

# Arthritis – Data Brief

## Vermont BRFSS 2015

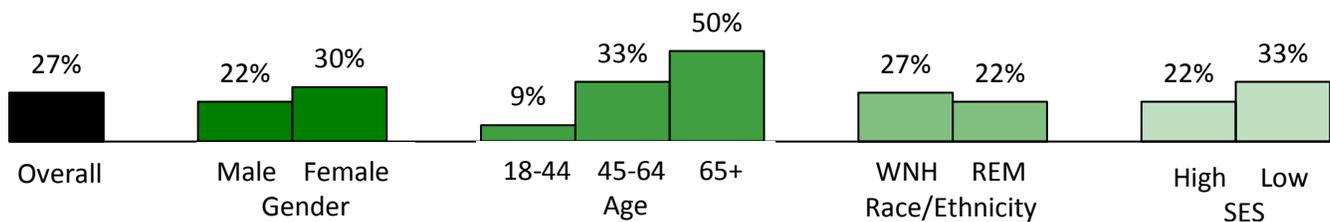
### Background

Arthritis includes more than 100 rheumatic diseases and conditions that affect joints, tissues that surround the joint, and other connective tissue<sup>1</sup>. Arthritis is a major cause of disability in the U.S. and Vermont. In 2015, more than a quarter (27%) of Vermont adults said they have arthritis, statistically higher than the 25% reported for all U.S. adults. Typically, arthritis conditions are characterized by pain/stiffness in/around one or more joints; however, physical activity can reduce pain, improve function, mobility, mood, quality of life and help manage other co-morbidities; such as diabetes, and obesity<sup>2</sup>.

### Arthritis Prevalence & Demographic Characteristics

Vermont women report having arthritis at a statistically higher rate than men (30% vs 22%, respectively). Diagnosis of arthritis increases at a statically significant rate with increasing age. Half of all Vermonters over the age of 65 have a diagnosis of arthritis. Prevalence of arthritis decreases with increasing education level and annual household income level, reflected by a statistically significantly lower diagnosis among Vermonters with high SES<sup>3</sup> compared to those with low SES (22% vs 33%, respectively). There is no significant difference in arthritis prevalence among white non-Hispanic Vermonters and racial or ethnic minority Vermonters.

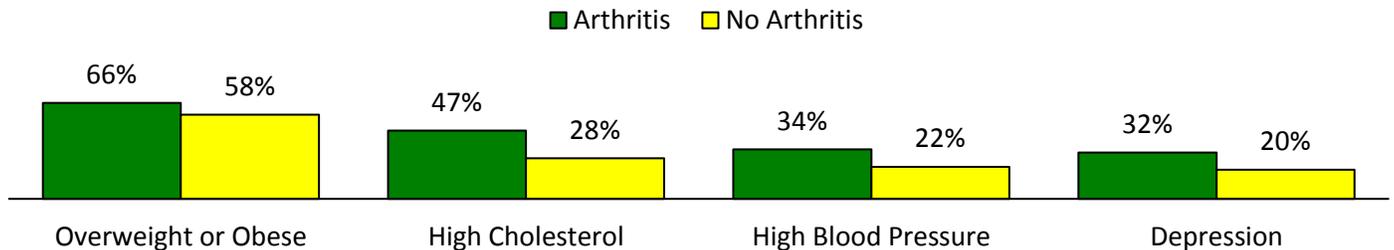
**Prevalence of Arthritis, Overall and by Demographics**  
Vermont Adults, 2015



### Co-morbidities & Arthritis

Adults with arthritis were significantly more likely to report having other chronic conditions, including: overweight or obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and depression. Likewise, those with arthritis are more than four times as likely as those without it to report fair or poor health (28% vs. 7%).

**Prevalence of Chronic Conditions by Arthritis Diagnosis**  
Vermont Adults, 2015



<sup>1</sup> Arthritis Basics. CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Arthritis: Physical activity and arthritis overview. CDC. [http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/pa\\_overview.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/pa_overview.htm)

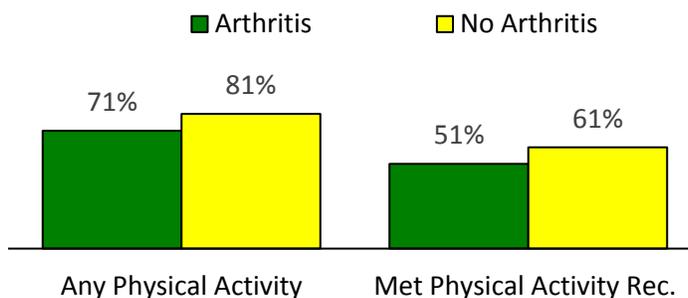
<sup>3</sup> Socioeconomic status (SES) is a measure of economic and social position based on income and education. Low SES is defined as an education level less than or equal to a high school diploma and an annual household income of less than 250% of the federal poverty level. High SES is defined as education equal to 4 years of college or more.

Vermont adults with arthritis are significantly less likely to report any physical activity in the past 30 days and are less likely to meet physical activity recommendations. Physical activity recommendations are 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week.

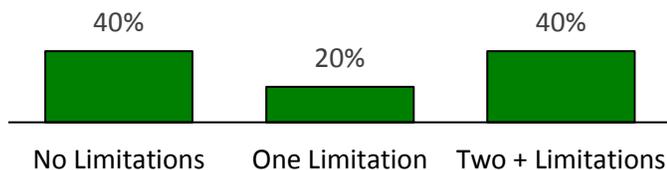
### Impact of Arthritis

On average, Vermont adults with arthritis rated their joint pain in the last month as 4.4, on a scale of 1 to 10 in 2015. Nearly four in ten (38%) adults with arthritis indicated their arthritis limited their social activities at least a little, while half said they limited their usual activities due to arthritis or joint symptoms (49%). One in three adults with arthritis, said their joint symptoms affects whether they work, the type of work they do, and/or the amount of work they do (31%).

### Physical Activity by Arthritis Diagnosis, Vermont Adults, 2015



### Activity Limitations Due to Arthritis Vermont Adult with Arthritis, 2015



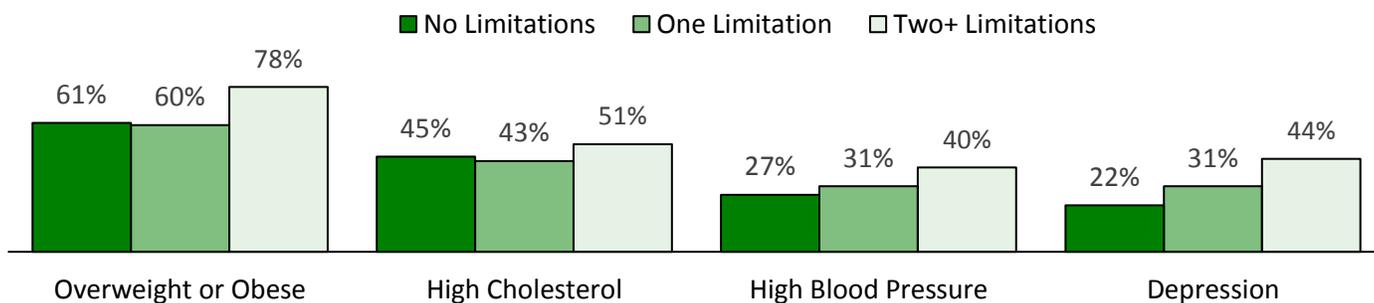
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Six in ten Vermont adults with arthritis said, in 2015, that they experienced at least one type of activity limitation due to their arthritis. Two in ten reported experiencing a limitation in either then social, usual, or work pursuits. Four in ten have limitations in two or three of these areas.

### Co-morbidities & Arthritis

In general, as Vermonters with arthritis report more activity limitations, the proportion reporting co-occurring chronic conditions increases significantly.

### Prevalence of Chronic Conditions by Number of Arthritis-Related Activity Limitations Vermont Adults with Arthritis, 2015



In contrast, as the number of activity limitations due to arthritis increases, participation in physical activity decreases significantly. Eight in ten adults with arthritis and no activity limitations participated in any physical activity during the last month (79%), compared with three-quarters of those with one limitation (75%) and about two-thirds of those at least two arthritis-related activity limitations (64%), respectively.

Six in ten Vermont adults with arthritis and no activity limitations meet physical activity recommendations. Less than half of those with one (47%) and two or more (48%) arthritis-related activity limitations report the same.

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