
Heart Disease, Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Oral Health: Findings From the Washington Adult Health Survey

Juliet VanEenwyk, PhD, State Epidemiologist – Non-Infectious Conditions, Washington State Department of Health; Dennis, PhD, MS, Research Analyst, Washington State Department of Health; Myduc L Ta, PhD, MPH, Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer, Washington State Department of Health; Lillian S. Bensley, PhD, Psychosocial Epidemiologist, Washington State Department of Health

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Abstract: Background: In 2007, the Washington State Department of Health conducted the Washington Adult Health Survey (WAHS) to assess prevalence and risk factors for ischemic heart disease (IHD), stroke, and diabetes, three chronic diseases responsible for about one-quarter of Washington deaths. Methods: We used a three-stage cluster design to obtain a random sample of adults ages 25 and older, stratified by census block median household income. Field teams measured participants' heights, weights, and blood pressures and collected fasting blood samples for measuring glucose and lipids. Participants provided information on their health and related risk factors. Results: Our response rate was 38%. Bias analysis showed the WAHS sample to be reasonably representative of Washington adults ages 25 and older. This session will present findings related to 1) prevalence of IHD, diabetes, obesity, and metabolic syndrome, comparing measured values to self-report from WAHS and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) as possible; 2) percentages of persons meeting dietary guidelines for total fat, saturated fat, fiber, and added sugar; 3) percentages meeting guidelines for physical activity compared to slightly different measures in BRFSS; and 4) psychosocial factors associated with poor oral health. For perspective on equity, we will compare findings for high and low income groups. Conclusions: Compared to self-reported data, WAHS provides additional perspective on three major causes of mortality and morbidity in Washington and identifies health equity issues. Conducting similar surveys on a periodic basis would assist in policy and program development to reduce these diseases and in evaluation of statewide prevention efforts.