

Utah Health Status Update: *Lifestyle and Behavioral Risk Factors*

Lifestyle and behavioral risk factors, such as tobacco use, diet and exercise habits, and misuse of alcohol are responsible for premature deaths, disability and substantial health care expenditures. A recent 1996 Utah Health Status Survey report presented data on four lifestyle factors: exercise, consumption of fruits or vegetables--*5 a Day*, alcohol consumption, and cigarette smoking. This Health Status Update reviews highlights of that report.

Physical Activity

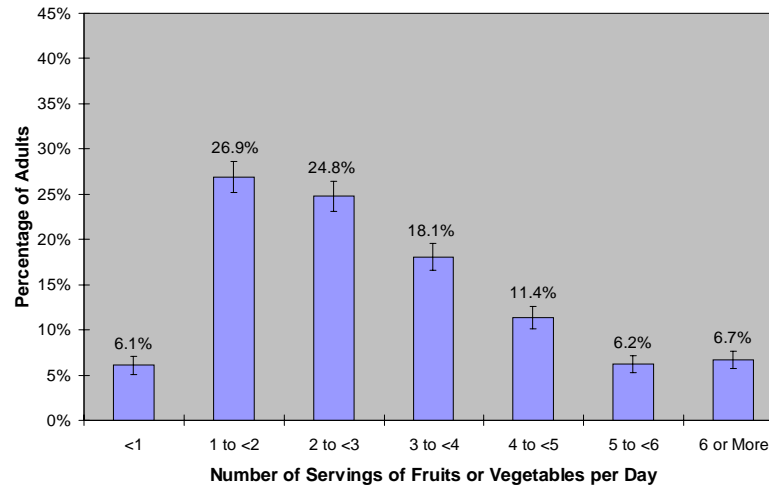
- The percentage of Utahns reporting regular vigorous exercise increased from 38% in 1986 to 46% in 1996.
- Many who reported regular exercise had been doing so for 5 or more years suggesting it was a well-established lifestyle pattern in those people.
- At most, half of people reported this important health behavior in all the demographic subgroups examined.

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption - *5 a Day*

- *5 a Day* is a health initiative to promote eating an appropriate amount of fruits and vegetables, which provide direct nutritional benefits as well as indirect benefits if they are substituted for less healthy foods--especially foods that are high in fat.
- Only about one in seven Utahns (13%) reported 5 servings a day of fruits and vegetables. More than half of Utah adults reported less than 3 servings a day.
- The percentage of adults eating *5 a Day* increased somewhat with age, but fewer than one in 5 Utahns reported eating *5 a Day* in all age groups.
- *5 a Day* was somewhat more common for females (15.2% vs. 10.4%), and those with more education or higher income levels.

Eating Fruits and Vegetables - *5 a Day*

Percentage of adults (age 18 or over) by number of servings of fruits and vegetables eaten on a typical day, Utah 1996.



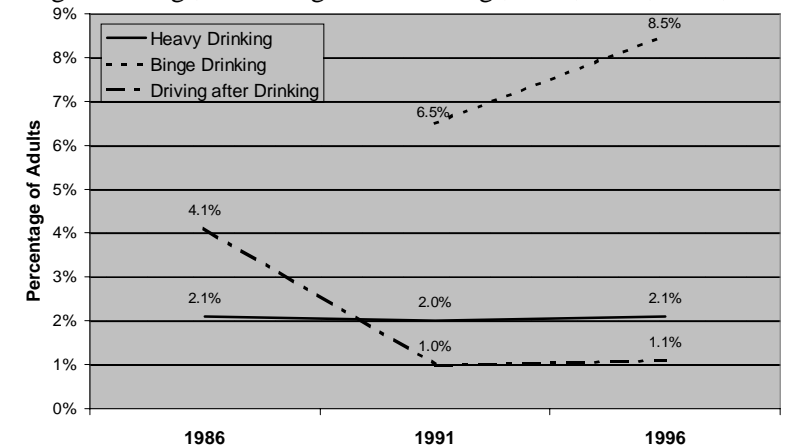
Source: 1996 Utah Health Status Survey

Alcohol Consumption

- The percentage of Utah adults reporting heavy alcohol consumption remained unchanged at 2.1%, or about 28,000 adults in 1996.
- The percentage of Utah adults reporting binge drinking (5 or more drinks on one occasion in the past month) increased from 6.5% in 1991 to 8.5% in 1996 (about 114,000 adults in 1996).
- Driving within one hour after four or more drinks decreased substantially between 1986 and 1991, but remained stable from 1991 to 1996 at 1.1% (about 15,000 adults).
- Binge drinking was more common for men than women, for younger adults, and for those with less education.
- Binge drinking was a strong predictor of driving after drinking.

Alcohol Consumption Trends

Percentage of adults (age 18 or over) reporting heavy drinking¹, binge drinking², or driving after drinking³, Utah, 1986, 1991, 1996.



¹ consumed, on average, more than 60 drinks per month

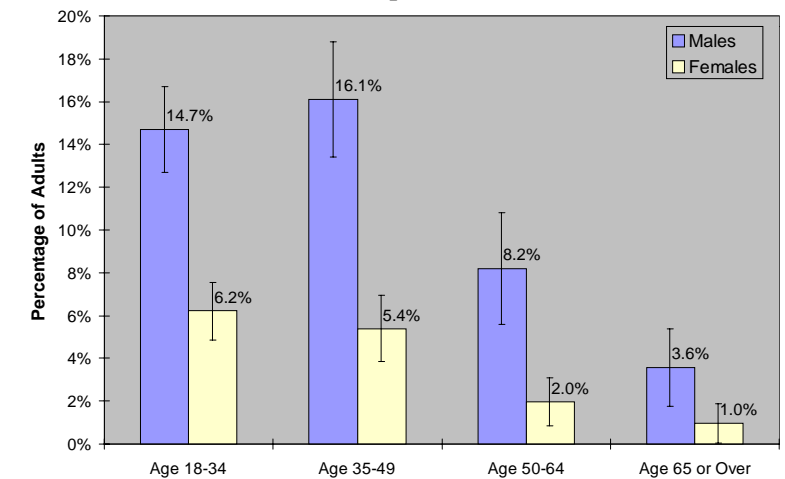
² 5 or more drinks on one occasion in past month

³ drove within one hour after drinking 4 or more drinks in past month

Source: 1986, 1991, and 1996 Utah Health Status Surveys

Binge Drinking by Age and Sex

Percentage of adults (age 18 or over) who reported drinking 5 or more drinks on one occasion in past month, Utah 1996.



Source: 1996 Utah Health Status Survey

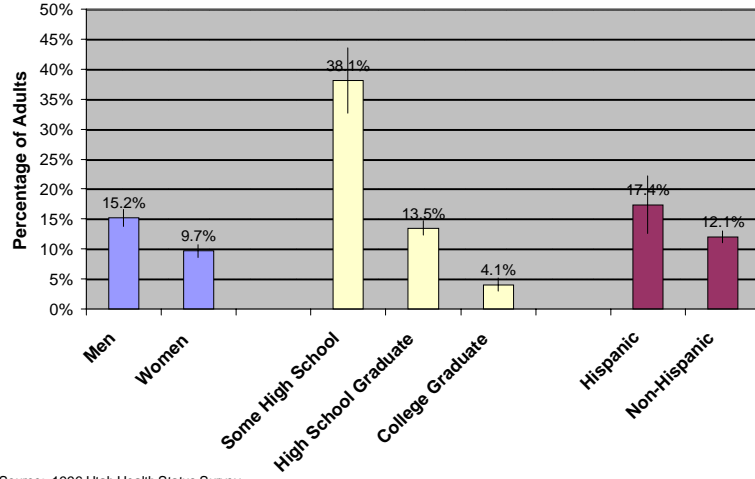
Age Groups

Cigarette smoking

- Current smoking decreased from 15.3% of Utah adults in 1986 to 12.4% in 1996 (166,300 Utah adults).
- Current smoking was more common for men, those with lower income or less education, and Hispanic people.

Cigarette Smoking

Percentage of adults (age 18 or over) who reported current cigarette smoking according to sex, education, and Hispanic ethnicity, Utah 1996.



Source: 1996 Utah Health Status Survey

Note: The Health Status Survey estimates of current smoking are somewhat lower than those from another Utah survey, the Utah Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.

Conclusion

Utahns have made progress in the areas of smoking and exercise, but binge drinking has become more common. Many Utahns have healthy lifestyles, especially low levels of alcohol and tobacco use, but fewer than half of Utahns regularly exercise and only one in seven eats enough fruits and vegetables. Making healthier lifestyle choices can substantially improve health and reduce the need for expensive medical care.



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Additional information about this topic are available from the Office of Public Health Data, Utah Department of Health, P O Box 142101, Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2101, (801) 538-6108, FAX (801) 536-0947, email: phdata@doh.state.ut.us. The complete report, *Lifestyle Factors in Utah: Exercise, 5 a Day, Alcohol, and Tobacco*, and other health data and reports can be obtained on the Internet at URL <http://hlunix.hl.state.ut.us/action2000>. Please send any comments on this report to the Office of Public Health Data.

Office of Public Health Data
Utah Department of Health
P O Box 142101
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2101

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