

# BRFSS Brief

Number 2021-07

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an annual statewide telephone survey of adults developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and administered by the New York State Department of Health. The BRFSS is designed to provide information on behaviors, risk factors, and utilization of preventive services related to the leading causes of chronic and infectious diseases, disability, injury, and death among the noninstitutionalized, civilian population aged 18 years and older.

## Active Transportation

New York State Adults, 2018

### Introduction and Key Findings

Regular physical activity has significant benefits across the lifespan including stronger muscles and bones, better weight control, improved mental health, lowered risk of chronic disease, and increased life expectancy. The 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults of all ages and abilities engage in moderate-intensity physical activity for at least 150 minutes per week or vigorous-intensity physical activity for 75 minutes per week.<sup>1</sup> Most adults do not meet this recommendation.

People can increase their physical activity by walking and biking; this is easier when everyday destinations are connected by activity-friendly routes. Active transportation includes such activities as walking or biking for at least ten minutes to get from one place to another. Communities can increase opportunities for active transportation by combining improvements to transportation systems (e.g. pedestrian or cycling paths) with land use and design components (e.g. access to public parks).<sup>2</sup>

Creating livable communities that support safe and accessible physical activity opportunities for all ages is a major goal of the New York State Prevention Agenda and New York's Health Across All Policies/Age-Friendly NY Initiative.<sup>3</sup> These initiatives have identified three priority populations: adults age 65 years and older, adults with less than a high school education, and adults living with disability.

#### Key Findings

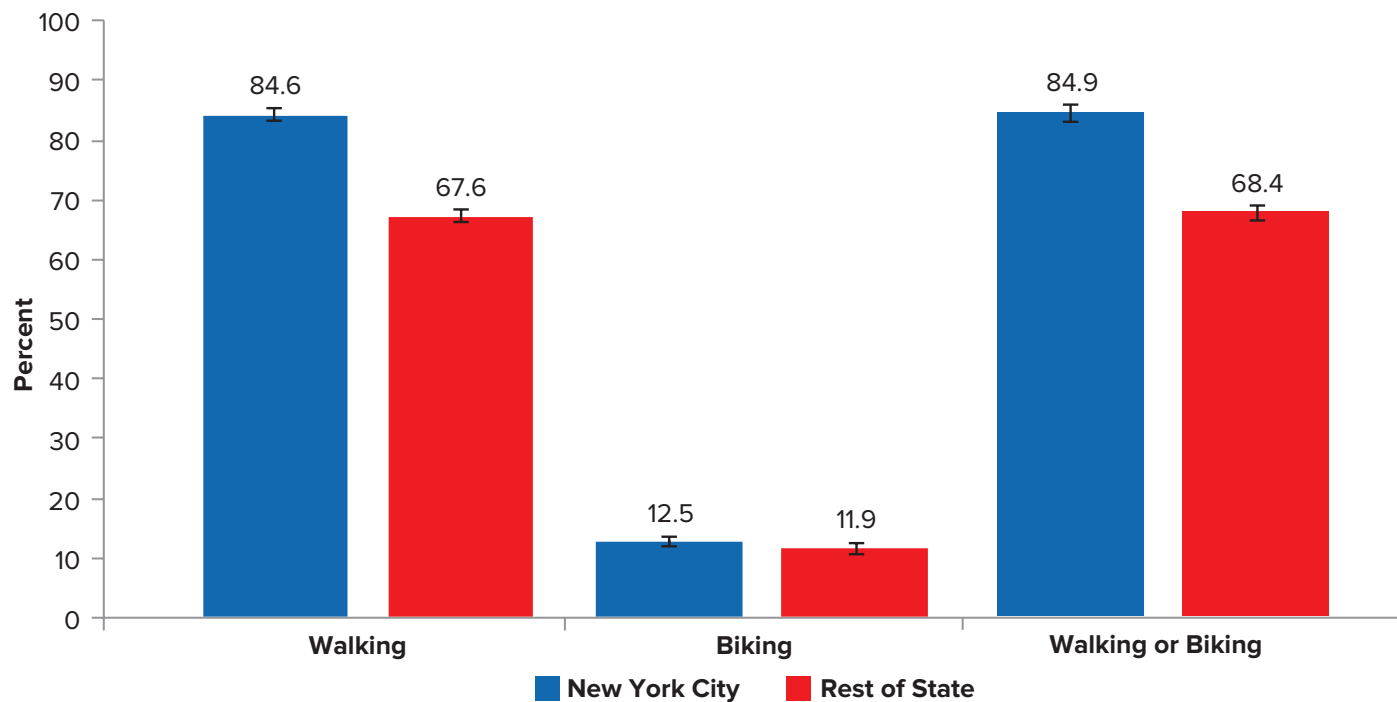
In New York State, 74.7% of adults reported walking for at least ten minutes to get from one place to another in a typical month and 12.1% reported biking. Altogether, 75.3% of adults reported using at least one form of active transportation in a typical month (walking or biking). Use of active transportation is lower among adults who are female (73.2%), over 65 years of age (72.5%), are living with disability (66.7%), and those with obesity (69.5%). Use of active transportation is higher among adults with a college degree (79.9%), and those living in New York City (84.9%).

### BRFSS questions

Active transportation includes such activities as walking or biking for at least ten minutes to get from one place to another.

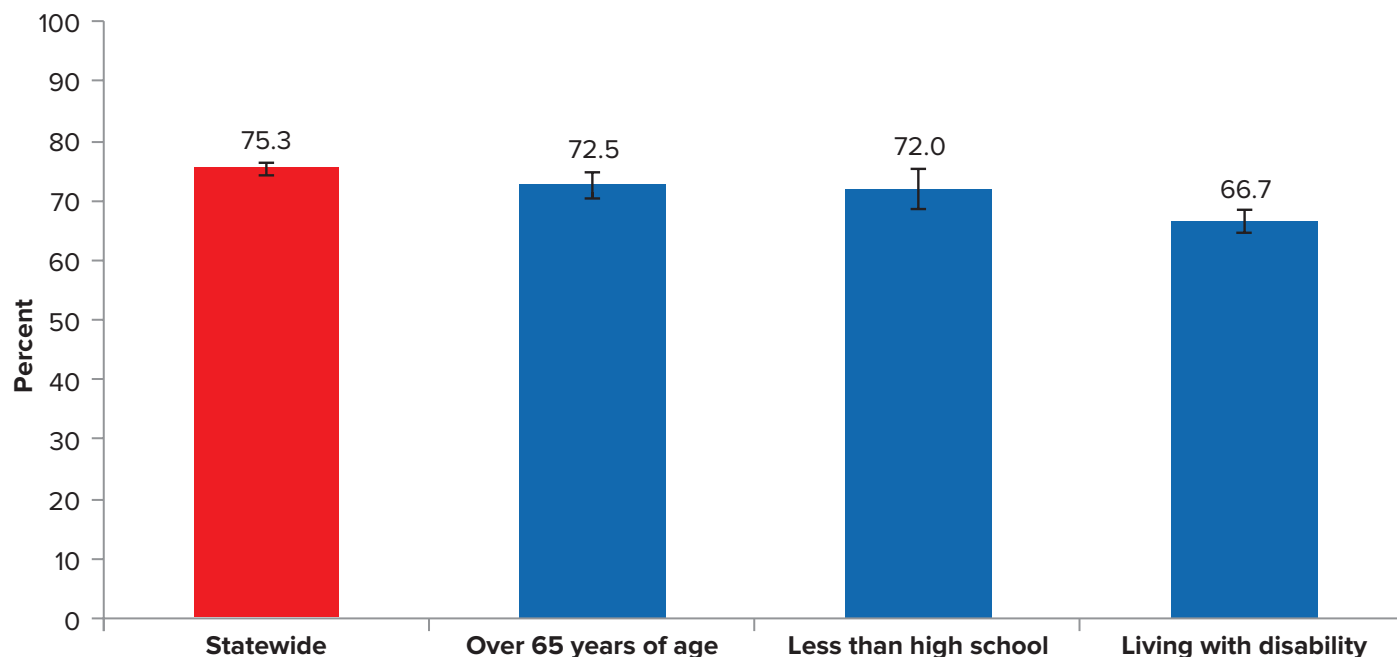
1. In a typical month, do you walk to get from one place to another?
2. In a typical month, do you ride a bike to get from one place to another place?

**Figure 1. Active transportation among New York State adults by region, BRFSS 2018**



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

**Figure 2. Walking or biking among New York State priority populations, BRFSS 2018**



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

## Active Transportation among New York State adults, 2018 BRFSS

	Walking <sup>a</sup>		Biking <sup>b</sup>		Walking or Biking <sup>c</sup>	
	% <sup>d</sup>	95% CI <sup>d</sup>	% <sup>d</sup>	95% CI <sup>d</sup>	% <sup>d</sup>	95% CI <sup>d</sup>
<b>New York State (NYS) [n=35,767]</b>	74.7	73.8-75.6	12.1	11.4-12.8	75.3	74.4-76.2
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	76.6	75.3-77.9	17.2	16.1-18.4	77.8	76.5-79.0
Female	73.0	71.7-74.3	7.7	6.9-8.4	73.2	71.9-74.5
<b>Age (years)</b>						
18-24	77.5	74.5-80.4	15.6	13.0-18.3	78.8	75.9-81.7
25-34	74.2	71.8-76.5	13.7	12.0-15.5	75.4	73.1-77.8
35-44	74.7	72.4-77.0	14.3	12.4-16.2	75.2	73.0-77.5
45-54	73.4	71.1-75.7	12.1	10.5-13.7	74.1	71.9-76.4
55-64	75.7	73.6-77.7	11.9	10.4-13.4	75.8	73.8-77.9
65+	72.5	70.4-74.6	7.5	6.4-8.7	72.5	70.5-74.6
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>						
White, non-Hispanic	72.3	71.2-73.4	12.6	11.8-13.5	72.8	71.7-73.9
Black, non-Hispanic	77.1	74.4-79.7	7.6	6.1-9.1	77.3	74.7-80.0
Hispanic	78.3	75.8-80.7	13.0	11.1-14.9	79.8	77.4-82.1
Other, non-Hispanic	76.8	73.3-80.3	12.2	9.7-14.6	76.9	73.4-80.4
<b>Annual household income</b>						
<\$25,000	72.8	70.8-74.9	11.3	9.8-12.8	74.0	72.0-76.0
\$25,000-\$49,999	71.0	68.5-73.5	11.5	9.8-13.2	71.9	69.4-74.3
\$50,000 and greater	76.7	75.4-78.0	13.2	12.2-14.2	77.2	75.9-78.6
Missing <sup>e</sup>	75.1	73.0-77.3	11.2	9.7-12.7	75.1	72.9-77.2
<b>Education</b>						
Less than high school (HS)	71.5	68.2-74.8	10.3	8.4-12.3	72.0	68.7-75.4
High school or GED	71.1	69.2-73.0	11.2	9.8-12.6	71.9	70.0-73.7
Some post-HS	73.8	72.0-75.6	11.8	10.4-13.2	74.4	72.6-76.1
College graduate	79.4	78.1-80.6	13.7	12.6-14.8	79.9	78.7-81.1
<b>Disability<sup>f</sup></b>						
Yes	66.0	64.0-68.0	9.5	8.3-10.7	66.7	64.7-68.7
No	77.7	76.7-78.7	13.1	12.3-13.9	78.3	77.3-79.3
<b>Weight status categories</b>						
Neither obese nor overweight	77.8	76.3-79.4	14.4	13.1-15.6	78.5	77.0-80.1
Overweight	76.5	74.9-78.0	12.6	11.4-13.8	76.9	75.4-78.5
Obese	68.9	67.0-70.8	8.8	7.6-10.0	69.5	67.6-71.4
<b>Region</b>						
New York City (NYC)	84.6	83.1-86.0	12.5	11.3-13.7	84.9	83.5-86.3
NYS exclusive of NYC	67.6	66.5-68.8	11.9	11.1-12.7	68.4	67.3-69.6

<sup>a</sup> Walking for at least ten minutes to get from one place to another in a typical month.

<sup>b</sup> Biking for at least ten minutes to get from one place to another in a typical month.

<sup>c</sup> Walking or biking for at least ten minutes to get from one place to another in a typical month.

<sup>d</sup> % = weighted percentage; CI = confidence interval.

<sup>e</sup> "Missing" category included because more than 10% of the sample did not report income.

<sup>f</sup> All respondents who reported having at least one type of disability (cognitive, mobility, vision, self-care, independent living or deafness)

## References

1. US Department of Health and Human Services. 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Hyattsville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2018. <https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/>
2. Guide to Community Preventive Services. Built Environment Approaches to Increase Physical Activity. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/content/combined-built-environment-features-help-communities-get-active>. Page accessed: December 18, 2019
3. New York State Prevention Agenda Preventing Chronic Diseases Action Plan available at: [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention\\_agenda/2019-2024/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2019-2024/)

## Program Contributions

New York State Department of Health  
Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research  
Bureau of Chronic Disease Control

## Order Information

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