

Alaska BRFSS HIGHLIGHTS

Behavioral Risk Factor Survey 2006

Introduction

Modifying risk behaviors contributing to chronic disease, premature death and impaired quality of life is an important public health challenge. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) collects information on risk factors, chronic disease prevalence and preventive practices that is essential for chronic disease prevention planning. The BRFSS is conducted in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands and is now the longest running and largest telephone health survey in the world. The State of Alaska began surveillance using the BRFSS in 1991 and has continued yearly since. The Alaska BRFSS is a collaborative project of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Alaska Division of Public Health.

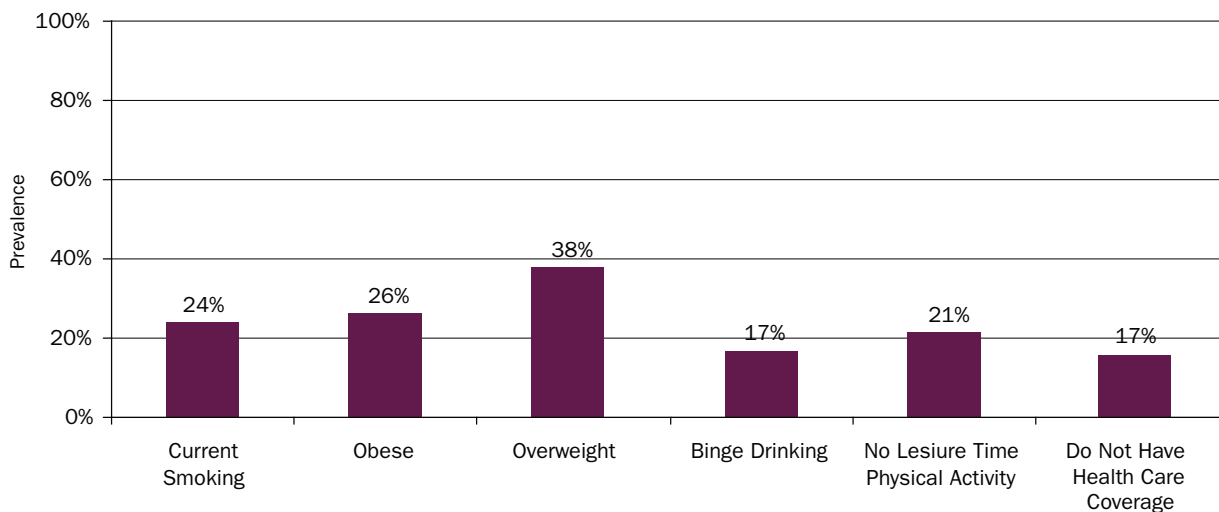


Sarah Palin, Governor
State of Alaska

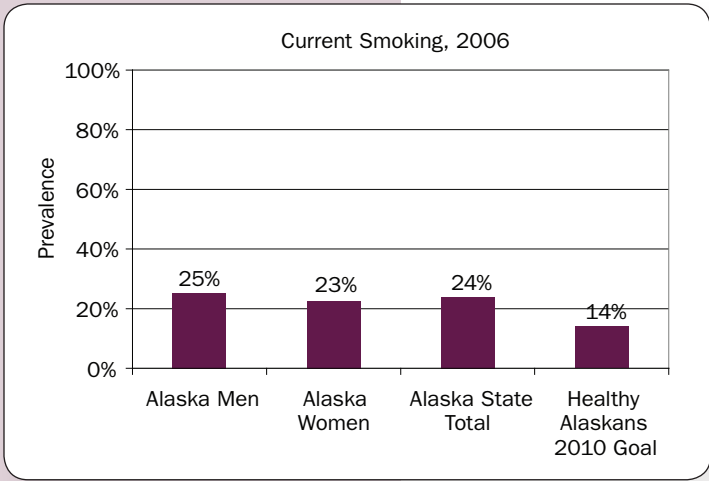
Karleen K. Jackson, Ph.D., Commissioner
Department of Health and Social Services

Jay C. Butler, M.D., Director
Division of Public Health

Prevalence of Selected Risk Factors Among Alaska Adults, 2006



In 2006, 2,113 health interviews were conducted using a standardized BRFSS questionnaire. The interviews were conducted over the telephone from the Health Survey Lab in Juneau using randomly selected telephone numbers. Households were contacted and one adult of age 18 years or older was randomly selected to complete the survey. These data were weighted to represent the state adult population. This report highlights some of the data collected in 2006.



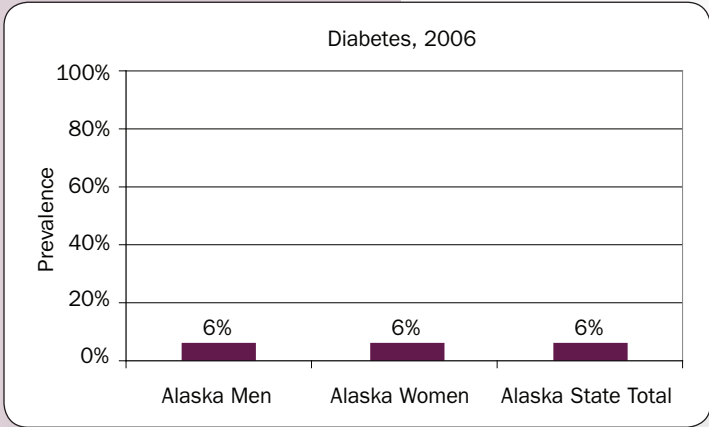
Current Smoking

Current smokers were those respondents that had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime and reported they currently smoke either some days or everyday. In 2006, 24% of Alaskan adults reported current smoking, higher than the Healthy Alaskans 2010 goal of 14%. Alaska Natives report the highest prevalence of current smoking of any race group at 45% (data not shown).



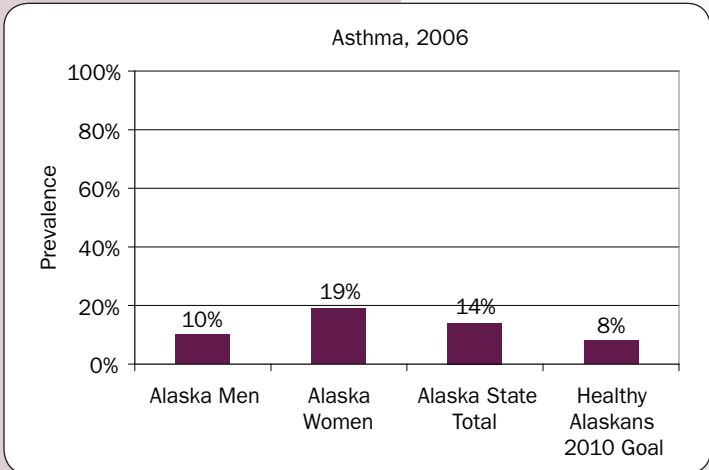
Overweight and Obesity

People who are overweight or obese are at increased risk of chronic disease and premature death. In 2006, 64% of Alaskan adults were overweight (38%) or obese (26%) based on Body Mass Index (BMI). Respondents with a BMI of 25.0 to less than 30.0 were considered overweight and those with a BMI of 30.0 or greater were considered obese. Both of these indicators are greater than the Healthy Alaskans 2010 goals of 30% for overweight and 18% for obese.



Diabetes

Diabetes increases the risk for heart disease and stroke and can result in blindness and renal disease. In 2006, 6% of Alaskan adults reported being told they have diabetes. There was no difference between men and women in the prevalence of diabetes.



Asthma

Asthma is a leading cause of restricted activity. In 2006, 14% of Alaskan adults reported ever being told they have asthma. Significantly more women than men reported asthma.

Binge Drinking

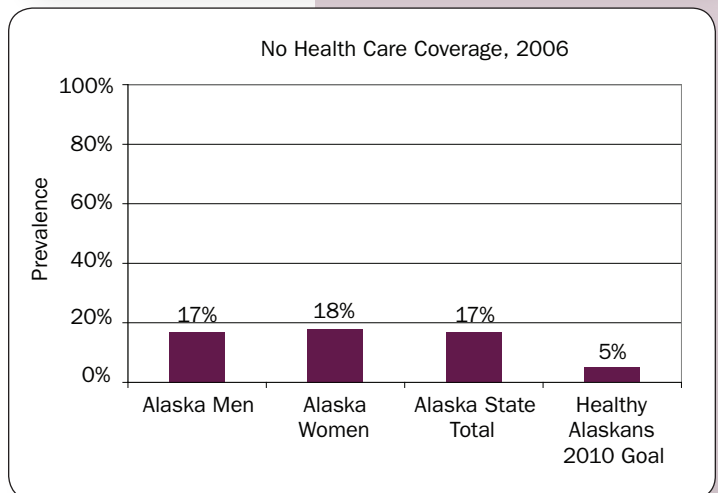
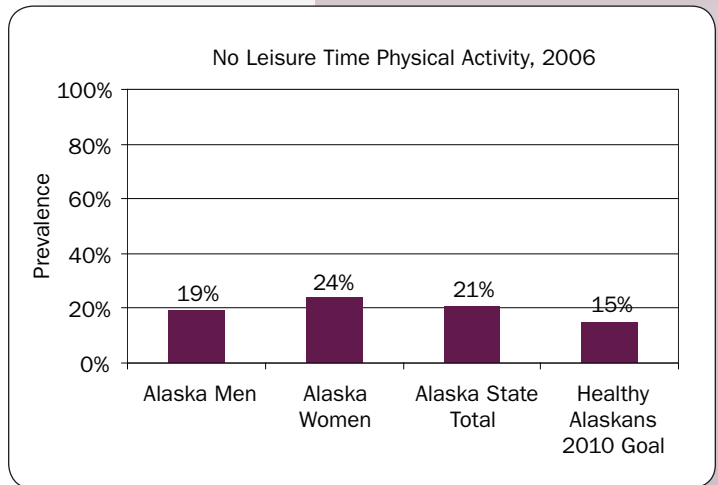
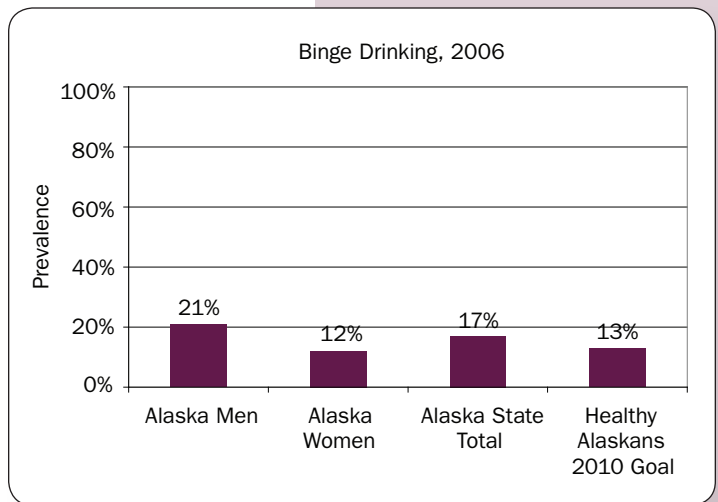
Binge drinking was defined as having had 5 or more drinks on one or more occasions in the past 30 days. Binge drinking is associated with injury, both intentional and unintentional. Seventeen percent of Alaskan adults reported binge drinking on the 2006 BRFSS; the Healthy Alaskans 2010 goal for binge drinking is 13%. Binge drinking among men (21%) was statistically significantly higher than among women (12%).

No Leisure Time Physical Activity

Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of chronic disease and help in maintaining current weight or with losing weight. In 2006, 21% of Alaskan adults reported no leisure time physical activity. This is above the Healthy Alaskans 2010 goal of 15%.

No Health Care Coverage

Many Alaskans lack access to primary health care and preventive services. Reasons include distance from sources of care and lack of health care coverage. On the 2006 BRFSS, 17% of Alaskan adults reported not having health care coverage. The goal of Healthy Alaskans 2010 is to reduce the proportion of Alaskans without health care coverage to 5%.



New Indicators Included in the 2006 BRFSS Annual Report

Anxiety and Depression

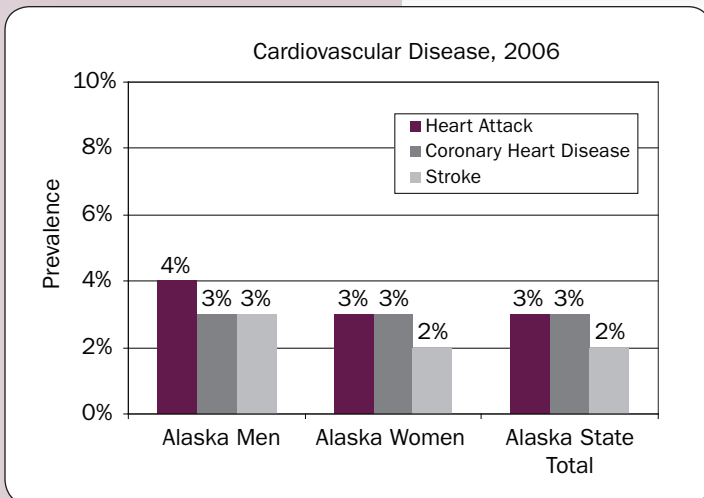
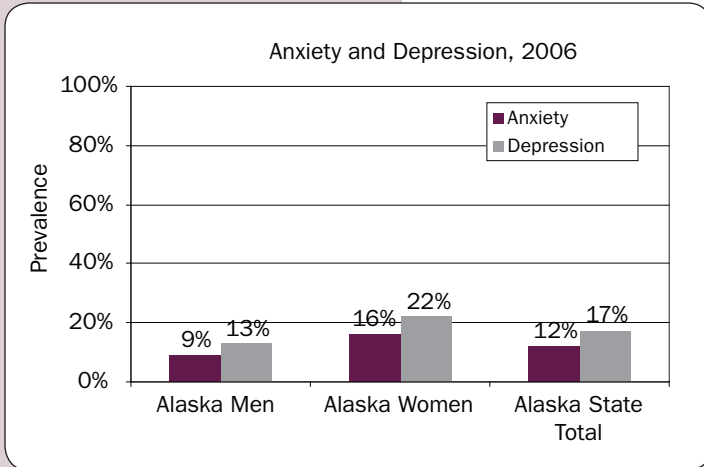
A new anxiety and depression optional module was included on the 2006 Alaska BRFSS. Respondents were asked if they had ever been told they have an anxiety disorder or been told that they have a depressive disorder. Significantly more women than men reported anxiety and/or depression.

Cardiovascular Disease

Heart disease is a leading cause of death in Alaska and the US as a whole. The BRFSS asks respondents if they have ever been told they have had a heart attack, coronary heart disease or a stroke. In 2006, 3% of Alaskan adults said they have had a heart attack, 3% said they have coronary heart disease and 2% said they have had a stroke. There was no significant difference in prevalence of cardiovascular disease by sex.

More information about the Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System can be found at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/hsl/brfss/default.htm>

The full Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Survey 2006 Annual Report can be downloaded from: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/hsl/brfss/publications.htm>



References:

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health. Healthy Alaskans 2010: Targets and Strategies for Improved Health. Volume I: Targets for Improved Health. Nov. 2005. Available at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/ha2010/Default.htm>

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