

## Nutrition in Washington State

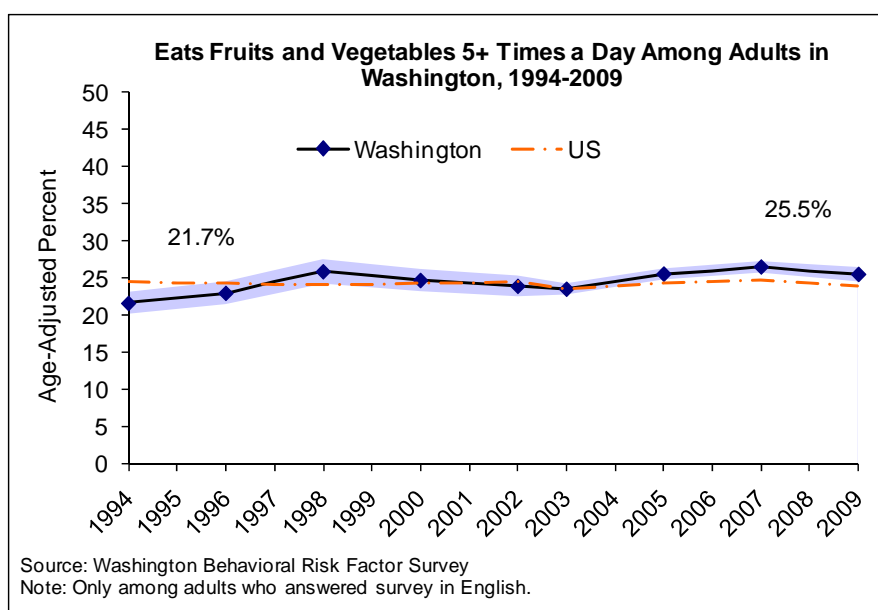
The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy and meats, whole grains, and healthy fats within caloric needs while limiting intake of unhealthy fats, added sugars, sodium, and alcohol.<sup>1</sup> People who follow the Dietary Guidelines are at lower risk for overweight and obesity, and chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disease,<sup>2,3,4,5</sup> but the diets of most Washington residents vary substantially from the recommendations. Poor nutrition has the potential to affect the growth, development, and health status of all people. Pregnant women, infants, children, and older people are especially vulnerable. Poor nutrition includes inadequate intake of fruits and vegetables, high food insecurity rates, and low breastfeeding rates.

### Fruit and Vegetable Intake

#### Prevalence and Trends<sup>6</sup>

\* Twenty six percent of adults reported eating fruits and vegetables five or more times a day in 2009.

\* Because people often eat more than one serving of fruits and vegetables at a given time, the fraction of Washington adults who eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily is likely to be higher.

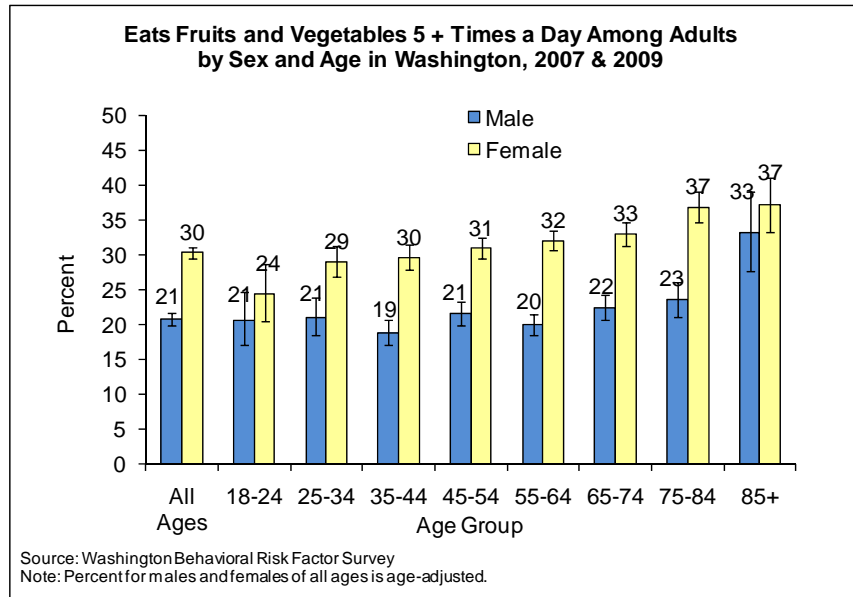


\* The percent of Washington adults who eat fruits and vegetables five or more times daily has been increasing slowly from 1994-2009. A similar increase in the share of adults eating fruits and vegetables five or more times a day has not been observed nationally<sup>7</sup>

## Age and Gender<sup>6</sup>

\* Women are more likely than men to report eating fruits and vegetables five or more times a day.

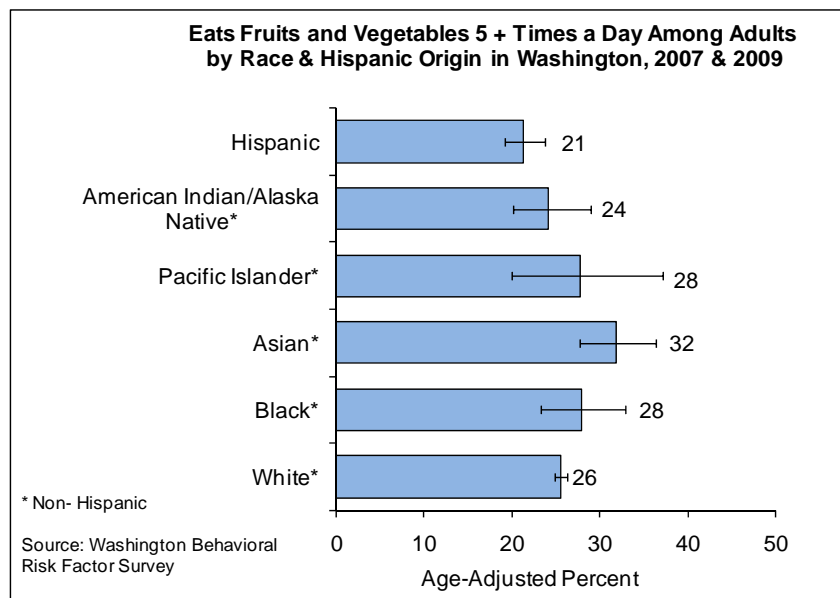
\* Eating fruits and vegetables five or more times a day is more common in older age groups.



## Race and Hispanic Origin<sup>6</sup>

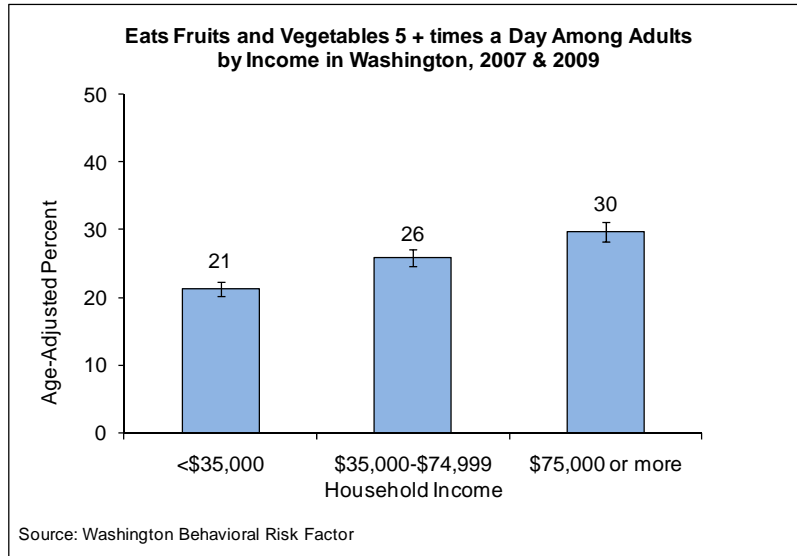
\* More Asians eat fruits and vegetables five or more times daily than Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites.

\* Hispanic adults are less likely to eat fruits and vegetables five or more times a day than non-Hispanic whites. However, after controlling for differences in age, education, and income, there is no detectable difference between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites.

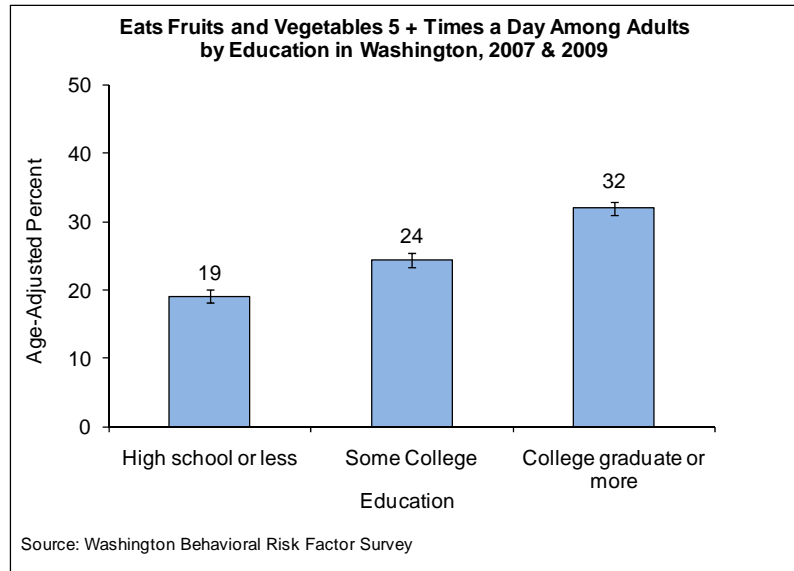


## Income and Education<sup>6</sup>

\* Similarly, as annual household income increases, the percent of adults eating fruits and vegetables five or more times each day also increases. This is the case even after controlling for education, age, gender, race, and Hispanic origin.



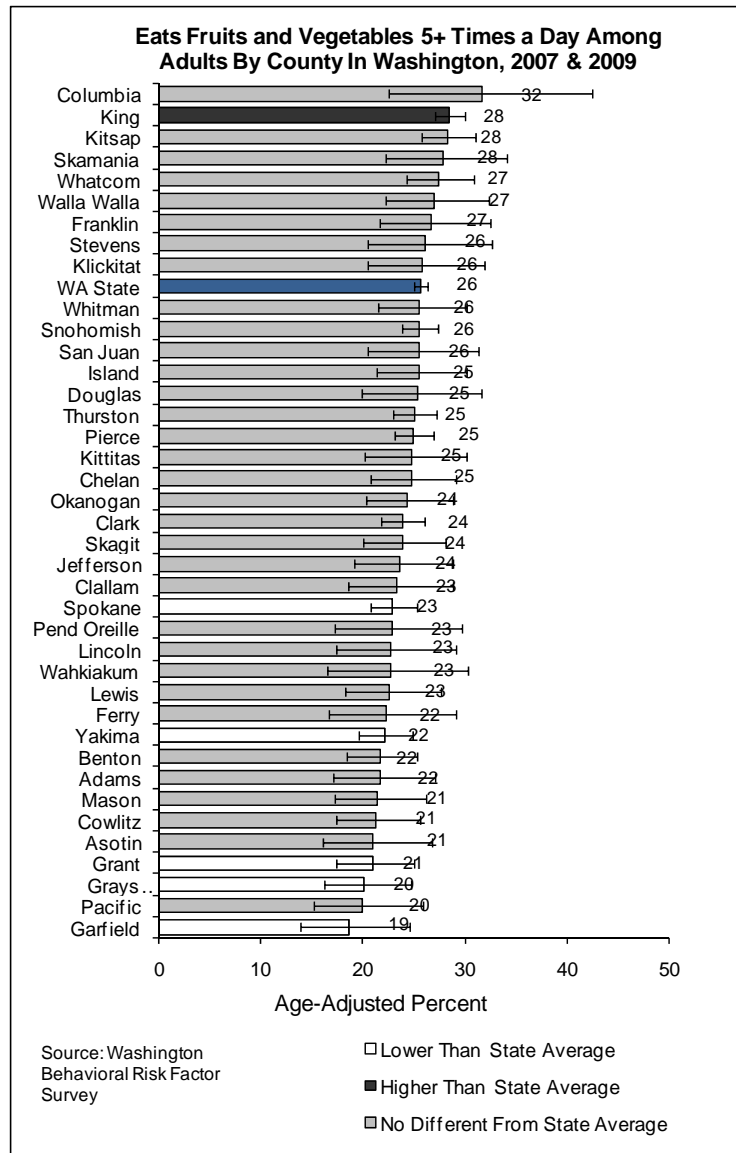
\* As education levels increase, the percent of adults eating fruits and vegetables five or more times each day also increases. This is the case even after controlling for income, age, gender, race, and Hispanic origin.



## Geographic Variation<sup>6</sup>

\* The age-adjusted percent of adults who report eating fruits and vegetables five or more times each day ranges from 19% in Garfield County to 32% in Columbia County.

\* In King County, more adults eat fruits and vegetables five or more times each day than the state average. In Spokane, Yakima, Grant, Grays Harbor, and Garfield Counties, fewer adults eat fruits and vegetables five or more times each day is below the state average.



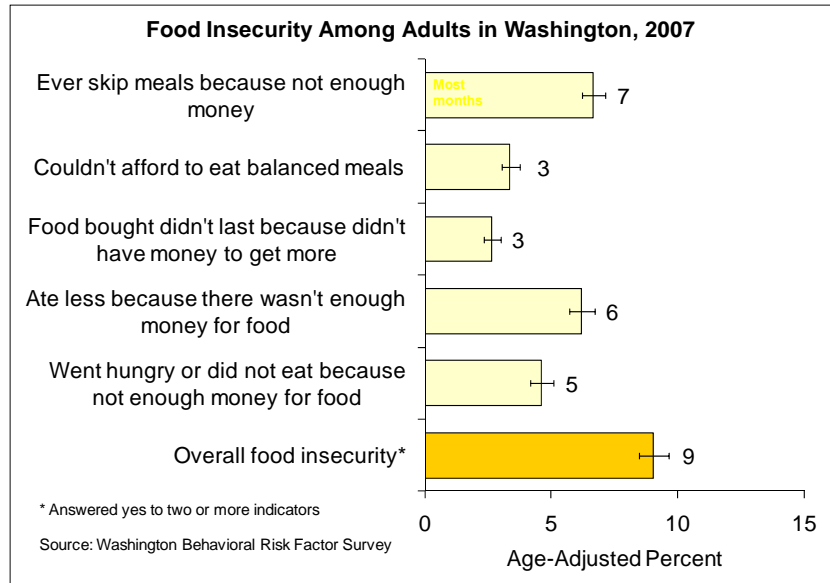
## Food Insecurity

### Prevalence and Trends

\* The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food insecurity as having difficulty providing enough food for all household members due to lack of money and other resources. That is, there are days in which household members have to eat smaller portions, skip meals, or eat less nutritious foods.<sup>8</sup>

\* Almost 1 in 10 adults in Washington reported being food insecure in 2007.<sup>6</sup>

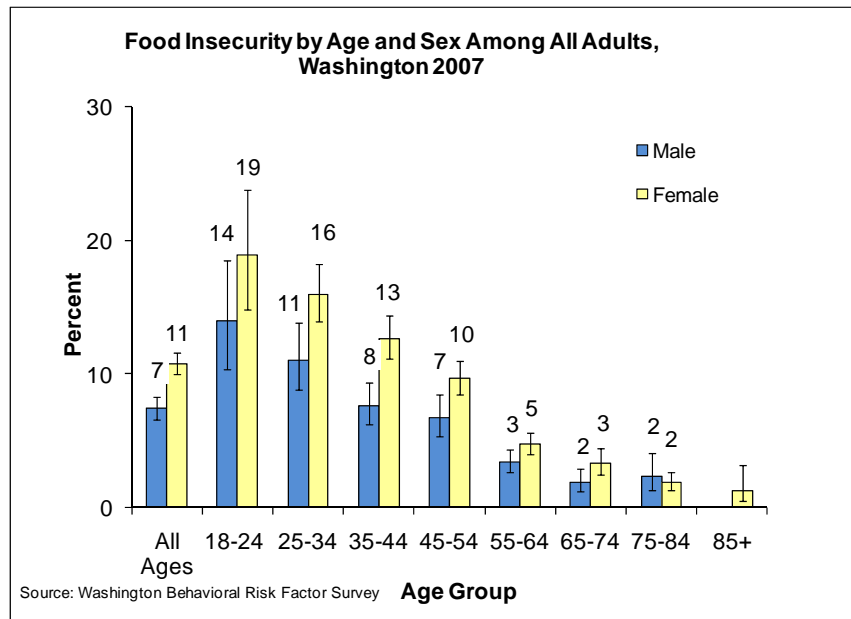
\* The percent of food insecure households in Washington has decreased from an average of 13% in 1996-1998 to the current average of 10% in 2007.<sup>8</sup>



### Age and Gender<sup>6</sup>

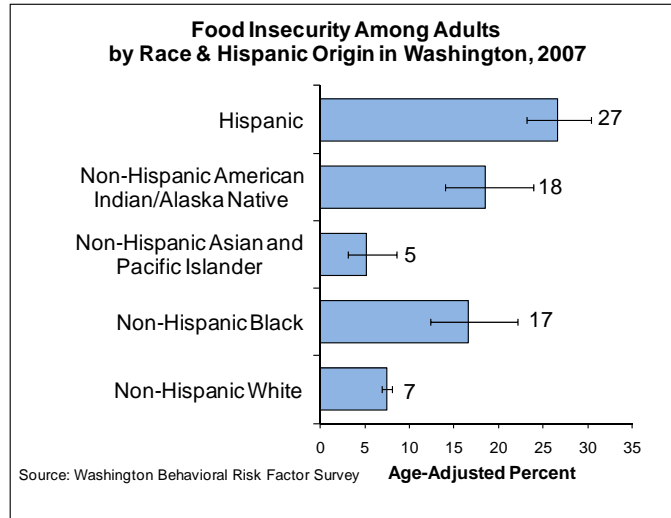
\* Women are more likely than men to experience food insecurity.

\* For both men and women, the percent who are food insecure is higher among younger adults, less among older adults



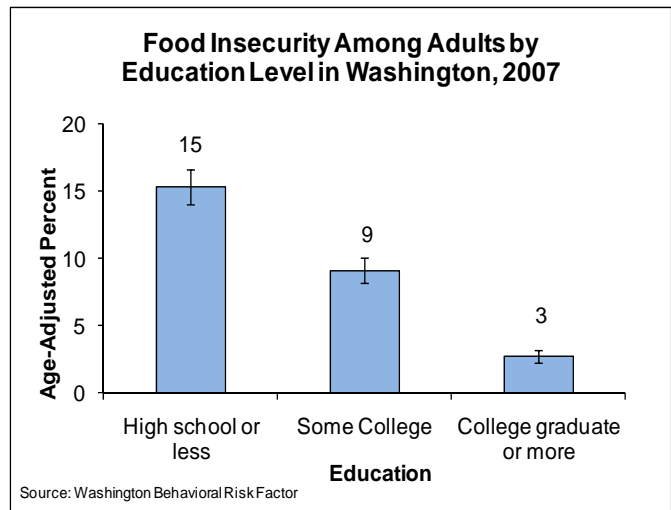
## Race and Hispanic Origin<sup>6</sup>

\* Adults of Hispanic origin are most likely to report being food insecure, followed by non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Natives and non-Hispanic Blacks.

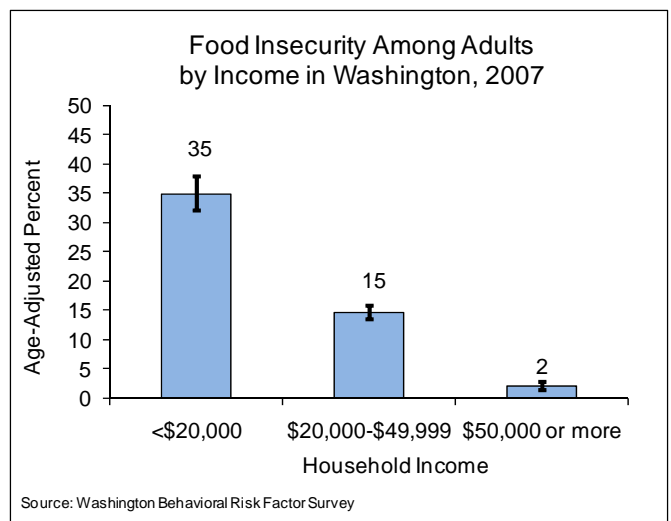


## Income and Education<sup>6</sup>

\* As education levels decrease, the percent of adults who experience food insecurity increases.



\* Similarly, as annual household income decreases, the percent of adults who are food insecure increases.



## **Nutrition in Youth**

\* In 2008, only one out of four 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in Washington ate fruits and vegetables 5 or more times a day.<sup>9</sup>

\* Additional data on dietary behaviors of adolescents is collected as part of Washington State's Healthy Youth Survey and is found here: <http://www.askhys.net/layout.asp?page=intro>. Click on the HYS Fact Sheets Menu to access data.

## **Breastfeeding**

Human milk provides the best nutrition for infants and children.<sup>10,11</sup> Breastfed children are healthier, incur fewer health care costs and are less likely to experience obesity and other chronic diseases when they are older.<sup>12,13</sup> If 75% of infants were breastfed early in life and 50% were still breastfed at 6 months, as recommended by the U.S. Surgeon General, it would save an estimated 3.6 billion dollars in health care costs.<sup>14</sup> Breastfeeding avoids the financial and environmental costs associated with manufacturing and transportation of formula and disposal of formula containers.

### **Prevalence and Trends<sup>15</sup>**

- \* In 2005 93% of new mothers began breastfeeding their newborns.
- \* At one and two months after birth, breastfeeding rates were 83% and 75%.
- \* Of 19 states reporting data in 2003, Washington and Alaska had the highest rates of breastfeeding one and two months after birth.<sup>16</sup>
- \* Breastfeeding initiation rates have increased slightly in Washington from 2000 to 2005. Rates at two months after birth, however, have remained stable.

### **Race and Hispanic Origin<sup>15</sup>**

- \* In Washington, American Indian and black mothers are less likely to begin breastfeeding their newborns than Asian and Pacific Islander and white mothers.
- \* National data also show that American Indians and Alaska Natives and African Americans were less likely than whites to breastfeed their infants.<sup>17</sup>
- \* Taking maternal education and other socioeconomic variables into account reduces some of these racial disparities.<sup>18</sup>

### **Additional High Risk Populations<sup>15</sup>**

- \* Washington mothers receiving Medicaid and unmarried mothers are less likely to begin breastfeeding and less likely to continue breastfeeding for more than two months.
- \* In addition, mothers younger than 20 years old are less likely than older mothers to continue breastfeeding.
- \* National data show similar patterns of breastfeeding among these high risk populations.<sup>17</sup>



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