

Fruits and Vegetables

Summary / Recommendations: In 2005, the proportion of residents with inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption was highest among residents with lower incomes, lower education levels, and respondents who were unable to work. Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption among Louisiana residents must remain a critical focus of chronic disease prevention efforts.

Fruit and vegetable among adults, overall and by select categories
 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Louisiana 2005

Characteristics+	Adequate Fruit and Vegetable Consumption**		
	Sample	%	95% CI
Total	598	20.2	(18.5-22.0)
Age			
18-34	114	18.9	(15.3-22.6)
35-54	212	18.4	(15.8-21.0)
55+	272	24.2	(21.4-27.0)
Gender			
Male	184	18.4	(15.6-21.3)
Female	414	21.9	(19.7-24.0)
Race			
White	397	19.9	(17.8-22.1)
Black	151	19.2	(15.8-22.5)
Education			
< High school	83	19.6	(15.1-24.2)
High school grad	180	17.3	(14.5-20.1)
Some college/grad	333	22.4	(19.9-25.0)
HH Income			
<\$25,000	169	19	(15.8-22.2)
\$25,000-\$49,999	145	19.7	(16.3-23.1)
\$50,000+	166	20.8	(17.6-24.0)
Employment			
Employed	267	19.7	(17.2-22.3)
Self-employed	199	23.5	(20.2-26.9)
Unemployed	86	19.7	(15.1-24.3)
Unable to work	43	15.0	(9.8-20.2)

* Percentages are based on weighted data estimates. Unweighted sample size = 598
 + In this analysis, data for each category are included only for persons for whom the data were available; excluded data were either unknown or refused.
 ** The proportion of respondents that reported fruit and vegetable consumption was more than 5 times per day on average

Diet and Nutrition play a vital role in the development and maintenance of a healthy lifestyle (*Healthy People 2010*, 2000). Fruit and vegetable consumption continues to be a major focus in promoting healthy eating behaviors (*Healthy People 2010*, 2000). *Healthy People 2010* health objectives include increasing “the proportion of persons aged 2 years and older who consume at least two daily servings of fruit” to 75% (objective 19-5) and “the proportion of persons aged 2 years and older who consume at least three daily servings of vegetables, with at least one-third being dark green or orange vegetables” to 50% (objective 19-6) (2000).

Nutritional and dietary factors are linked to four out of ten leading causes of death which include cancer, diabetes, stroke and coronary heart disease (CHD) (as cited in *Healthy People 2010*, 2000). Consuming a diet rich in fruits and vegetables decreases the risk of developing chronic illnesses and has been shown to be instrumental in managing weight (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2007).

In 2005, the proportion of Louisiana residents who reported consuming fruits and vegetables at least five times per day was 20.2% [95% CI: 18.5-22.0], which is significantly lower than the US proportion of 23.2%. Louisiana residents aged 55 or older were more likely to consume fruits and vegetables at least five times per day (24.3% [95% CI: 21.4-27.0]) than were their younger counterparts.

Between 1998 and 2005, rates of adequate fruit and vegetable consumption have remained fairly steady in Louisiana and nationally. Louisiana rates remain, however, much lower than US rates.

