



Survey Findings Offer Critical Insights into Nashville's Health

In the first countywide health assessment in nearly 20 years, the 2019 *Nashville Community Health and Well-being Survey* provides an up-to-date picture of the health of our city.

Survey findings show bright spots, as well as some inequities and areas for improvement. While most Nashvillians have health insurance and a primary care physician, too many still struggle to manage hypertension, obesity and mental health challenges-- with wide demographic, economic and geographic disparities across our community.

Since these survey findings include a broad range of indicators for the health status and behaviors of adults in Davidson County, as well as their access to and utilization of health-care resources, this comprehensive data will also establish a foundational baseline to inform and enhance the important health-related work already underway by government agencies, non-profits, businesses and other organizations in the community to create a culture of health.

Key Findings:

Vast Majority of Nashvillians Have Health Insurance and Visit their Doctor Annually

Two-thirds of all adults in Davidson County (67.5%) report having a personal doctor or health care provider. A similar proportion (64.7%) indicated they had visited a physician for a routine check-up within the past year. The vast majority (90.1%) of Nashvillians reported currently having health insurance coverage.

- While the majority of African Americans (79.7%), Whites (61.6%), and Mixed Races (56.7%) received a check-up from a doctor in the past year, less than half (46.1%) of the Hispanic/Latino population received a check-up in that time period.
- The Hispanic, and Lesbian, Gay, and Bi-sexual populations were less likely to be insured (67% of Hispanics/ 70% of Lesbian, Gay, and Bi-sexual population reported having insurance coverage).
- Those Nashvillians who are uninsured reported significant barriers to seeing a physician during the past year.
 - 60% of the uninsured face cost-related barriers to obtaining care.
 - 54.6% did not take prescription medications due to cost.

Obesity is a Challenge for the City

Based on self-reported weight and height, which was used to calculate Body Mass Index scores, an alarming two-thirds of all adults in Davidson County (63.6%) are considered obese or overweight.

- Unlike other health indicators within the survey, overweight and obesity rates remained high among all Nashvillians regardless of education and income levels.
- The Northwest Zone of Davidson County saw the highest levels of obesity with 72.5% of its residents classified as either overweight or obese.
- Large racial disparities exist: 78% of African American respondents, 73% of Hispanic/Latino respondents compared to 55% of White respondents are classified as overweight or obese.
- Nashvillians self-reported only consuming 3 servings of dark green vegetables and 5 servings of fruit during the past *week*. (The USDA's Dietary Guidelines recommend adults eat at least 5 and up to 13 servings of fruits and vegetables each *day*.)

Too Many Nashvillians Struggle with Poor Mental Health

Davidson County residents reported having 5.3 poor mental health days involving stress, depression, and problems with emotions in a 30-day period. This outpaces the state average (4.5 days), and those of similar sized peer cities Austin (3.3 days) and Charlotte (3.4 days) and the national average (3.8 days).

- Women self-reported 6.2 poor mental health days each month compared to 4.3 for men.
- About one-in-five adults (22.1%) indicated having been diagnosed with a depressive disorder, and 15.5% of Nashvillians report currently taking medicine or receiving treatment from a doctor or other health professional for a mental health condition or emotional problem.

Tobacco Rates Differ Across County— Vaping Leads Among Young Adults

13.2% of Nashvillians report they are current smokers and 6.6% of respondents said they were current users of e-cigarettes or vaping products. Among the 18-29 demographic, more people reported vaping (13.7%) than smoking (12.2%).

- In Nashville's East Zone, the smoking rate is double the city average (26.3%). The East Zone was also the area of the community most likely to suffer from respiratory illnesses like COPD, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and asthma (26%).

Social Determinants Influence Health and Well-being in Nashville

The health and wellness divide in Nashville largely tracks along income levels and educational attainment.

- **Hypertension** - Almost one-third of all Davidson County adults (30.5%) have at some point been diagnosed with hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, by a doctor, nurse or other health care professional.
 - But those rates jump even higher for Nashvillians who never graduated high school (39.6%). College-educated Nashvillians saw much lower hypertension rates (17.7%) than the city-wide average.
- **Mental Health** - Nashvillians with lower levels of educational attainment and lower incomes also have more self-reported poor mental health days than their higher income and more educated neighbors.
 - Those who never graduated high school self-reported more than 10 poor mental health days each month, while those with a graduate or professional degree reported an average of 3.4 poor mental health days.
- **Opioid Use** - Education levels and income attainment are strongly associated with Nashvillian's use of painkillers and tranquilizers within the last year that were *not prescribed* by a doctor.
 - Those in households earning less than \$25,000 a year were 12 times more likely than those making \$100,000 or more a year to use opioids not prescribed to them within the past year.
 - Nashvillians with college degrees were less likely to take opioids not prescribed to them (3.8%), compared to those who had never graduated high school (11.8%).
 - Unemployed Nashvillians were twice as likely to use prescription pain relievers or tranquilizers (8.2%) that were not prescribed to them compared to employed Nashvillians (4.4%).
- **Tobacco Use** - The highest prevalence of every day cigarette smokers (23.6%) is found among those who never graduated from high school and from those whose households earn less than \$25,000 annually (15.3%). In comparison, only 1% of Nashvillians with graduate degrees and those with higher household incomes smoke cigarettes every day.

ABOUT THE SURVEY:

NashvilleHealth and the Metro Public Health Department (MPHD) partnered with the University of Illinois at Chicago Survey Research Laboratory to field the *Nashville Community Health & Well-being Survey*. Available in English and Spanish, this first-of-a-kind large-scale assessment was mailed to over 12,000 Davidson County households and garnered a 15 percent response rate. A total of 1,805 respondents aged 18 and over answered either online or via a mailed paper questionnaire. The results are weighted to reflect the latest Census estimates for Davidson County and presented citywide and also broken down by gender, age, ethnicity, education, employment status, annual household income, health insurance coverage, sexual orientation, and geographic zones of Davidson County (East, Promise Zone, North West, South East, South West).

*Peer city data is sourced from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings

For a full copy of the *Nashville Community Health & Well-being Survey* results, please visit: <https://www.nashville.gov/Health-Department/Data-and-Publications/Community-Health-Survey.aspx>