



Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: Population in Focus Report

**Vermont Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance
System (BRFSS), 2023**

December 2025

Introduction – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

This report focuses on sexual orientation and gender identity (transgender status) to understand disparities in health-related factors, behaviors and outcomes experienced by Vermont adults. Respondents were asked to provide their sexual orientation and transgender status in a series of questions.

The Vermont Department of Health acknowledges that data presented in this report are driven by complex upstream factors, including social, economic, and environmental inequities. Data on the prevalence of certain indicators may be influenced by differences in age distribution sexual orientation and gender identity groups. We are continually working to further incorporate information highlighting the social determinants of health and informed by the communities and partners we seek to serve.

Their responses for sexual orientation are categorized into the following groupings for final reporting:

- Gay or Lesbian,
- Bisexual,
- Heterosexual, or
- Another Sexual Orientation.

Another Sexual Orientation is an additional identity which is not gay or lesbian, bisexual, or heterosexual, and may include people who identify as pansexual, asexual, queer, questioning, moving between identities, or other additional identities.

Responses to the question about transgender status are grouped into transgender and cisgender. Cisgender means that one's gender aligns with the gender they were assigned at birth based on their sex.

Note that although sexual orientation and gender identity (transgender status) are presented alongside each other in this report, sex, gender, sexual orientation and transgender status are all separate concepts. Often, these identities intersect in meaningful ways; persons of historically non-dominant sexual orientation groups, and gender expansive, gender fluid, non-binary and transgender persons share social, political, and historical commonalities. This report intends to highlight outcomes among subpopulations within this broader LGBTQIA+ community.

Methodology

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a telephone survey conducted annually among adults aged 18 and older. The Vermont BRFSS is completed by the Vermont Department of Health in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). All U.S. states, Washington D.C., and most U.S. territories participate in the BRFSS. BRFSS surveys are completed by approximately 7,000 adults each year, from across the state. Completion of the BRFSS depends on a participant's ability to independently complete an over-the-phone survey with a personal cellphone or on a landline phone in a private residence. Adults who are incarcerated, living in group housing, without a personal phone, or who have hearing impairments or other physical, emotional, or cognitive disabilities that preclude their ability to independently complete such a survey may not be adequately represented in this data. Results are weighted to be representative of the entire adult population.

Throughout this report, all estimates reported represent percentages. To ensure statistical reliability and decrease instances of data suppression, estimates represent the average of 2 years of data combined. Statistical significance is calculated by comparing the 95% confidence intervals of two or more values. A 95% confidence interval is a range of values and can vary due to the size of a particular population or how consistently participants responded to an item. All comparisons are made to the overall statewide estimate, and statistically significant differences are noted. Sometimes, when comparing the responses of two or more groups, the overall percentage may look very different, but the two numbers are not statistically different. Other times, the two values may be very close but differ statistically. While this report notes statistical differences, we encourage you to consider meaningful differences: does the disparity merit a targeted intervention, show a real change in health, or otherwise mean something important to the community (statistics aside).

For more information on the BRFSS and to see other reports, please visit the Vermont Department of Health BRFSS webpage at: <https://www.HealthVermont.gov/BRFSS>

Demographics

Sexual Orientation	N	%
Gay/Lesbian	458	3
Bisexual	722	6
Another sexual Identity	351	3
Heterosexual	15,676	89

Gender Identity	N	%
Transgender	116	1
Cisgender	17337	99

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2022-2023

N = Unweighted number of respondents; % = Weighted percent

Health Status Indicators

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
General health fair or poor ¹	14	16	17	26*	13	28*	14
Health insurance coverage (age 18-64) ¹	95	96	97	88*	95	87	95
Have a personal health care provider ¹	90	91	89	84*	91	85	91
Delayed health care due to cost, past year ¹	7	9	12*	18*	6	22*	7
Experienced physical symptoms as a result of how treated based on race ¹	2	.	7*	.	2	.	2
Fell in past year, (age 45+) ³	29	33	38	29	29	47	29
Fall in past year resulting in injury, (age 45+) ³	32	24	32	.	32	.	32

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: ¹2022-2023, ²2019, 2023, ³2020, 2023, ⁴2021, 2023

. = Too few responses to report; * = Statistically different compared to VT overall

Quality of Life

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
Physical health not good ¹	12	12	16	12	12	22*	12
Mental health not good ¹	16	23*	36*	36*	14*	59*	15
Has a disability ¹	27	30	39*	44*	26	62*	27

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: ¹2022-2023, ²2019, 2023, ³2020, 2023, ⁴2021, 2023

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Chronic Conditions

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
Arthritis ¹	29	30	16*	23	30	9*	29
Asthma ¹	12	16	15	13	12	11	12
Cancer (non-skin) ¹	10	11	5*	9	11	.	10
Cardiovascular disease ¹	9	6	2*	.	9	.	9
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) ¹	7	4	4	.	7	.	7
Depressive disorder ¹	25	38*	53*	46*	23*	60*	25
Diabetes ¹	9	8	7	.	9	.	9
High blood cholesterol ⁴	33	35	21*	30	34	33	33
Hypertension ¹	32	27	17*	22*	33	14*	32
Kidney disease ¹	3	.	.	.	3	.	3
Long-term covid symptoms ¹	13	14	19	.	12	.	13
Pre-diabetes ⁴	9	7	5*	7	10	.	9
Skin cancer ¹	6	5	.	.	7	.	7

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: ¹2022-2023, ²2019, 2023, ³2020, 2023, ⁴2021, 2023

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Risk Factors and Behaviors

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
No leisure time physical activity ¹	20	18	19	24	20	22	20
Rates community as slightly or not safe to walk ²	11	10	20*	14	10	.	11
Has a loaded firearm in the home ³	18	26	12	.	18	.	18
Rarely or never wear a seatbelt ³	3	.	.	.	3	.	3
Illness or symptom was caused or made worse by air quality, mold, pets, furnishings, or excessive heat or cold in home, past year ³	6	5	19*	11	5	.	6
Had at least one sunburn, past year ²	41	35	59*	46	40	43	41

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: ¹2022-2023, ²2019, 2023, ³2020, 2023, ⁴2021, 2023

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Substance Use – Alcohol and Cannabis

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
Drink any alcohol, past month ¹	61	64	65	55	61	47*	61
Binge drinking, past month ¹	17	19	27*	16	17	20	17
Heavy drinking, past month ¹	9	9	14*	12	9	.	9
Driving under the influence of alcohol, past month ³	3	.	.	.	2	.	3

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
Cannabis use, past 30 days ¹	24	28	47*	39*	22	41*	24
Driving under the influence of cannabis, past month ¹	21	.	27	24	20	.	21

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: ¹2022-2023, ²2019, 2023, ³2020, 2023, ⁴2021, 2023

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Substance Use - Tobacco

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
Current cigarette smoking ¹	12	12	12	16	12	.	12
Current e-cigarette use ¹	6	6	14*	13*	5	.	5
Current smokeless tobacco use ¹	2	.	.	.	2	.	2
Attempted to quit smoking, past year ¹	45	60	56	.	46	.	46

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: ¹2022-2023, ²2019, 2023, ³2020, 2023, ⁴2021, 2023

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Preventative Behaviors and Screenings

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
Routine doctor visit ¹	76	78	72	71	77	61*	77
Meets physical activity recommendations ²	64	69	70	50*	64	55	64
Meets strength building recommendations ²	41	36	40	40	41	31	41
Had cholesterol screening ⁴	85	88	80	80	86	72*	86
Had HIV screening, ever ¹	37	62*	52*	39	35	34	37
Had HIV screening, past year ¹	6	17*	13*	11	5	.	6

All numbers are percentages.

Source: VT Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: ¹2022-2023, ²2019, 2023, ³2020, 2023, ⁴2021, 2023

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Immunizations

	VT	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Another Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	Transgender	Cisgender
Shingles shot, past ten years (age 50+) ³	50	59	52	26*	50	.	50
Flu shot, past year (age 65+) ¹	72	80	92*	58	72	94	72
Pneumonia shot, (age 65+) ¹	71	75	61	70	71	85	71

All numbers are percentages.

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For Questions and More Information

Email: AHS.VDHBRFSS@Vermont.gov

Web: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/stats/population-health-surveys-data/behavioral-risk-factor-surveillance-system-brfss>

Social: @HealthVermont