

Addendum to Community Health Assessment 2019

May 2022

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Introduction

The Washington County's Community Health Assessment (CHA) 2019 includes data from Adult Survey of the Health of All the Population and the Environment (SHAPE), 2014 and Minnesota Student Survey, 2016. After the publication of the CHA, Washington County Public Health and Environment (WCPHE) conducted Adult Health Survey 2019 and collected new adult health data. The survey was conducted in a similar approach to SHAPE 2014 and included survey of Randomized Sample and Targeted/Convenience Sample. Majority of the participants in the Targeted Sample include low-income and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) population.

The Minnesota Student Survey was also conducted in 2019. This triennial survey is one of the longest running surveys in the nation which is made possible by collaboration between local schools and four state agencies: the Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, Human Services and Public Safety. WCPHE obtains Washington County data and analyzes them to identify youth health needs.

The results from both Adult Health Survey 2019 and Minnesota Student Survey 2019 were obtained after the publication of CHA in April 2019. New data were also available on 'Leading cause of death' and 'opioid use'. In this addendum WCPHE has included data from Adult Health Survey 2019 and Minnesota Student Survey 2019.

Key Priority Areas

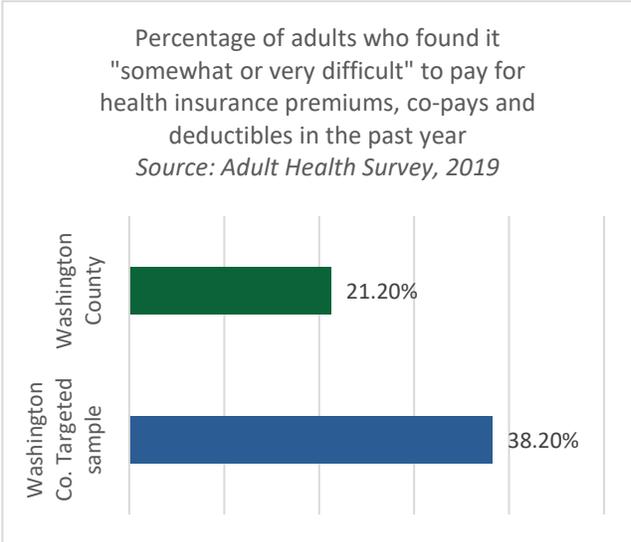
Six priority areas were identified in Washington County PHE's Community Health Assessment 2019. The priorities are of equal importance and are presented in alphabetical order. The six priority areas are:

- Access to care
- Access to health
- Environmental conditions that promote and protect health
- Mental health and well-being
- Nutrition and physical activity
- Substance abuse

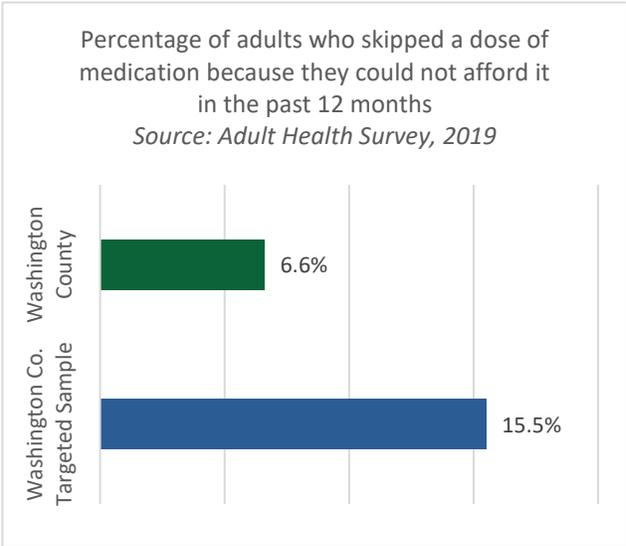
Priority: Access to care

Access to care refers to having equitable access to appropriate, convenient and affordable health care. This includes factors such as proximity to care, access to providers, cost, insurance coverage, medical transportation, care coordination within the health care system, cultural sensitivity and responsiveness.

Cost of insurance

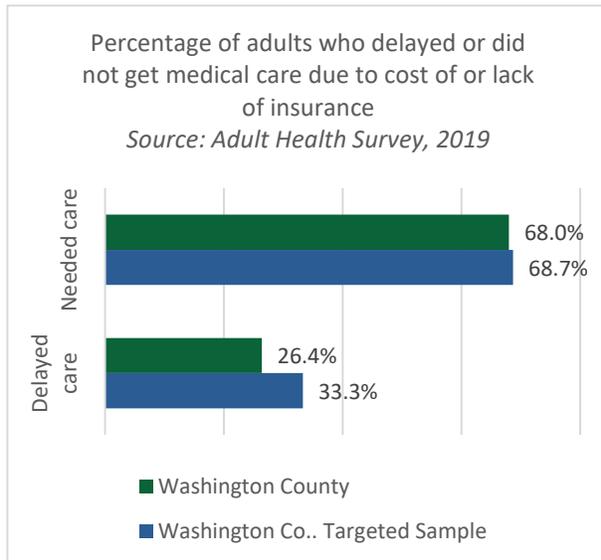


When people cannot afford to pay for insurance or other health care costs, they are less likely to get the care they need. A little over 21% of Washington County residents said they found it “somewhat or very difficult” to pay for medical expenses.



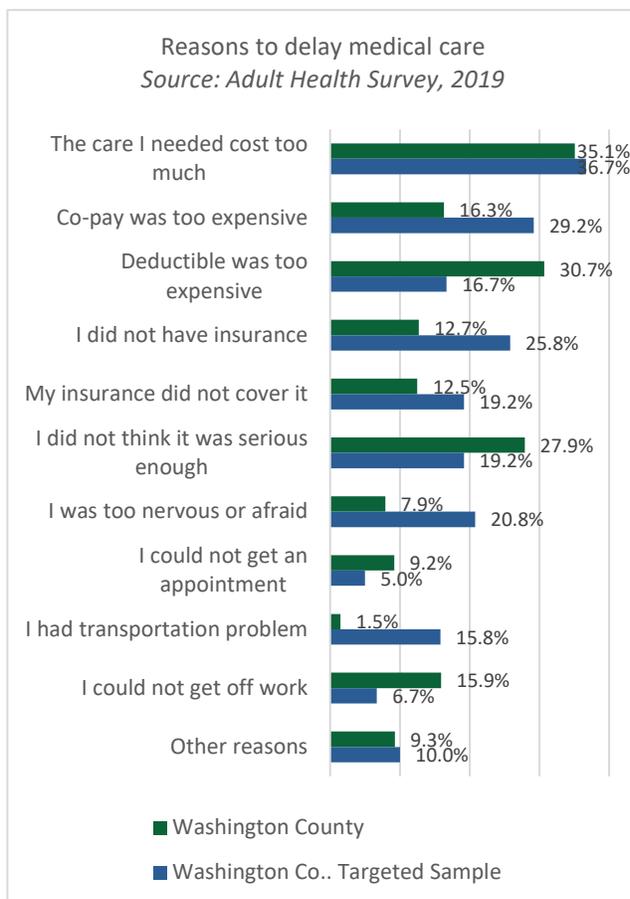
Even if people are able to get the care they need, managing their health through medication can be a major cost burden. In the past 12 months, more than 6% of adults in Washington County have skipped a dose of medication because they could not afford it. When we look at Washington County’s low income population, over 15% of these residents said they skipped a dose of their medication due to cost.

Cost of care



Nearly 68% of adults in our community reported to need medical care. Among them, about 26% said that they delayed care. The rate is very similar among our low-income residents.

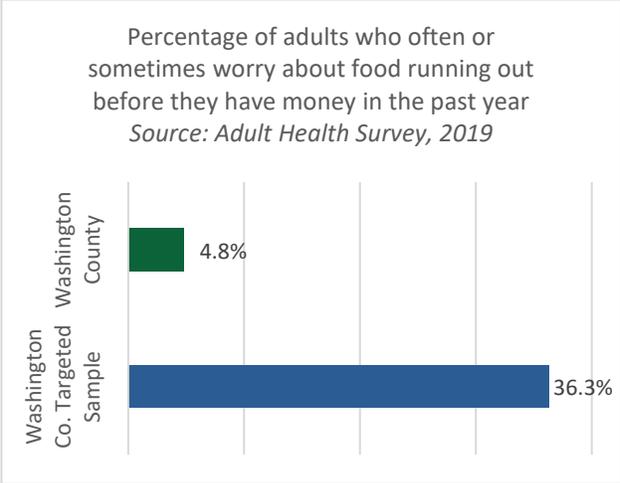
Among the reasons they delayed the care, the ones related to cost of getting medical care ranked the top. Other reasons related to cost include co-pay and deductibles being too expensive.



Priority: Access to health

Access to health refers to the social and environmental conditions that directly and indirectly affect people’s health such as housing, income, employment, education, and more. These factors, also referred to as social determinants of health, disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color.

Food insecurity

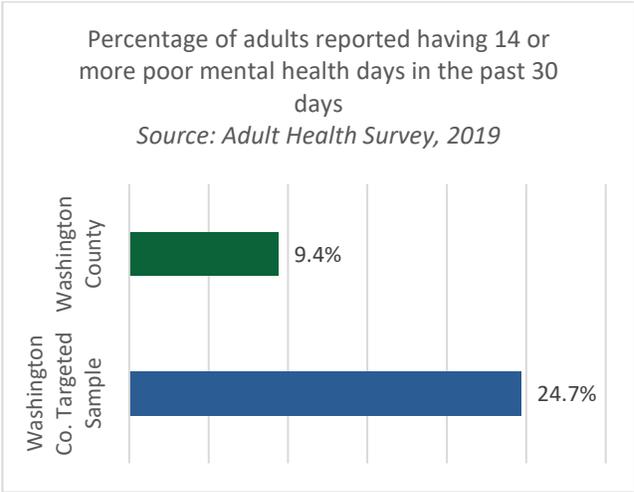


People experiencing food insecurity do not have consistent access to healthy and adequate food. Expenses for food are one of the first reductions people make under economic stress. People who experience food insecurity may forego adequate food for other expenses such as housing and health care. About 36% of Washington County’s low-income population often or sometimes worries about food running out before they have money within the past year.

Priority: Mental health and well-being

Mental health and well-being refers to the interconnection between mental illness, mental health, mental well-being, and the associated stigma. Poor mental health is associated with poor quality of life, higher rates of chronic disease, and a shorter lifespan.

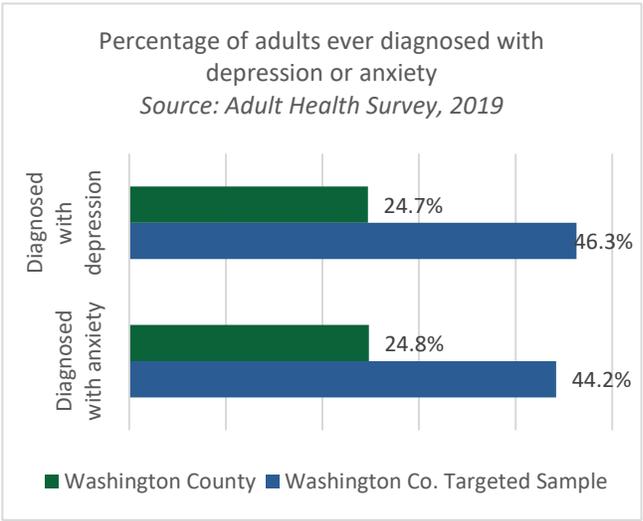
Poor mental health days



Mental health and well-being was ranked as the second highest concern for the Community Health Action Team and third highest for the Lakeview Health and Wellness Advisory Committee. Health care providers ranked mental health and well-being as their number one concern.

9% of adults in Washington County report that they have poor mental health on 14 or more days in a month. The rate was more than double for the targeted sample participants.

Adult mental health: anxiety and depression

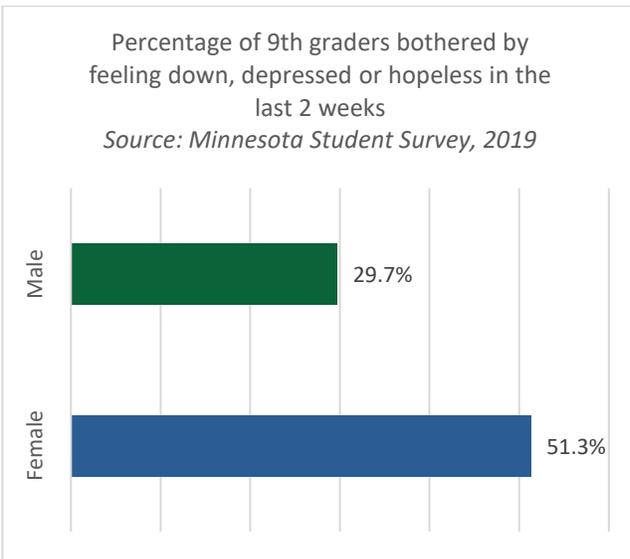


Many adults in our community say they have been diagnosed with a mental illness such as anxiety or depression. More than 1 in 5 adults in our community has been diagnosed with anxiety and depression.

Rates of mental illness are highest in low-income communities. Nearly one-third of adults in low-income households reported having an anxiety or depression diagnosis.

Access to mental health care, as well as bullying was mentioned as unhealthy aspects of the community in community surveys. Health care providers mentioned the growing prevalence of mental health issues as well as the need for more mental health treatment referrals.

Youth mental health

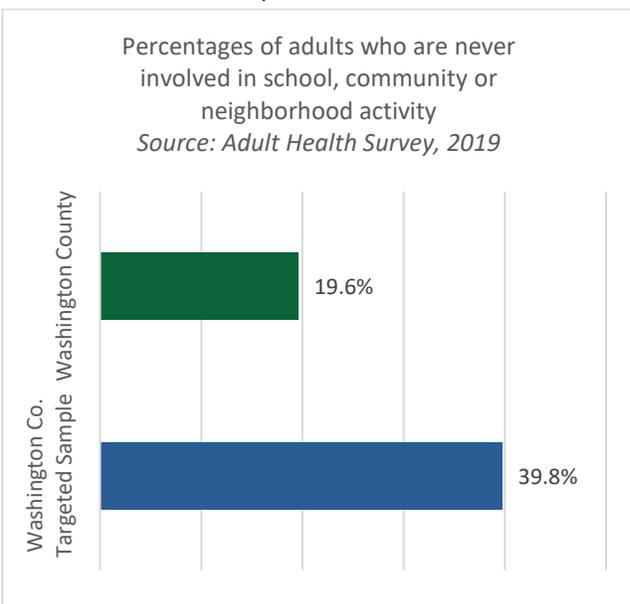


While more than half of young people in our community are experiencing good mental health, many report frequently feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.

Nearly 1 in 4 young people in our community experience poor mental health more than half the days or every day in a month.

Among community members who were concerned about access to mental health services and providers in the county, several indicated an even greater need for youth services.

Contributors to poor mental health: social isolation

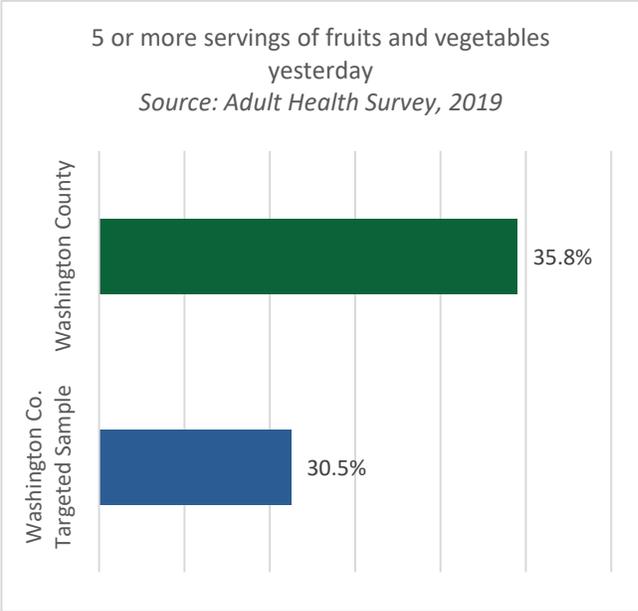


Social and emotional support are important contributors to overall health and well-being. Social and emotional support are also linked to educational achievement and economic stability. However, many people in our community are at risk of social isolation. According to Adult Health Survey 2019, about 20% of Washington County adults reported to never been involved in community activities. But the rate is almost double for the low-income population.

Priority: Nutrition and physical activity

Nutrition and physical activity refers to equitable access to nutrition, physical activity, and food and feeding choices. Poor nutrition and physical inactivity are major contributors to obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, which disproportionately impact low income communities and communities of color.

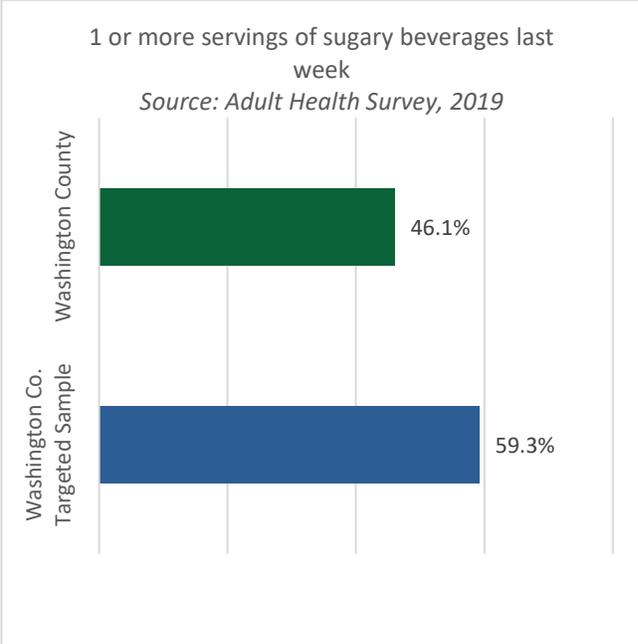
Adult fruit, vegetable and sugary beverage consumption



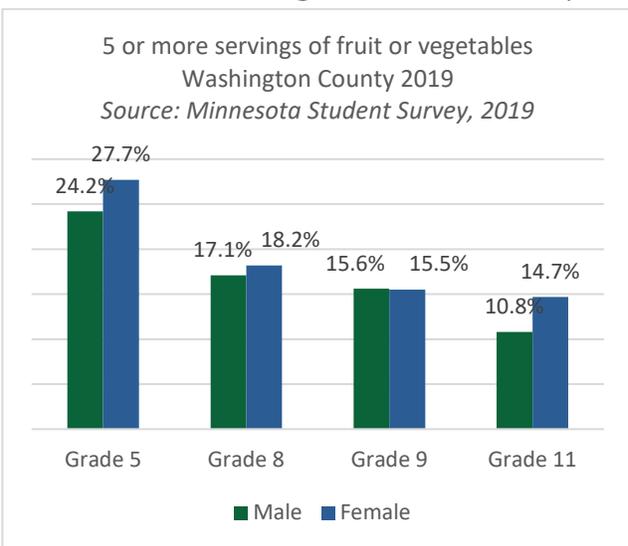
A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins is a key protective factor in preventing chronic disease. The current recommendation from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for adults is to eat five or more servings of fruit and vegetables per day.

A little over 1 in 3 adults in Washington County get the recommended daily servings of fruit and vegetables. But the rate is lower for the low-income residents.

When looking at consumption of sweetened beverages, almost 60% of the low-income residents reported to drink one or more in the past week.

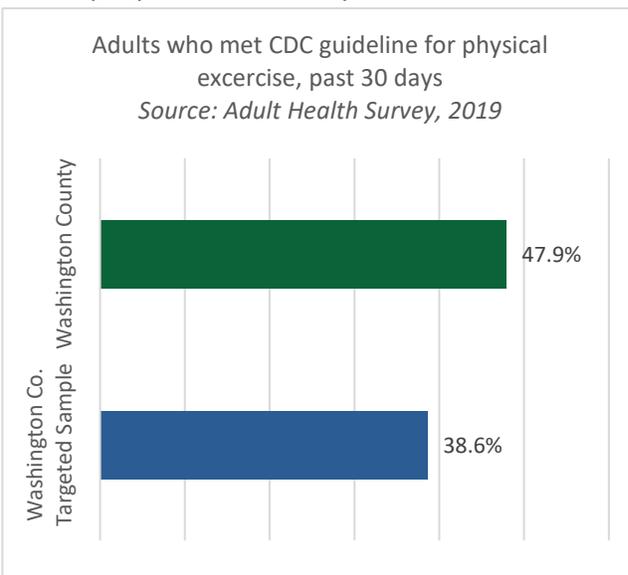


Youth fruit and vegetable consumption



The graph shows percentages of youth that met the CDC guideline for daily fruit and vegetable consumption. The rate is very similar among male and female students. The rate of daily fruit and vegetable consumption is lower among older youths comparing to younger youths.

Adult physical activity

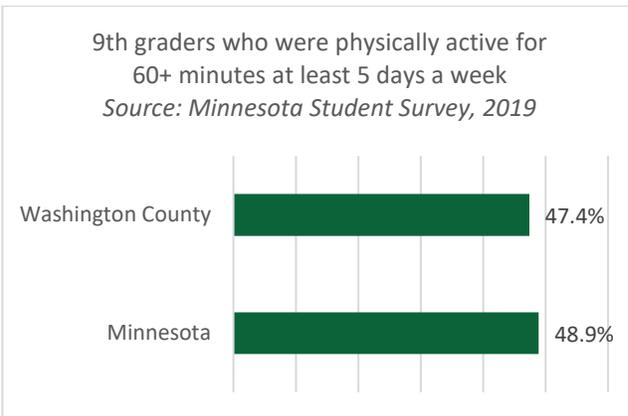


Physical activity is defined as exercise and other activities that involve bodily movement. Types of physical activity include playing, working, active transportation, household chores, and recreational activities. Current CDC guideline for physical activity suggests 30 minutes of moderate activity for 30 minutes 5 days a week, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week.

When looking at Washington County, almost 48% adults meet this guideline whereas the rate is only 39% in the low-income population. In the Community Health Survey, residents listed barriers to physical activity which included:

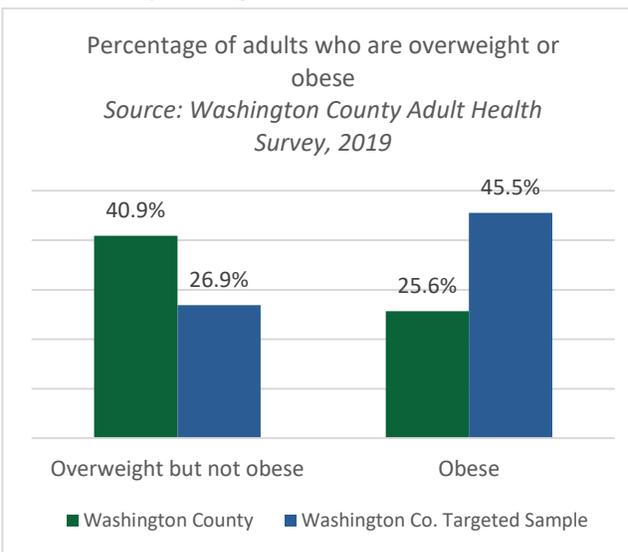
“Demanding work schedule”
“Over-scheduling myself so I can’t focus on me”
“Busyness, not enough time, not exercising”

Youth physical activity



The recommendation for youth is to be active for 60 minutes or more at least five days a week. About half of youth in Washington County are getting the recommended amount of physical activity. Washington County rates are similar to that of Minnesota.

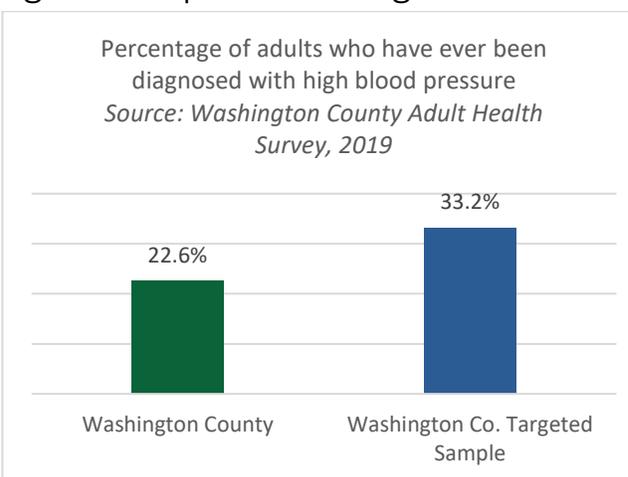
Unhealthy weight



Being overweight or obese puts people at higher risk for heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic conditions. According to self-reported height and weight, about 1 in 4 adults are obese. But the rate is more than 45% among low-income adults.

It is also important to note that about 41% adults are in the overweight category.

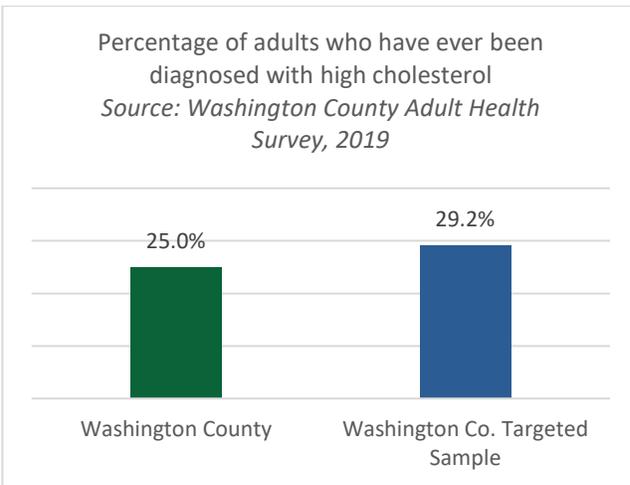
High blood pressure diagnosis



Uncontrolled high blood pressure puts people at higher risk for heart disease and stroke. According to the Metro Shape Survey, 23% of Washington County adult residents have been diagnosed with high blood pressure at some point in their lives.

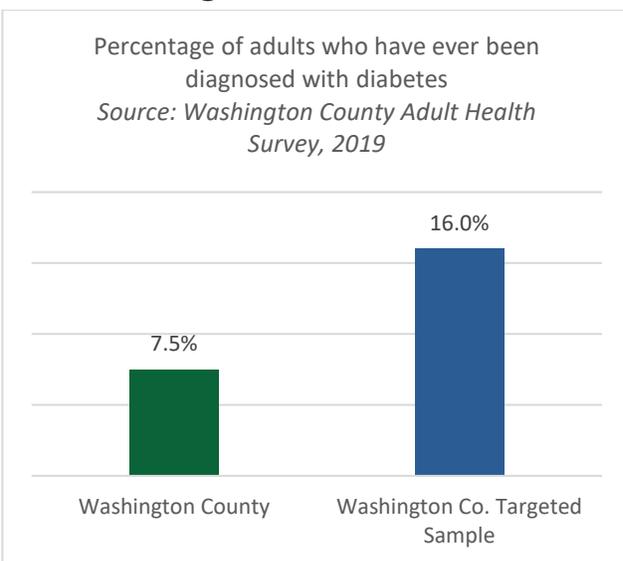
This number nearly doubles to almost 33% of Washington County's low income population receiving a diagnosis of high blood pressure.

High cholesterol diagnosis



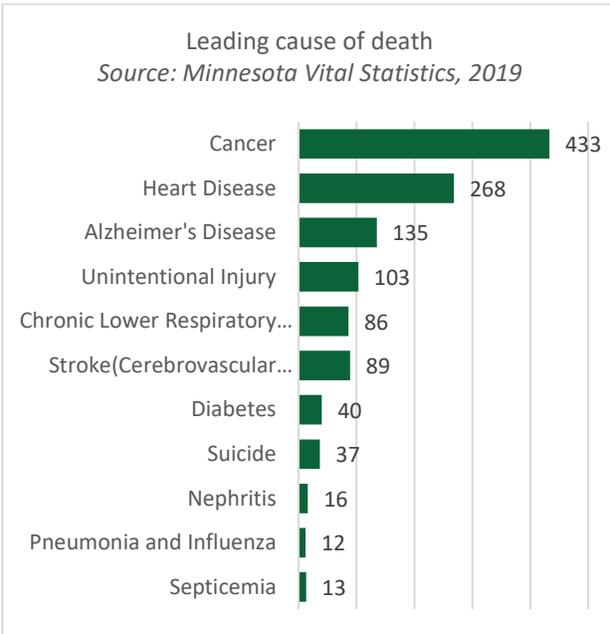
Uncontrolled high cholesterol also puts people at higher risk for heart disease and stroke. In Washington County, 25% of adults have been diagnosed with high cholesterol. This number increases to 29% when we look specifically at the low income population.

Diabetes diagnosis



Diabetes puts people at high risk for long-term problems affecting the eyes, kidneys, heart, brain, feet and nerves. A little over 7% of adults in our community said they have been told by a health care provider that they have diabetes. But the rate is more than double for our low-income residents.

Cancer rates/leading cause of death

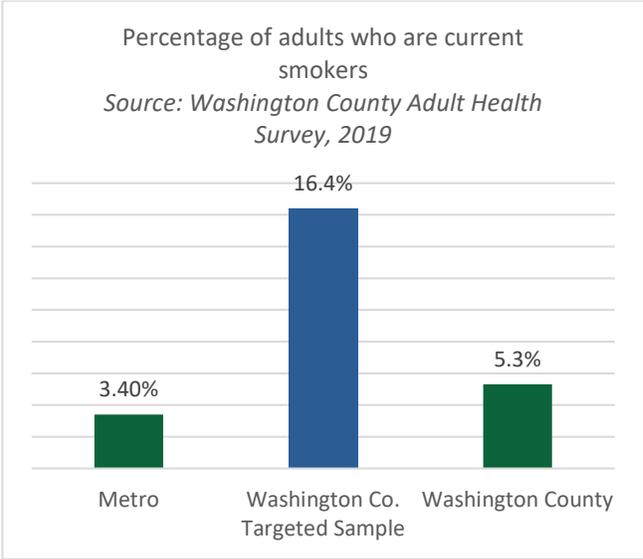


According to the Minnesota Department of Health, 1 in 4 Minnesotans die of cancer. The incidence of all cancers in Washington County is similar to the Minnesota rate overall. Breast and prostate cancers have the highest incidence of any cancer type among women and men. Cancer is still the leading cause of death in Washington County, followed by heart disease, Alzheimer's disease and unintentional injury.

Priority: Substance abuse

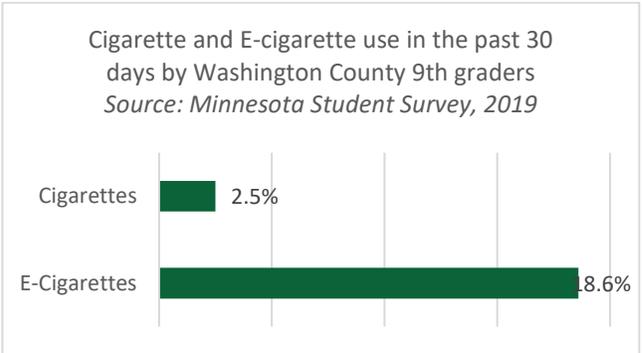
Substance abuse refers to the excessive use of substances including alcohol, tobacco, prescription drugs, opioids, and other drugs in a manner that is harmful to health and well-being.

Adult tobacco use

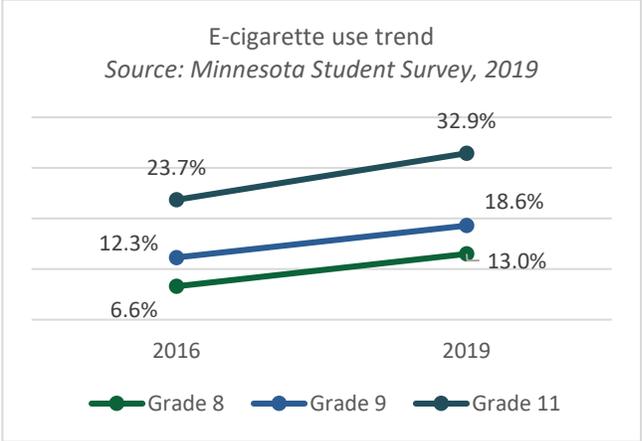


Tobacco use is associated with many chronic diseases and health conditions, including respiratory disease, heart disease, and cancer. About 3% of Washington County residents are current smokers which is a little lower than the metro region average. However, when we look specifically at Washington County’s low income population, we see that number increase dramatically to a little under 16%.

Youth tobacco use

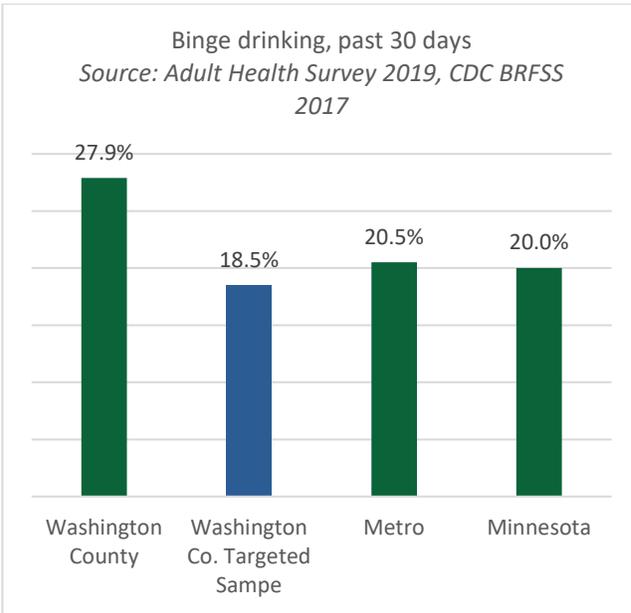


According to the Minnesota Student Survey, few 9th graders report smoking cigarettes in the past month. Only 2.5% of Washington County 9th graders reported smoking cigarettes in the past month. However, there has been dramatic increase in the use of e-cigarettes. More than 18% 9th grade students reported to use e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.



It is also important to note that e-cigarette use increased for all three grades that the survey asked the question to. Almost 1 in 3 11th grade students reported that they used e-cigarettes.

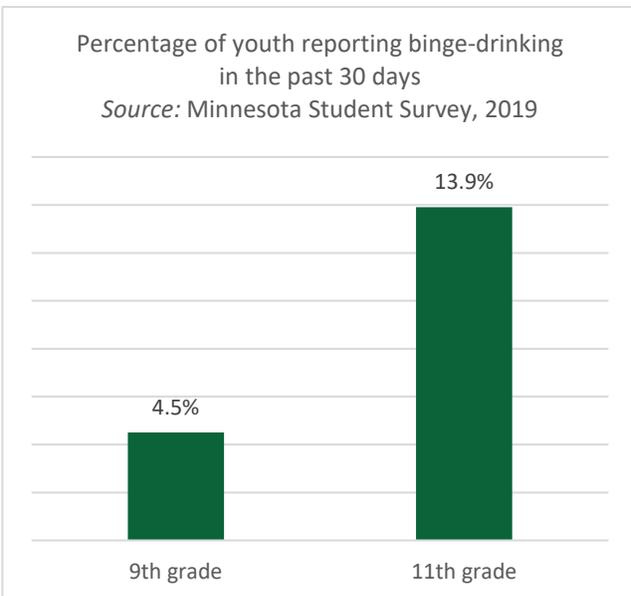
Alcohol binge drinking



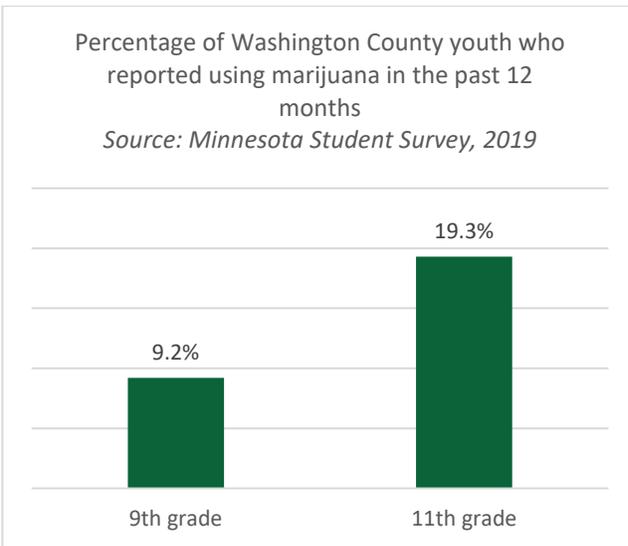
Alcohol binge drinking is associated with many health concerns which may include accidents, unintentional injuries, physical, and sexual violence, sexually transmitted diseases, unintended pregnancy or fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol dependence, and chronic disease. Binge drinking refers to occasions when a person consumes 5 or more drinks in about 2 hours. In Washington County, about 28% of adults engaged in binge drinking over the last month.

Youth who drink alcohol are more likely to experience problems at school, illness, physical and sexual violence, unintentional injury even death.

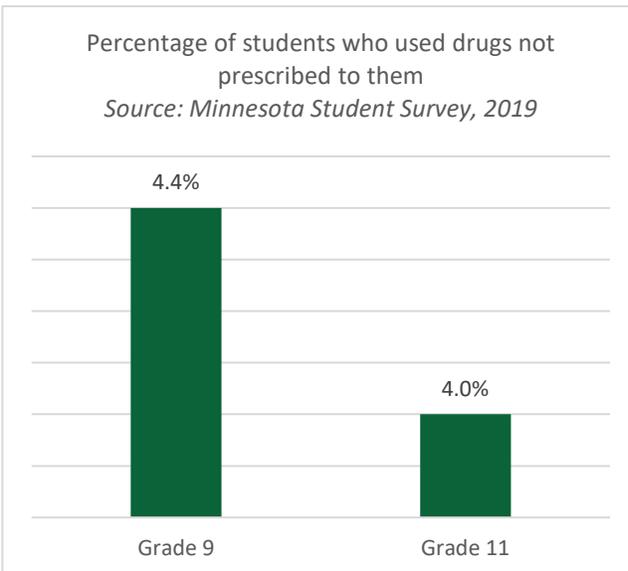
In our Minnesota counties, about 11% of 9th grade students and 26% of 11th grade students reported using alcohol in the past month. Youth binge drinking in Washington County is lower, where about 4.5% of 9th grade students and about 14% of 11th grade students reported binge drinking in the past month.



Illicit drug use including prescription drug use

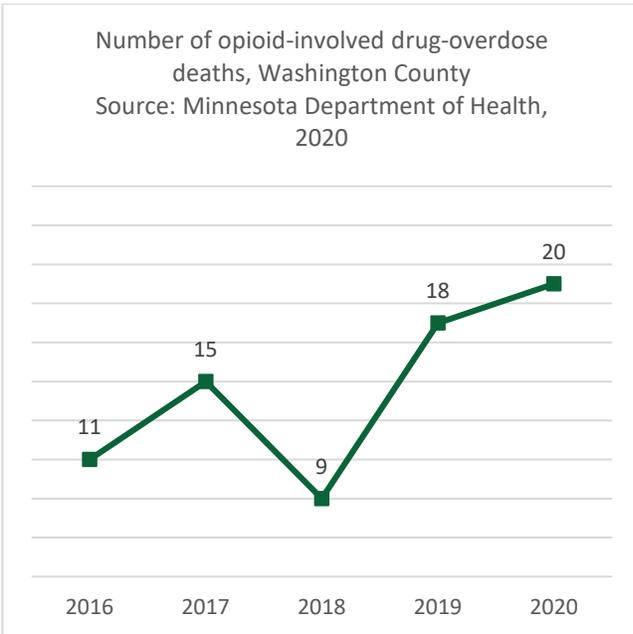


Marijuana use among adolescents more than doubles between 9th and 11th grade. 19% of 11th grade students in Washington County reported using marijuana in the past 12 months according to the Minnesota Student Survey.

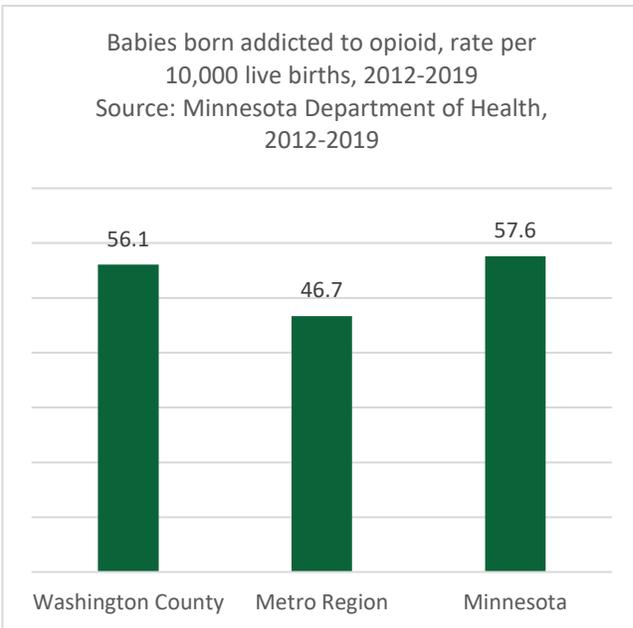


About 4% of 11th grade students in Washington County reported using any illicit drugs or prescription drugs prescribed for someone else in the past year.

Opioids



There is increasing concern about opioid use in our community. The CDC has stated that the country is experiencing an opioid crisis. From 1997 to 2017 almost 400,000 people have died from opioid overdoses which include both prescription and illicit opioids. From 2016-2020, Washington County has lost 73 residents to opioid drug overdoses.



The rate of babies born addicted to opioids in the metro area is about 47 per every 10,000 births. While lower than the overall Minnesota rate of 58 per 10,000 births, babies who are born addicted to opioids are starting life off with a series of health barriers to overcome that otherwise non-addicted babies would not have to overcome.