

Washington State Department of Health

Data Notes for Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) dashboards

Data source

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an annual phone survey of randomly selected Washington adults. The Department of Health administers the survey under the supervision of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is the longest continuously running health survey in the world and has been administered in Washington State since 1987.

Rationale for inclusion

The BRFSS provides a rich source of data about health care access and utilization, chronic health conditions and behaviors that affect health (e.g., smoking cigarettes). It is often the only population-level data available on many of these topics. The breadth of topics covered by the BRFSS survey allows study of how a condition occurs in different populations (male/female, race/ethnicity, etc.), and how different disease and behaviors may occur together.

Information about the data

The BRFSS data are from a random-digit dial survey sample of Washington adults 18 years and older. Both landline and cell phones are called. Collection of the data is stratified; it is designed to include people from across the entire state. It provides population-level estimates of health-related behaviors. Data are currently available from 2012 through 2019.

- Coverage: Washington residents 18 or older with a landline or cellular telephone.
- Statistics: Age adjusted percentages
- Variables by year type: Annual, bi-annual, random years
- Variable by category: Demographic, Chronic conditions, , Behavioral Health, Healthcare Access and Prevention, Injury Related
- Years: 2012–most recent year available; updated annually
- Geography: State, Accountable Communities of Health (ACH), Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ)
- Age: Not available
- Gender: Male, Female
- Race/ethnicity: White, Black, Asian, Native American, Hispanic and Multi-racial.

Caveats

- BRFSS is a population-based, cross sectional telephone survey. This design contains an inherent selection bias, as participation is voluntary.
- These data are self-reported, and this can introduce recall and social desirability biases.
- It does not include vulnerable populations such as those incarcerated or in nursing homes.
- Some race groups are not available for every measure due to small sample sizes that generate unreliable estimates.

Information about the selectable layer

Individual races and geographic areas can be selected from bar charts or the map. This will show the trend for that race or location, compared to the trend of the statewide average.

Race and gender selections apply only to the state as a whole.