



Urbanization level has long been recognized as an important characteristic when studying health disparities among communities. Residents in rural (nonmetropolitan) areas tend to have poorer health than those in more urbanized areas. Also, residents of central cities in metropolitan areas with one million or more residents have poorer health measures than those in the suburban areas surrounding those cities (large fringe metro). [D. Ingram and S. Franco 2006 NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties] This article will focus on differences among the five different groups.

Many health conditions and behaviors are not reportable; hence, prevalence data must be obtained from another source. The BRFSS is an annual, random digit-dial telephone survey of adults aged 18 years and older. The survey is conducted through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). All 50 states and the District of Columbia participate.

The BRFSS relies on self-reported data. This type of survey has certain limitations that should be understood when interpreting the data. Many times, respondents have the tendency to underreport some behaviors that may be considered socially unacceptable (e.g., smoking, heavy alcohol use). Conversely, respondents may overreport behaviors that are desirable (e.g., physical activity, fruit and vegetable consumption).

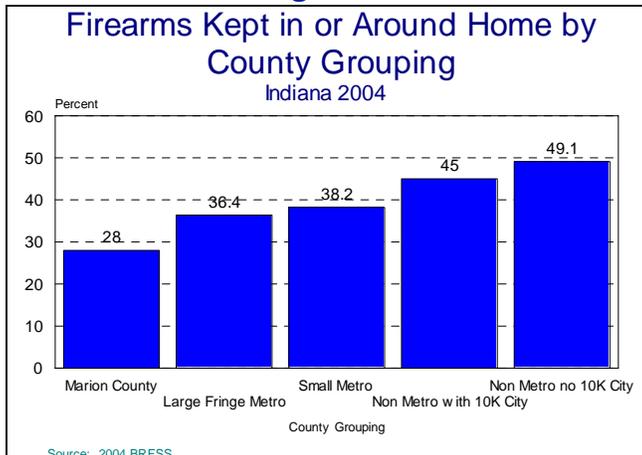
The information on the selected risk factors and reported conditions in this report was obtained from the 2004 BRFSS survey. The differences reported below are statistically significantly different ( $p < 0.05$ ) unless otherwise noted.

Adults in Marion County were more likely to report not having any kind of health care coverage (19.9%) than adults in small metro counties (13.2%) and large fringe metro counties (12.6%). Adults in Marion County were also more likely to report having needed to see a doctor but could not because of cost in the past 12 months (17.0%) than adults in small metropolitan counties (12.1%) and large fringe metropolitan counties (11.4%).

Adults in nonmetropolitan counties with a city of 10,000 or more were more likely to report not having visited a dentist, dental hygienist, or dental clinic within the past year (42.0%) than adults in Marion County (34.5%), small metropolitan counties (29.7%), and large fringe metropolitan counties (30.1%).

Survey participants were asked if they had ever been tested for HIV, excluding tests they may have had as part of a blood donation. Adults in Marion County (47.5%) were more likely than the four other county groupings (range of 32.4%-37.0%) to report having had a test.

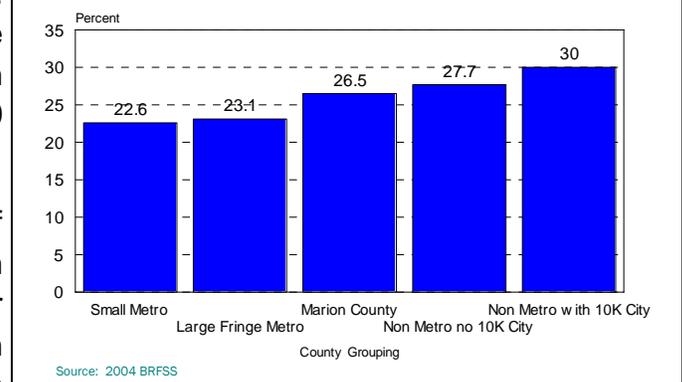


**Figure 2**

Regarding firearms kept in or around the home, respondents in nonmetropolitan counties without a city of 10,000 or more (49.1%) were more likely to report having a firearm than adults in Marion County (28.0%), small metropolitan counties (38.2%), and large fringe metropolitan counties (36.4%). The prevalence of firearms kept in or around the home increased with ruralness (see Figure 2). Marion County adults were less likely than the four other groupings to report having a firearm in or around the home.

**Figure 3**

**Current Smokers by County Groupings**  
Indiana 2004



Respondents were also asked if they had ever been told by a health professional that they had asthma. Adults in small metropolitan counties (14.9%) were more likely to report having asthma than adults in nonmetropolitan counties without a city of 10,000 (10.4%).

Respondents with joint symptoms or a diagnosis of arthritis were asked if a doctor or other health professional ever suggested physical activity or exercise to help their condition. Respondents in Marion County (55.5%) were more likely than those in small metropolitan counties to report having received this advice (45.4%).

Adults in nonmetropolitan counties with a city of 10,000 (30.0%) were more likely to report being current smokers than adults in small metropolitan counties (22.6%) or large fringe metropolitan counties (23.1%) (see Figure 3).

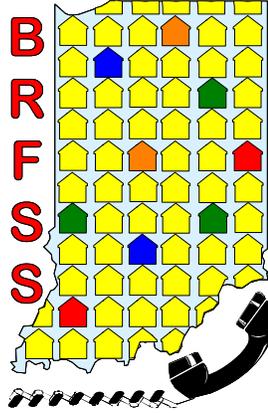
There were a number of risk factors and conditions with no differences in prevalence among the five county groupings:

- having a flu shot in the past 12 months
- ever having a pneumonia shot
- having had certain cancer screenings (mammogram, Pap smear, Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test, digital rectal exam, blood stool test, colonoscopy/sigmoidoscopy)
- binge drinking
- body mass index (BMI) greater than 25.0 (overweight or obese)
- diabetes
- arthritis
- fair/poor health
- having illness or symptoms from poor indoor air or outdoor air pollution
- having stopped smoking for one day or longer in an attempt to quit smoking



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