

## Purpose

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) initiated the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey in 1984 after research showed that personal health behaviors play an important role in the existence of unnecessary deaths and illnesses. The survey allows states to collect data on health risks (such as smoking, drinking, obesity, lack of insurance, and seatbelt use) that are linked to the leading causes of death (heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and injury) and other important health issues. The Arkansas BRFSS has been conducted since 1993 by the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), with funding and guidance provided by the CDC.

## How Data are Collected

- A random sample of Arkansas households is selected each month for the survey. Participation is voluntary, and all responses to the survey are confidential.
- Households with a listed telephone number are sent a letter to explain the survey.
- The survey is conducted using landline and cellular telephones. Arkansas has been conducting cellular telephone surveys since 2009.
- Clearwater Research, an independent survey research company, conducts the interviews.

## How BRFSS Data Can be Used

- Assess health needs of Arkansas communities
- Improve public health strategies to promote and protect health
- Identify health disparities to understand why differences in health occur
- Provide data for grant proposals to acquire funds for health promotion programs
- Publish scientific articles in professional journals
- Inform policymakers about state-specific health problems and issues
- Track progress in meeting *Healthy People* objectives<sup>1</sup>



## BRFSS Topics of Interest

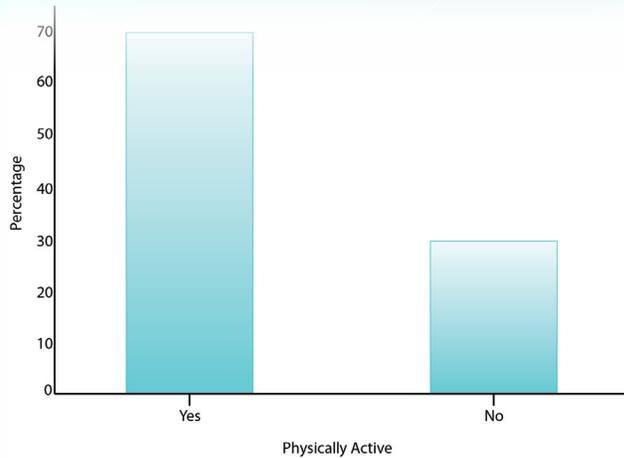
- Alcohol
- Physical Activity
- Diabetes
- Quality of Life
- Cancer Control
- Racism
- Nutrition
- Tobacco
- Obesity/Overweight
- Women's Health



<sup>1</sup> <http://healthypeople.gov>

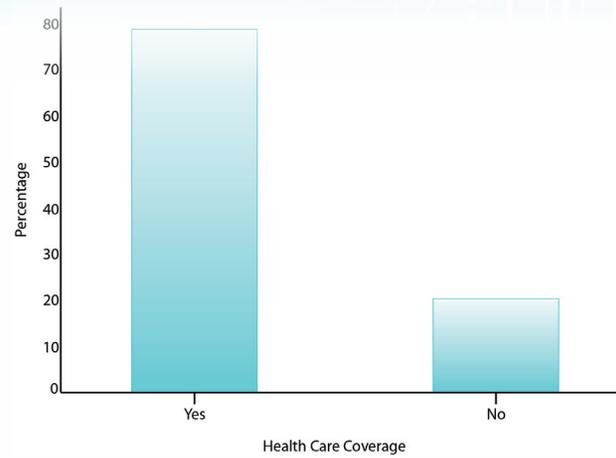
## Examples of BRFSS Data

Percentage of Persons Who Participated in Physical Activities  
Arkansas - 2010



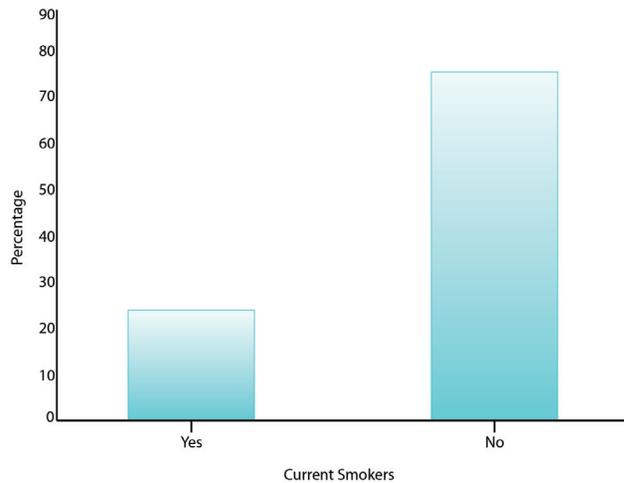
29.8% of Arkansans did not participate in any physical activities in the past 30 days.

Percentage of Persons Who Have Health Care Coverage  
Arkansas - 2010



21.3% of Arkansans are uninsured.

Percentage of Persons Who Are Current Smokers  
Arkansas - 2010



22.9% of Arkansans currently smoke.

### BRFSS Users

- State and Local Health Departments
- Healthcare Professionals
- Federal Agencies
- Students and Researchers
- Media
- Epidemiologists
- Community Health Program Planners

If you need additional information,  
Please call the Arkansas BRFSS Coordinator  
Toll Free: **1-800-462-0599 EXT. 2003**  
[www.brfss.ar.gov](http://www.brfss.ar.gov)



## Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

Center for Health Statistics – Arkansas Department of Health

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a standardized, random digit dial telephone health survey conducted by the 50 states, Washington, D.C., and three U.S. territories under the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention