

Chronic Disease and Cognitive Impairments

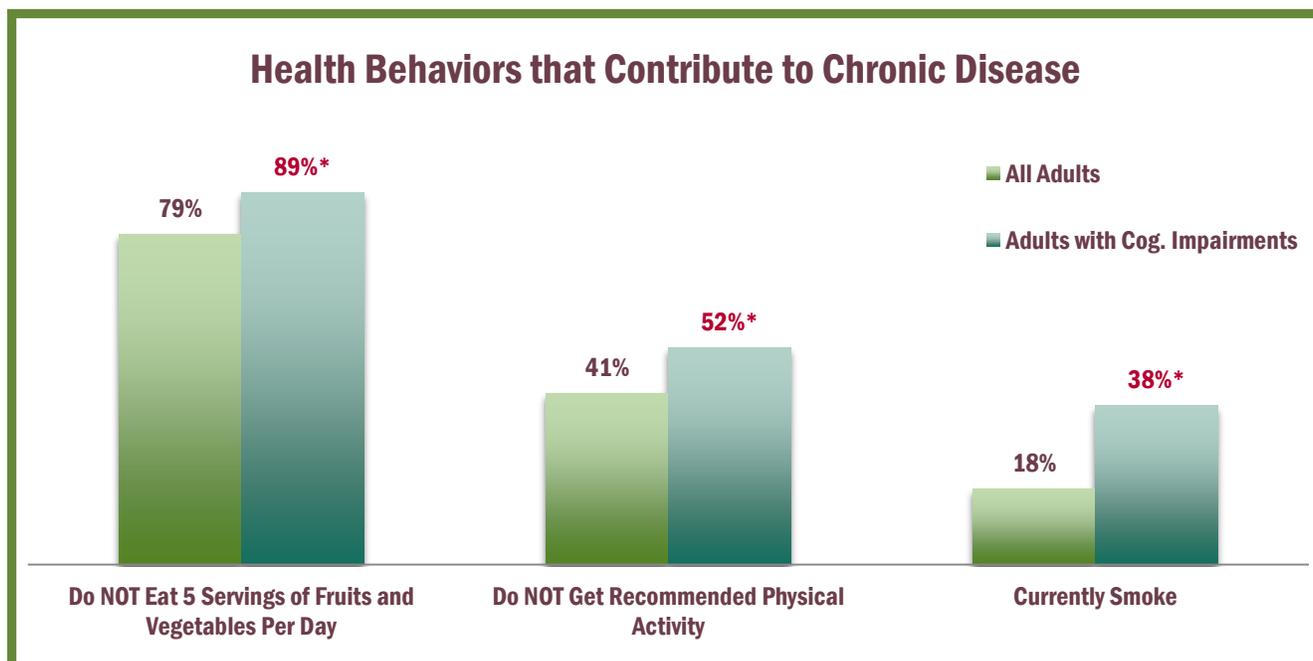
Vermonters with cognitive impairment are disproportionately impacted by chronic disease.

Cognitive impairment is defined as confusion or memory loss that occurred often or worsened in the last 12 months. Individuals with cognitive impairments have greater rates of both chronic diseases and their associated behaviors. Although Vermont has fewer individuals with cognitive impairments than the national average, the health disparity in certain behaviors and diseases is greater for Vermonters with cognitive impairments than the national average. Most pronounced are differences related to smoking and asthma.¹ Programs and policies to reduce the behaviors that lead to chronic diseases should work to ensure they are appropriate or adapted for individuals with cognitive impairments.

3-4-50 is a simple concept to help us grasp the reality that 3 health behaviors contribute to 4 chronic diseases that claim the lives of more than 50 percent of Vermonters. This data brief compares these measures by all Vermont adults and adults with cognitive impairments.

3 BEHAVIORS

Poor nutrition, lack of physical activity and tobacco use are three health behaviors that contribute to the development and severity of chronic disease. Vermonters with cognitive impairments are more likely to have a poor diet, not get the recommended amount of physical activity, and to smoke. Nearly nine out of 10 do not follow the recommended diet and half do not get enough physical activity. They are twice as likely as all adult Vermonters to smoke.



(*) notes statistical difference

Data Source: BRFSS 2013 & 2014

Note: Percentages for combined chronic disease prevalence account for Vermonters with dual diagnosis.

LEAD TO 4 CHRONIC DISEASES

Vermonters with cognitive impairment are more burdened with disease than other Vermonters.

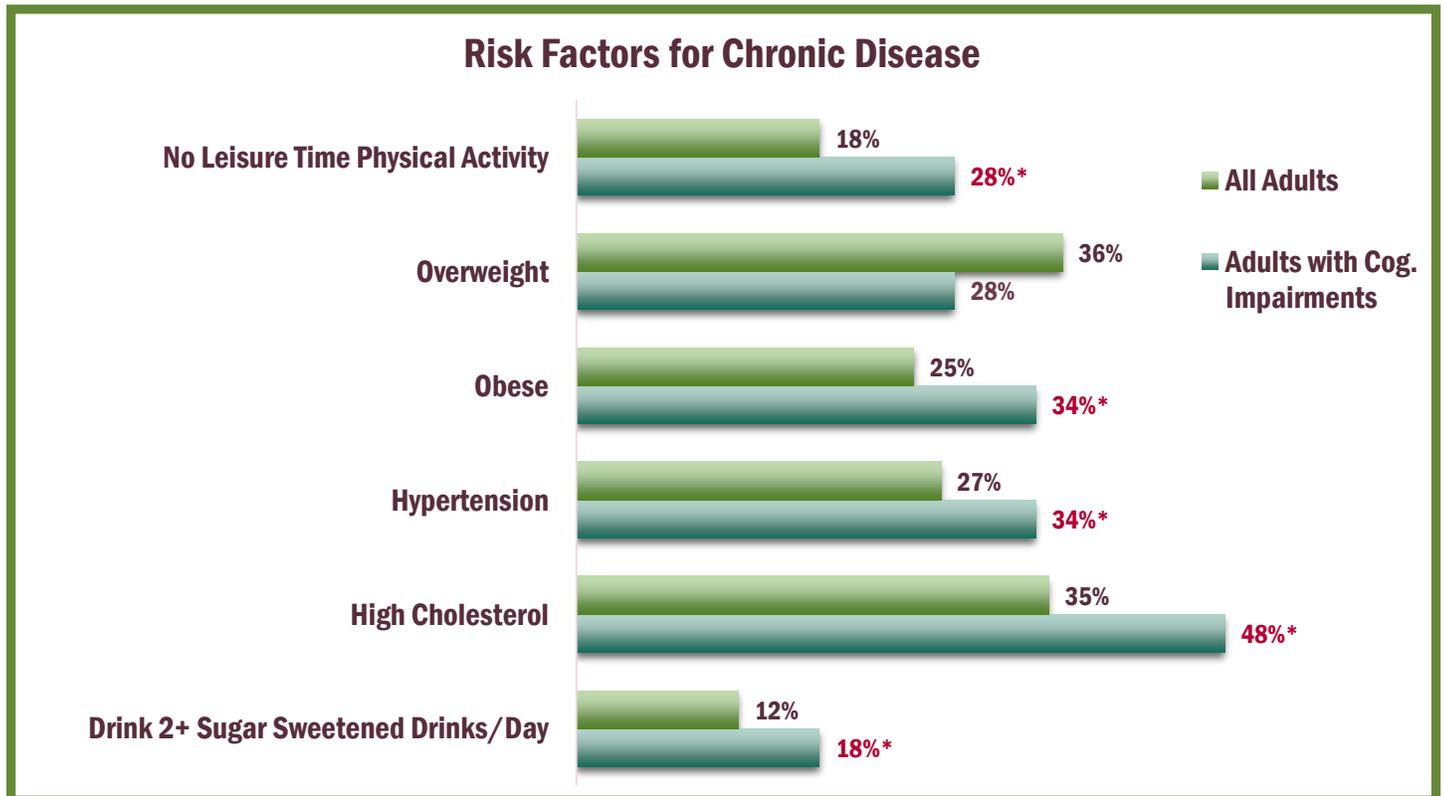
- One in five have been diagnosed with asthma (21%) and 14% have been diagnosed with COPD.
- One in five have been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease (21%).
- 15% are living with cancer.
- 15% have been diagnosed with diabetes and one in 10 have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes (9%).

Chronic Disease Diagnosis	All Adults	Adults with Cognitive Impairments
Lung Disease (Asthma/COPD)	15%	28%*
Diabetes and Pre-Diabetes	13%	22%*
Cardiovascular Disease	7%	21%*
Cancer	7%	15%*

(*) notes statistical difference

Data Source: BRFSS 2013 & 2014

Note: Percentages for combined chronic disease prevalence account for Vermonters with dual diagnosis.



(*) notes statistical difference

Data Source: BRFSS 2013 & 2014

For more information on the data presented here, contact Jennifer Hicks at jennifer.hicks@vermont.gov

1. Disability and Health Data System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://dhds.cdc.gov/>