

CANCER | SC TRACKING

SC BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM META DATA

BACKGROUND

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is the world's largest random telephone survey of the noninstitutionalized population aged 18 or older that is used to track health risks, behaviors, and preventative health practices in the United States. South Carolina has been administering the BRFSS survey annually since 1984. SC Tracking obtains BRFSS data from the SC BRFSS program.

DATA LIMITATIONS

BRFSS data is a self-reported and anonymous telephone-based survey. With self-reported data, several biases could influence the data, including self-report bias, recall bias, and non-coverage bias. Response rates for the BRFSS survey have been declining over time. Due to relatively small sample sizes, county and ZIP Code level data is not recommended for analysis at times due to suppression rules. Additionally, county-level estimates often need to aggregate several years' worth of data to show stable rates.

ACCESS CONSTRAINTS

Data is displayed as percentages. Blanks or missing data within maps, tables, or charts may be due to data not being available or BRFSS suppression rules. Data is unavailable when no observations were made for that specific group, and therefore estimates were not available. Suppression is applied in accordance with BRFSS guidelines to protect confidentiality. Data is suppressed when confidence intervals exceed 20%, the denominator is less than 50, county-level data has less than 200 observations for aggregated years, or county-level data has less than 500 observations for single years.

USE CONSTRAINTS

Any user of this data must have reviewed and understood the metadata content before attempting to understand, interpret or use BRFSS data. No attempt should be made to identify survey participants through use of this data set. This is a public dataset and is not for commercial purposes. Any use of this data should contain proper data source acknowledgement to: SC BRFSS.



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MEASURE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The prevalence of adults 18 and older who have reported an obesity diagnosis, physical inactivity, current smoking, binge drinking, fruit consumption, vegetable consumption, depression, poor mental health days, cervical cancer screening, mammogram, colorectal cancer screening, and prostate cancer screening are displayed at the county and state-levels for 2023 on the [Cancer Dashboard](#). Sex, race and ethnicity, education, age group, and income breakouts are also displayed.

The BRFSS definition for **obesity** is adults age 18 or older who have a body mass index (BMI) ≥ 30.0 kg/m² calculated from self-reported weight and height. The following were excluded: height data from respondents measuring <3 ft or ≥ 8 ft, weight data from respondents weighing <50 lbs. or ≥ 650 lbs., and BMI data from respondents with BMI <12 kg/m² or ≥ 100 kg/m².

Physical inactivity is described as the percentage of adults who report no leisure-time physical activity in the past month. Respondents are asked, "During the past month, other than your regular job, did you participate in any physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercises?" Respondents who replied with a "No" response were categorized as being physically inactive.

To obtain information surrounding smoking status, respondents were asked, "Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your entire life". People who replied "Yes" were then asked a follow-up question of, "Do you now smoke cigarettes every day, some days, or not at all?" Respondents who replied saying they smoke every day or some days were categorized as being a **current smoker**.

Binge drinking is defined as consuming four or more drinks for women and five or more drinks for men on a single occasion. Survey respondents were asked to respond to, "Considering all types of alcoholic beverages, how many times during the past 30 days did you have five or more drinks for men or four or more drinks for women on an occasion?"



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MEASURE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Fruit consumption is captured by asking survey respondents, “During the past month, how often did you eat fruit? Do not include juices. You can tell me times per day, per week, or per month.” People who responded to not consuming any fruit daily are displayed in the dashboard.

Vegetable consumption is captured by asking survey respondents a series of questions around their intake of a variety of vegetables including leafy greens, fried potatoes, other forms of potatoes, and other forms of vegetables. People who responded to not eating vegetables daily are displayed on the dashboard.

To determine the percentage of women aged 21-65 who have had a Pap test in the past three years, women respondents were asked several questions around cervical cancer screening. These questions included: 1) “Have you ever had a cervical cancer screening test?”, 2) “How long has it been since you had your last cervical cancer screening test?”, and 3) “At your most recent **cervical cancer screening**, did you have a Pap test?” Results were compiled and dichotomized to determine the percentage of women who had received a Pap test within the past three years.

To determine the percentage of females aged 50-74 who have had a **mammogram** in the past two years, women respondents were asked several questions around breast cancer screening. These questions included: 1) “A mammogram is an X-ray of each breast to look for breast cancer. Have you ever had a mammogram?” and 2) “How long has it been since you had your last mammogram?” Results were compiled and dichotomized to determine the prevalence of women aged 50-74 who have received a mammogram within the past two years.



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MEASURE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

BRFSS captures information from survey respondents aged 45 or 50-75 on a variety of **colorectal cancer screening mechanisms** including Fecal Occult Blood Test, Colonoscopy, and Sigmoidoscopy. Respondents are asked questions based on the specific type of colorectal cancer screening tool used. Individuals were asked, “Sigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy are exams in which a tube is inserted in the rectum to view the colon for signs of cancer or other health problems. Have you ever had either of these exams?”. If respondents replied yes, they were asked, “How long has it been since you had your last sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy?” Years since colorectal cancer screening are calculated and dichotomized to determine if the individuals test falls within the USPSTF recommendations. Individuals whose colorectal cancer screening values meet USPSTF recommendations are displayed on the dashboard.

More information around the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force’s Screening recommendations can be found [here](#).

Prostate cancer screening information was captured through BRFSS by asking male respondents aged 40+ a series of questions related to prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests. These questions include 1) “Have you ever had a PSA test?” and 2) “About how long has it been since your most recent PSA test?” Responses were calculated and summarized to display men who had completed a PSA test within the past two years.

Data surrounding heart attack, stroke, diabetes, obesity, and smoking status is updated annually and was last updated July 31, 2025.

Data surrounding fruit consumption and vegetable consumption is collected biannually with survey collection taking place during every odd calendar year (i.e., 2023). Pap test, mammogram, and PSA test data are collected every even calendar year. The data is updated biannually on this dashboard as available with the last updates occurring on July 31, 2025.



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SUGGESTED CITATION

SC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. [Graphic name]. Available online: www.dph.sc.gov/tracking. Accessed on [date accessed].

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about the National BRFSS program here:
www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.html

Review SC BRFSS historical questions here:
<https://apps.dhec.sc.gov/Health/BFSSQuestionSearch/default.aspx>



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SC CENTRAL CANCER REGISTRY META DATA

BACKGROUND

The South Carolina Central Cancer Registry (SCCCR) is the population-based cancer surveillance system for the state of South Carolina. The SCCCR collects, processes, analyzes, and publishes cancer incidence (newly diagnosed cases) for South Carolina, and is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR). The SCCCR also publishes information on cancer mortality (deaths), provided from DPH's Office of Vital Statistics.

Data from the SCCCR are used to determine the frequency and rate of cancer occurrence in a defined area (such as county or region), the frequency of occurrence in population subgroups (such as males, females, by race and age), and the comparison of SC cancer trends (incidence, mortality and survival) to national patterns over time.

Annual data submissions are made to CDC and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) of de-identified cancer data. The data undergo stringent examination to test for completeness, timeliness, and quality. High marks for these criteria are rewarded with Registry of Distinction and Gold Certification designations which the SCCCR has consistently received over the years. By reaching this level of data excellence, the SCCCR cancer data are included in the official cancer statistics publication for the nation called United States Cancer Statistics.

The SCCCR is the point of contact within DPH to assess community cancer concerns through data analysis. CDC guidelines are followed to determine any cancer excess in the community. A Community Cancer Assessment (CCA) report is provided with results of the assessment for all requests.

DATA LIMITATIONS

SCCCR data is based on where patients reside, not where they are diagnosed with the condition. Data is collected based on information available in a patient's medical chart. Risk factors are not collected or are collected infrequently. Comorbidities are not collected.



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ACCESS CONSTRAINTS

SCCCR suppresses all cancer incidence cases less than 16 along with their associated rates in accordance with the National Program of Cancer Registries guidelines. Statistics do not include in situ cancers, except for bladder cancer.

USE CONSTRAINTS

Any user of this data must have reviewed and understood the metadata content before attempting to understand, interpret or use SCCCR data. No attempt should be made to identify registry participants through use of this data set. This is a public dataset and is not for commercial purposes. Any use of this data should contain proper data source acknowledgement to: South Carolina Department of Public Health (DPH) Central Cancer Registry (SCCCR). Additional data requests should be made to SCCCR.

MEASURE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Cancer incidence (newly diagnosed cases of cancer) and cancer mortality (deaths due to cancer) for 2022 are displayed at the county and state-levels by age-adjusted rate (per 100,000) and number on the [Cancer Dashboard](#).

The top three cancer incidence and cancer mortality by cancer type for 2022 are displayed at the county-level as age-adjusted rates (per 100,000) and numbers on the [Cancer Dashboard](#) and [County Profiles Dashboard](#).

The following cancer types are displayed on these dashboards: Bladder Cancer (including in situ), Brain and Other Nervous System Cancer, Colorectal Cancer, Esophageal Cancer, Female Breast Cancer, Kidney and Renal Pelvis Cancer, Larynx Cancer, Leukemia, Liver and Intrahepatic Bile Duct Cancer, Lung and Bronchus Cancer, Melanoma of the Skin, Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma, Oral/Pharynx Cancer, Pancreas Cancer, Prostate Cancer, Testicular Cancer, Thyroid Cancer, and all cancers (including those outside this list).



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MEASURE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Cancer incidence among children is displayed as an age-adjusted rate (per 1,000,000) and number at the state-level for 2022 on the [Cancer Dashboard](#) by the following cancer types: Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia, Acute Myeloid Leukemia, Leukemia, Brain and Other Nervous System Cancer.

All cancer incidence and mortality data is updated annually, and was last updated July 31, 2025.

SUGGESTED CITATION

South Carolina Department of Public Health Central Cancer Registry. [Graphic name]. Available online: www.dph.sc.gov/tracking. Accessed on [date accessed].

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about the South Carolina Central Cancer Registry (SCCCR) here: [Cancer Registry | South Carolina Department of Public Health](#)

Learn more about the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) here: [Home \(naaccr.org\)](http://Home.naaccr.org).



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