



Community Health Profile

NUTRITION

Unhealthy eating, along with physical inactivity, is one of the most important risk factors for chronic disease in the United States. A 2019 study found that dietary risks were the fourth leading risk factor driving death and disability in Minnesota. Unhealthy eating, combined with physical inactivity, contributes to the development of obesity and chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, osteoporosis and certain cancers. Since the late 1970s, the prevalence of overweight and obesity in the United States has nearly doubled in adults, more than doubled in children and more than tripled in adolescents.

KEY FACTS

Overweight and obesity has increased in adults and children.

Breastfeeding initiation among Dakota County infants is high, but only 46 percent of infants in Minnesota are still breastfed at 12 months.

One-fourth or fewer of Dakota County students consumed fruits or vegetables five or more times per day in the previous week.

More people are unable to access healthy food since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overweight and obesity

- In 2023, 37 percent of Dakota County adults are considered overweight (but not obese) and 24 percent are considered obese. The obesity rate is below Minnesota (34 percent), and is below the Healthy People 2030 goal for obesity in adults (36 percent).
- Among children ages 2-5 enrolled in Dakota County WIC in 2019, 11.5 percent had a body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to the 95th percentile for their age. This is slightly below the rate for WIC enrollees in the state and below the Healthy People 2030 goal for children ages 2-19 (15.5 percent).

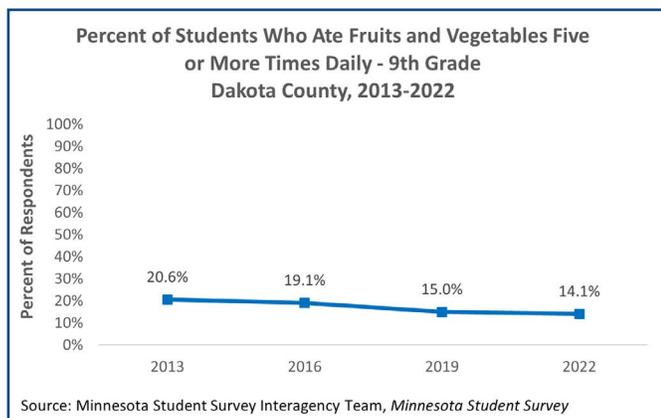
Infant Nutrition

- In 2022, among Dakota County babies for whom breastfeeding status could be determined, 93 percent were breastfeeding upon discharge from the hospital.
- Seventy percent of all Minnesota babies born in 2019 were still breastfed at six months. Only 36.5 percent were exclusively breastfed at six months, below the Healthy People 2030 goal of 42 percent. 46.5 percent of infants served by Dakota County WIC who were born in 2021 were still breastfed at six months.
- Forty-six percent of all Minnesota babies born in 2019 were still breastfed at 12 months, below the Healthy People 2030 goal of 54 percent. Twenty-six percent of infants served by Dakota County WIC who were born in 2021 were still breastfed at 12 months.



Fruit and vegetables

- In 2023, 30 percent of Dakota County adults (25 and older) reported eating five or more fruits and vegetables the previous day. This was a decrease from 39 percent in 2010.



- Fourteen percent of all Dakota County students reported consuming fruits or vegetables (including fruit juice) five or more times per day in the previous week (2023 percents – 8th grade: 16 percent, 9th grade: 14 percent, and 11th grade: 12 percent).

Milk and other beverages

- In 2022, 10 percent of Dakota County students drank milk three or more times the previous day.
- Males reported more milk consumption than females.
- Ten percent of all Dakota County students drank a can, bottle or glass of pop or soda one or more times during the previous seven days in 2022.
- Eight percent of Dakota County students reported drinking sports drink one or more times during the previous seven days (2022).

Inadequate access to food (food insecurity)

- An estimated four percent of the population of Dakota County were food insecure in 2021. An estimated six percent of Dakota County children were food insecure.
- In 2023, five percent of Dakota County adults said that they often or sometimes worried that food would run out before they had the money to buy more.
- The percent of Dakota County households accessing food stamps or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (five percent) is lower than the state (seven percent) in 2022. It was stable from 2018 to 2022.
- In Dakota County, the number of WIC recipients increased by eight percent from 2020 to 2022.
- During the 2022-23 school year, 36 percent of students in Dakota County public and charter schools were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. This is lower than the state as a whole (43 percent), and this percent increased from 27 percent in the 2018-19 school year. This increase was due to a change in State Legislation for the 2023 school year which expanded eligibility for free and reduced price meals.



For more information:

- Minnesota Department of Health www.health.state.mn.us
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) www.cdc.gov/nutrition/index.html
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) www.usda.gov

The Dakota County Public Health Department is accredited by the national Public Health Accreditation Board.

For more information about the Dakota County community health assessment, email public.health@co.dakota.mn.us or call 651.554.6100.

