 65+)	73	73	75
Pneumonia shot (ages 65+)	71	70	78

All numbers are percentages.

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# Oral Health

	VT	18-64	65-79	80+
Dentist visit, past year	70	68	79*	72

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# For Questions and More Information

Email: [AHS.VDHBREFSS@Vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHBREFSS@Vermont.gov)

Web: [www.healthvermont.gov/brfss](http://www.healthvermont.gov/brfss)

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