

# Disparities in Diabetes Prevalence among Older Adults

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While diabetes affects Americans of all ages, older adults are disproportionately affected. In a recent analysis, we found that 23 percent of Americans ages 65 and older in 2015 reported having been diagnosed with diabetes (Table 1). The stark racial and ethnic disparities in diabetes prevalence among older adults are particularly concerning—about 20 percent of whites reported a diabetes diagnosis, compared to 35 percent of both blacks and Hispanics.

**TABLE 1**  
**Prevalence and 95% confidence interval (95% CI) of Self-reported Diabetes Diagnoses by Age and Race/Ethnicity Based on Data from the 2015 Behavioral Risk Factor and Surveillance Survey (BRFSS)**

	50-64			65+		
	Diabetes	Pre-diabetes	No Known Diagnoses	Diabetes	Pre-diabetes	No Known Diagnoses
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>15.4</b> (15.0-15.8)	<b>2.2</b> (2.0-2.4)	<b>82.4</b> (82.0-82.9)	<b>22.9</b> (22.4-23.3)	<b>2.7</b> (2.6-2.9)	<b>74.4</b> (73.9-74.9)
<b>White, non-Hispanic</b>	12.6 (12.2-12.9)	1.6 (1.5-1.8)	85.8 (85.4-86.2)	19.8 (19.4-20.2)	2.4 (2.2-2.6)	77.8 (77.3-78.2)
<b>Black, non-Hispanic</b>	23.1 (21.7-24.6)	2.8 (2.3-3.4)	74.1 (72.6-75.6)	35.0 (33.1-36.9)	3.7 (3.0-4.6)	61.3 (59.3-63.2)
<b>Other, non-Hispanic</b>	18.3 (16.1-20.6)	3.8 (2.7-5.2)	78.0 (75.4-80.3)	29.5 (25.6-33.8)	4.8 (3.3-7.0)	65.7 (61.4-69.7)
<b>Hispanic</b>	22.2 (20.5-23.9)	3.8 (3.0-4.7)	74.1 (72.2-75.8)	34.7 (32.4-37.1)	3.8 (2.9-4.9)	61.5 (59.0-63.9)

**TABLE 2**  
**Prevalence and 95% confidence interval (95% CI) of Self-reported Diabetes Diagnoses by Age and Race/Ethnicity Based on Data from the 2015 Behavioral Risk Factor and Surveillance Survey (BRFSS)**

	50-64			65-79			80+		
	Diabetes	Pre-diabetes	No Known Diagnoses	Diabetes	Pre-diabetes	No Known Diagnoses	Diabetes	Pre-diabetes	No Known Diagnoses
<b>OVERALL</b>	15.4 (15.0-15.8)	2.2 (2.0-2.4)	82.4 (82.0-82.9)	23.8 (23.2-24.3)	2.7 (2.5-3.0)	73.5 (72.9-74.0)	19.7 (18.9-20.5)	2.7 (2.4-3.2)	77.6 (76.7-78.5)
<b>White, non-Hispanic</b>	12.6 (12.2-12.9)	1.6 (1.5-1.8)	85.8 (85.4-86.2)	20.5 (20.0-21.0)	2.4 (2.2-2.6)	77.1 (76.6-77.6)	17.7 (17.0-18.6)	2.3 (2.0-2.7)	79.9 (79.1-80.8)
<b>Black, non-Hispanic</b>	23.1 (21.7-24.6)	2.8 (2.3-3.4)	74.1 (72.6-75.6)	35.4 (33.3-37.5)	3.7 (2.8-4.7)	60.9 (58.7-63.1)	33.2 (29.2-37.6)	3.9 (2.5-6.0)	62.9 (58.5-67.1)
<b>Other, non-Hispanic</b>	18.3 (16.1-20.6)	3.8 (2.7-5.2)	78.0 (75.4-80.3)	31.1 (26.6-36.0)	4.0 (2.8-5.9)	64.8 (60.0-69.4)	21.4 (15.8-28.4)	8.8 (3.6-19.7)	69.8 (60.8-77.5)
<b>Hispanic</b>	22.2 (20.5-23.9)	3.8 (3.0-4.7)	74.1 (72.2-75.8)	36.1 (33.5-38.7)	3.9 (2.9-5.2)	60.0 (57.3-62.7)	28.2 (23.2-33.9)	3.4 (1.8-6.3)	68.3 (62.4-73.7)

*Note: The BRFSS survey respondents are asked whether or not a doctor, nurse, or other health professional has ever told them they had diabetes. The survey does not differentiate between type 1 and type 2 diabetes. We classified those who reported having been told they had “pre-diabetes or borderline diabetes” as having “pre-diabetes”. We classified women who reported having had diabetes “only during pregnancy” (gestational diabetes) as having “no known diagnoses”.*

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015.*

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