

Huron Health Report

Fruits And Vegetables Consumption



May 2010

SUMMARY

- In 2008, 40% of surveyed respondents in Huron County reported eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day.
- Females were more likely to eat fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day.
- Obese persons were less likely to eat fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day.
- Persons with less than high school education were less likely to eat fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day.
- There was no difference in the proportion eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day among the income groups.

BACKGROUND

Fruits and vegetables are important components of a healthy diet, and their sufficient daily consumption could help prevent major diseases such as cardiovascular diseases and certain cancers. Low fruits and vegetables intake is among the top 10 selected risk factors for global mortality¹. Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide (2007) from Health Canada provides recommendations on the amount of fruits and vegetables people need as a part of a healthy diet. The recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables intake varies by age and gender.² The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health recommends an intake of a minimum of 400g (5 servings) of fruits and vegetables per day.³

This report provides current population-level information on the experience, perception and behaviour of Huron County residents, reported through the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS). The RRFSS is a random-digit-dial telephone survey of adults 18 years and older, conducted by the Institute of Social Research (ISR) at York University on behalf of the Huron County Health Unit.⁴

The specific objective of this report is to describe the proportion of Huron County residents aged 18 and over consuming fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day

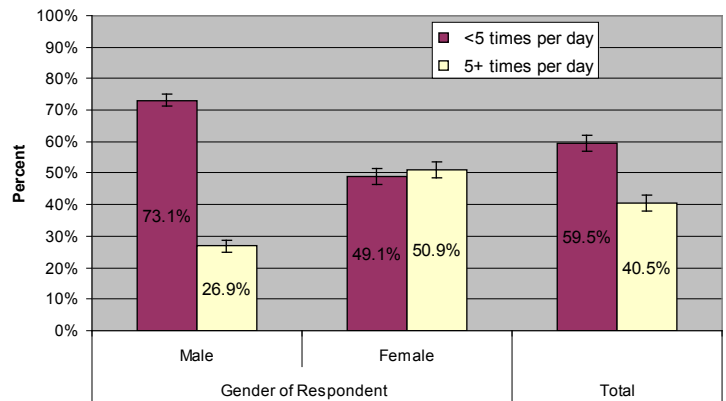
This analysis was done using data collected between January and December 2008. A total of 717 interviews were conducted in Huron County during that period, giving an overall response rate of 64%. Estimates are presented with 95% Confidence Intervals (CI). CIs are reported in brackets or presented as **I** in the graphs. The sample was weighted to correct for unequal probabilities of selection within households.

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RESULTS

**Figure 1: Daily fruits and vegetables consumption
Huron - 2008 - by gender**

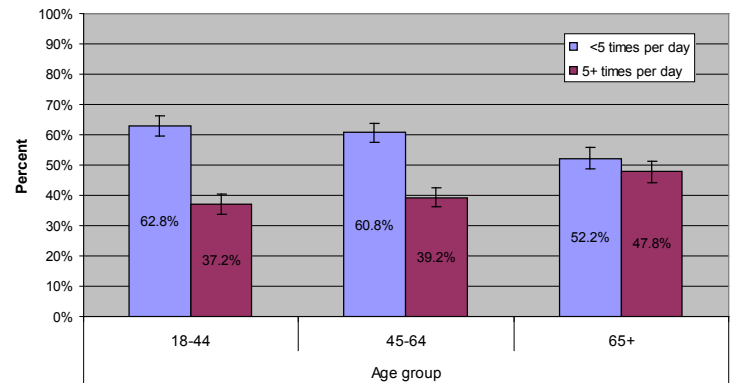
40.5% (36.8, 44.2) of respondents indicated they eat fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day. The proportion of females (50.9%, CI 45.9, 55.9) that eat fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day was significantly higher than males (26.9%, CI 21.8, 32.0) ($p < 0.001$).



Data source: RRFSS (Extracted February 10, 2010)

**Figure 2: Daily fruits and vegetables consumption
Huron - 2008 - by age group**

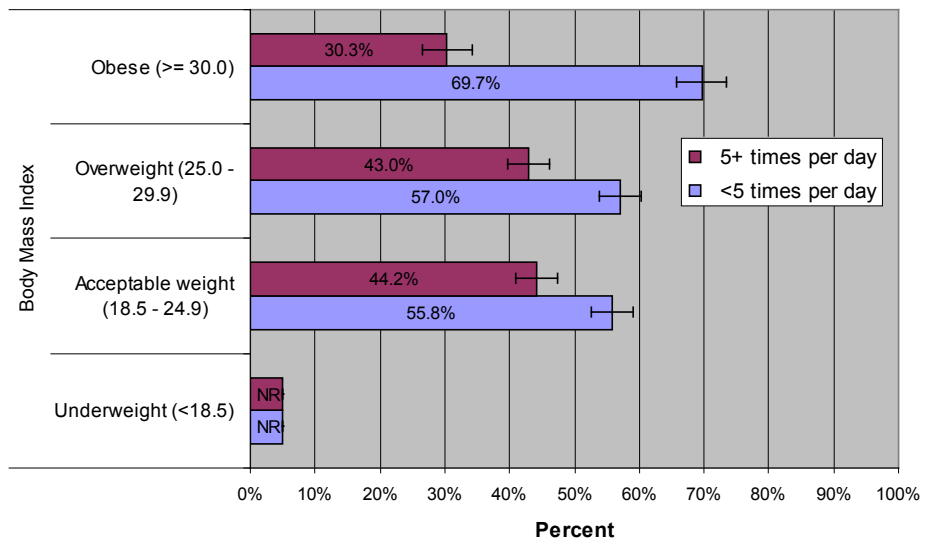
There was no significant difference in the proportion of respondents eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day among the three age groups (p -value=0.074).



Data source: RRFSS (Extracted February 10, 2010)

**Figure 3: Daily fruits and vegetables consumption
Huron - 2008 - by BMI**

30.3% (22.8, 37.8) of respondents with a BMI ≥ 30 (obese) reported eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day, this is significantly less than the other BMI classifications (p -value=0.038).



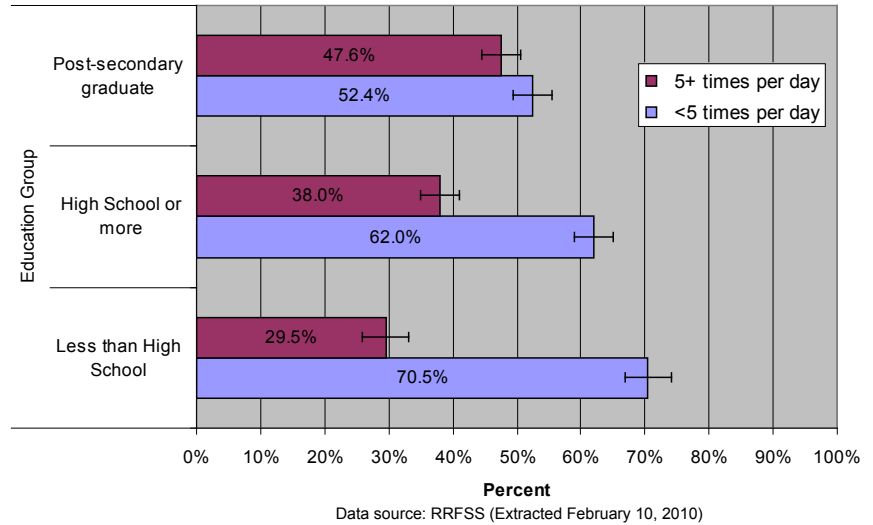
Data source: RRFSS (Extracted February 10, 2010)
NR: Not Released due to High Sampling Variability

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**Figure 4: Daily fruits and vegetables consumption
Huron - 2008 - by education**

29.5% (22.2, 36.8) of respondents with less than high school education report eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day, this is significantly less than the other education groups (p-value=0.001) (Figure 4).

There was no significant difference in the proportion of respondents eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more time per day among the income groups (p-value=0.775).



LIMITATIONS

RRFSS results are based on respondents self-reporting and they may not necessarily have accurate recall. Households without telephones were excluded from the survey (about 3% of all Ontario households).

Thus the percentages may not represent the true estimates for the general population as respondents may have different characteristics than people that have not been included in the survey.

REFERENCES

¹ Promoting fruit and vegetable consumption around the world. World Health Organization. www.who.int. Accessed February 10, 2010.

² Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. Health Canada. http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/hpfb-dgpsa/pdf/food-guide-aliment/view_eatwell_vue_bienmang-eng.pdf. Accessed April 1, 2010.

³ Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, 2004. World Health Organization. http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/strategy/eb11344/strategy_english_web.pdf. Accessed Feb 10, 2010.

⁴ Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System. <http://www.rrfss.on.ca>