



# Community Health Needs Assessment

# Virginia Beach

A community and data-driven look at health and wellbeing in Virginia Beach.

August 2024



Submitted by:  
*Toxcel*



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- Hampton Roads Foodbank
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- Old Dominion University- Social Science Research Center
- People in Need Ministries (PIN)
- Sentara Health
- Sentara Diabetes Center
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## Executive Summary

This report summarizes the work of the Virginia Beach Department of Public Health, our community members and stakeholders to assess the overall health and well-being of our city in 2024. This was done by pulling together **data** from many different sources (e.g. the Census Bureau and vital records) and integrating it with a cross-sectional community **survey** as well as targeted **focus group** feedback. Data collection on health indicators for Virginia Beach was conducted in 2023 and informed the community survey distributed to those who live, work and play in Virginia Beach as well as identified topics for discussion for the focus groups. Distribution of the survey depended on our Community Advisory Board, our Community Outreach Workers, the Virginia Beach Health Services Advisory Board, web and social media resources of participating stakeholders, and word of mouth. A total of **800** responses were recorded from January through April 2024. A total of **9** focus groups were conducted with **39** community members from March through April 2024.

Respondents shared some positive reflections about our community, noting ***safe neighborhoods, good schools*** and frequent ***ability to get health care when needed***. Community members also highlighted challenges with ***mental health, chronic conditions*** and ***substance abuse*** as well as ***availability of health care appointments*** being a concern. Data from secondary sources supported these comments documenting increases in emergency department visits for self-harm from 2020 to 2021 as well as increases in the rate of overdose deaths and emergency department visits.

Virginia Beach Department of Public Health intends to use the findings from this community health needs assessment to uplift the health and well-being of our community by supporting the development of an implementation plan that will be coming soon.

# 1. Introduction

This community health needs assessment (CHNA) provides an analysis and discussion of key community health issues in Virginia Beach. The goal of this document is to develop a stronger understanding of the health of our city, to build on our strengths, and to identify areas where we need to continue to focus so that everyone has the opportunity to be as healthy as they can be.

## Background: CHNA Process

Beginning in October 2023, the Virginia Beach Department of Public Health (VBDPH), in collaboration with community partners, launched a broad effort to learn more from its community members about issues that impacted their health.

The CHNA process involved:

- A survey shared with the community to better understand issues that impacted health and wellbeing, as well as health and community priorities.
- Focus groups to explore health equity, access to services and community engagement.
- In-depth review of health indicators to examine data on issues related to quality of life and root causes of inequities, as well as physical and mental illnesses and conditions.

A Community Advisory Board met five times during this process to advise on different aspects of the CHNA, how to best reach Virginia Beach residents, and to reflect on how the findings informed health priorities. The group maintained a strong focus on how to include the diverse perspectives of the community, including those most vulnerable and marginalized.

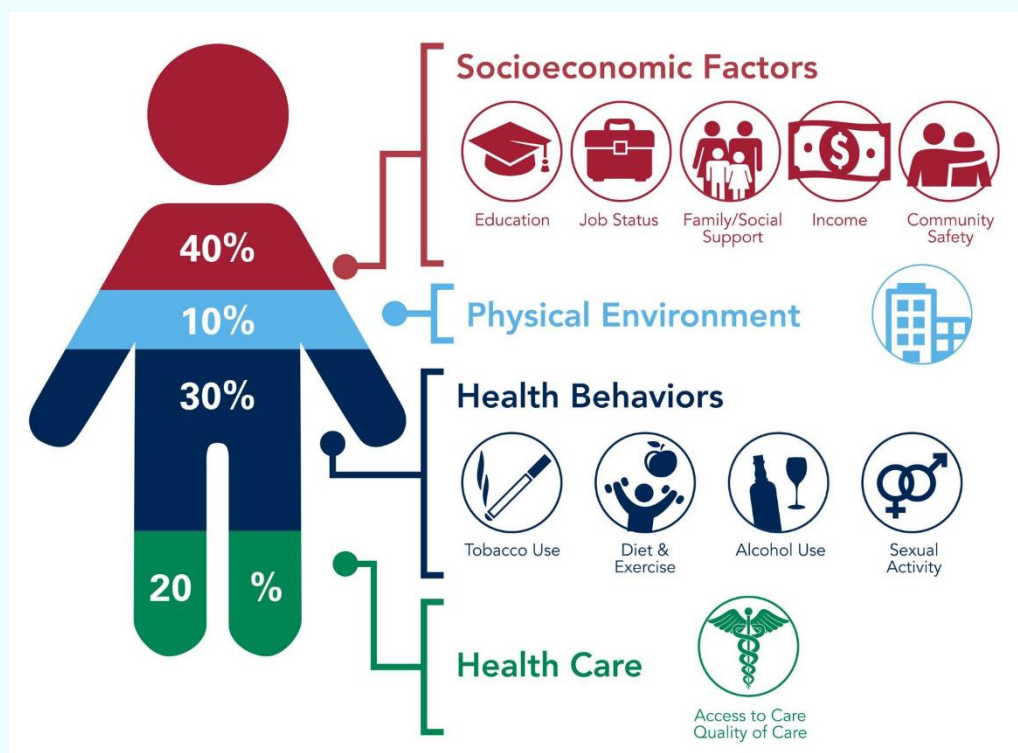
## Social Determinants of Health

**A healthy environment and community impact the health of its residents.** Social determinants of health are the conditions of the social and physical environments that impact our health and health outcomes.<sup>a</sup> Social determinants of health include factors related to:

- Education access and quality,
- Economic stability,
- Social and community context (e.g., social networks, community violence),
- Neighborhood and built environment, and
- Health care access and quality.

The illustration below, Figure 1, highlights the huge role that social determinants play in shaping an individual's health. Social determinants – **socioeconomic factors**, the **physical environment**, and **health care** -- account for **70% of the factors** that impact health.

FIGURE 1. FACTORS THAT IMPACT INDIVIDUAL HEALTH



Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement; Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems, 2014.  
Graphic designed by ProMedica.

In their survey responses, Virginia Beach community members recognized and described the wide-ranging issues that influenced their own health and quality of life, as well as that of their families, neighbors, and the broader community. Some of their responses are below. More of the survey results are shared later in this report.

Examples of  
survey responses  
to the question:

## **What would you do to improve health?**

*“Be able to give more comprehensive care (ex. parent flu shots at pediatric visits).”*

*“Easy access to healthy, inexpensive food.”*

*“Help address homelessness and those in need of basic necessities.”*

*“Improve communication between healthcare providers and provide education on navigating healthcare to the community.”*

*“Make medical care/appointments available on Saturdays.”*

*“More sidewalks to make our neighborhood safer and more walkable.”*

*“More Spanish resources for our community.”*

*“Provide more funding and support for mental health services and substance use services and provide more low cost or no cost options and opportunities for routine and preventative medical care for everyone no matter the income level in our community”*



## 2. Approach

This community health needs assessment provides results and discussion from a survey circulated to the Virginia Beach community, focus groups, and health data indicators.

### 2.1 Community Survey

Virginia Beach launched a community survey that was open from January – April 2024. This survey asked participants their opinions on:

- Qualities that make their community and themselves healthy,
- Health problems,
- Quality of their own physical and mental health,
- Barriers to accessing care, and
- Health priorities.

The survey was widely shared through outreach and social media channels of Virginia Beach Department of Public Health and the City of Virginia Beach. Community Advisory Board members also supported circulation of the survey through outreach in places such as the food bank and food pantries, human services organizations, hospitals, and networks among childcare providers, the Latino and Asian business community, South Hampton Roads Panhellenic Council, and the arts and faith communities.

In total, 800 participants completed the survey; 89.3% of those responses came from residents of Virginia Beach, including a broad cross-section of the community. A more in-depth analysis of the survey results as well as the demographic profiles of survey participants can be found in Appendix A.

## Survey Question: Important Healthy Qualities

The survey asked survey participants to prioritize the qualities that they felt were most important to keep themselves and then their community healthy.

- **61%** of respondents **chose living in a safe neighborhood** as an important community quality **and** an important quality for their own health.
- **51%** of respondents chose being **able to get healthcare when needed** as an important quality for communities **and** for their own health.
- **35%** of respondents who identified **enough household income** as a good quality identified it as a good quality in the community.

Figure 2 highlights the similarity in responses as participants considered qualities that make individuals and communities healthy.

FIGURE 2. SURVEY RESPONSES ON HEALTHY QUALITIES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY AND YOU

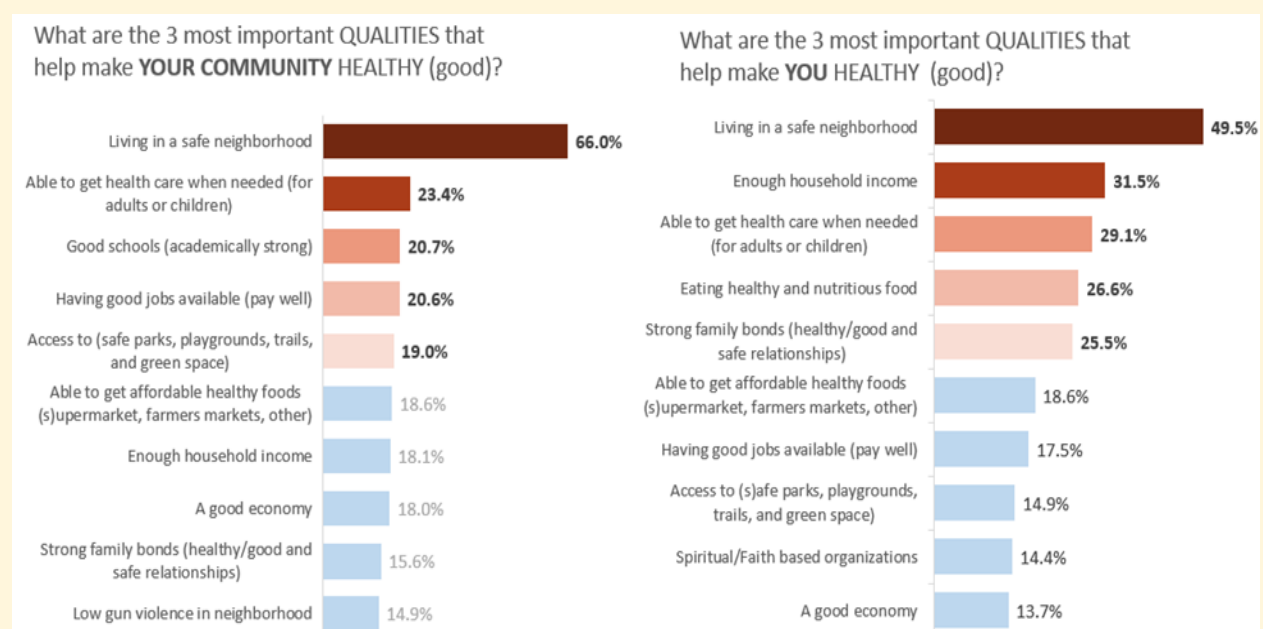
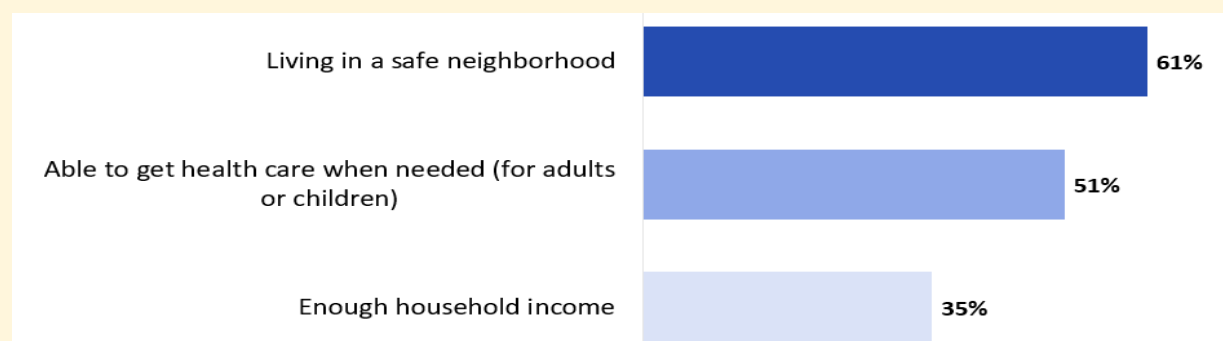


FIGURE 2A. SIMILARITIES IN SURVEY RESPONSES ON HEALTHY QUALITIES



## Survey Question: Health Problems

The survey also asked survey participants to prioritize health problems for themselves and their community.

- **49%** of respondents chose **obesity** as a health problem in the community **and** for themselves.
- **46%** of respondents chose **mental health issues** as both a community **and** individual issues that makes them unhealthy
- Only **15%** identified **drug abuse** as both an issue in the community **and** themselves.

Figure 3 highlights the similarities in priorities for individuals and communities.

FIGURE 3. SURVEY RESPONSES ON HEALTH PROBLEMS

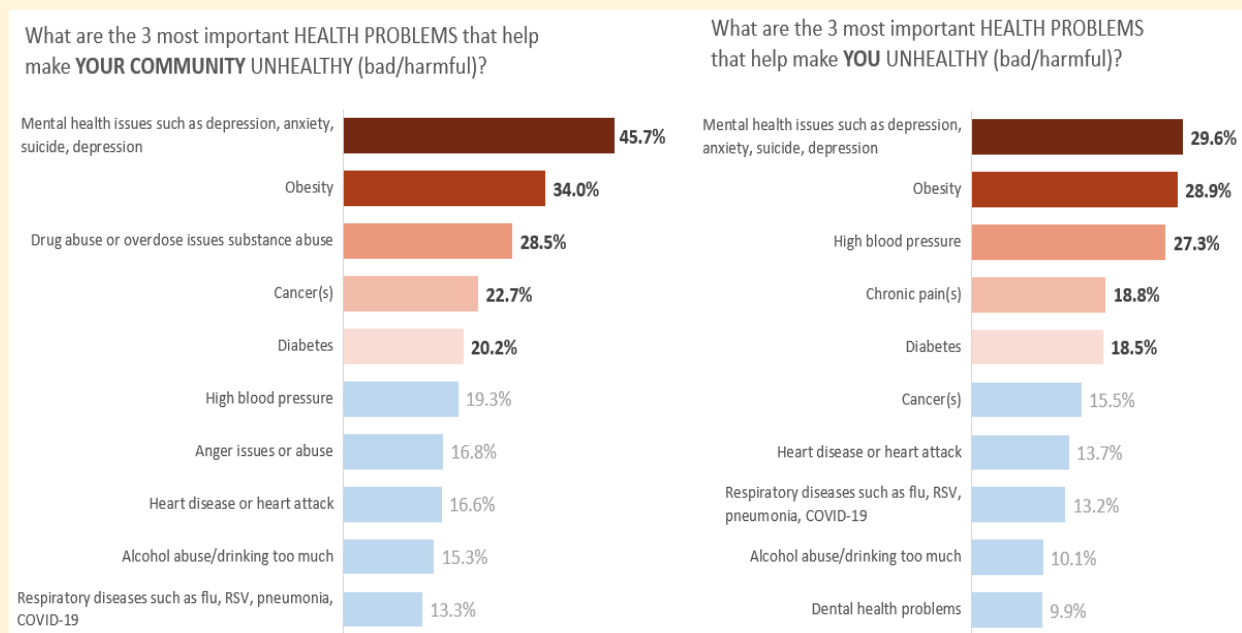
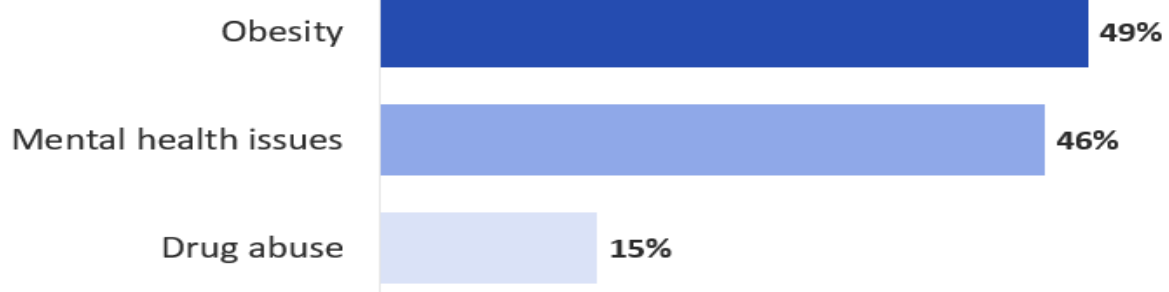


FIGURE 3A. SIMILARITIES IN SURVEY RESPONSES ON HEALTH PROBLEMS



## 2.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted by the VBDPH Community Development Team across various dates and locations.

- A total of 9 focus groups were conducted with 39 participants from March-April 2024. These focus groups were held at libraries and community centers across Virginia Beach capturing a diverse group and perspective. Discussions were had on healthcare access and quality, economic stability, public transportation, childcare, community engagement, education and the neighborhood environment.
- Key findings from thematic analysis revealed challenges in the following areas.
  - **Healthcare access and quality** - Concerns about locating healthcare providers and long wait times, especially for specialists.
  - **Economic stability and employment** - Concerns were voiced about automation and the strong military presence in limiting job options.
  - **Public transportation** - Concerns about access to essential services and employment because of the lack of public transportation.
  - **Childcare and education** - Concerns around the cost and availability of childcare and quality and accessibility of educational resources.
  - **Community engagement** - Desire for more community engagement and health care education.
  - **Neighborhood and built environment**- Community concerns about development but positive feelings overall on the built environment.
  - **Social/community context**- Significant concerns about mental health.

These issues were also reflected in survey responses.

See Appendix B for a more detailed discussion on the focus group findings.

### 3. Primary and Secondary Community Data Analyses

In addition to community input, the Virginia Beach Department of Public Health analyzed a wide array of data to better understand root causes of poor health. The data analysis also involved investigating causes of death, as well as disease incidence and prevalence.

**Essentially, what are people dying from and what is making people sick? Health indicator data also included an analysis of social determinants of health.**

Highlights of the findings from this data analysis are discussed in the next sections. Maps are used to highlight inequities within Virginia Beach related to specific data. Some survey responses are also shared in this section. The full health indicator report is found in Appendix C.

#### 3.1 Demographics

In Virginia Beach:

- The total population<sup>1</sup> is 457,900 people consisting of:
  - 59.9% White
  - 18.9% Black
  - 8.8% Hispanic/Latino
  - 7.1% Asian
- About half of the population is female (50.7%).
- The median age is 37 years old, with an aging of the population.
- The percentage of residents with a disability has increased over time.
- Veterans make up about 16.6% of the adult population.



1

Image: publicdomainvectors.org

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<sup>1</sup> Data Source: US Census, ACS 2018-2022.

## 3.2 Education



*To improve health, I would...  
support schools to be strong academically and safe.*



Education provides the tools people need to find a job with a living wage, have healthcare, lead fulfilling lives, and contribute to their community.

### In Virginia Beach:

- 94.5% of the residents have completed high school. Among this population<sup>2</sup>:
  - 96.3% of White population completed high school
  - 92.8% of Black population completed high school
  - 89.3% of Asian population completed high school
  - 87.7% of Hispanic/Latino population completed high school

Table 1 below shows that compared to Virginia, Virginia Beach City Public School (VBCPS) students had higher reading and math proficiency scores.

TABLE 1. EDUCATION ACCESS AND QUALITY

Education- Access and Quality	2022	Compared to VA Estimate	Virginia 2022 Estimate <sup>#</sup>
HS diploma+ (Pop 25+ yrs old)	94.5	▲	90.8
Reading proficiency 3rd (VBCPS Students)	62.5	▲	57.0
Reading proficiency 8th (VBCPS Students)	66.4	▲	59.3
Math proficiency 3rd (VBCPS Students)	62.2	▲	56.3
Math proficiency 8th (VBCPS Students)	65.3	▲	52.1

Data Source: American Community Survey, 2018-2022. Various Tables.  
Virginia Department of Education- Data & Reports.

<sup>2</sup> Data Source: US Census, ACS 2018-2022

### 3.3 Economy & Employment

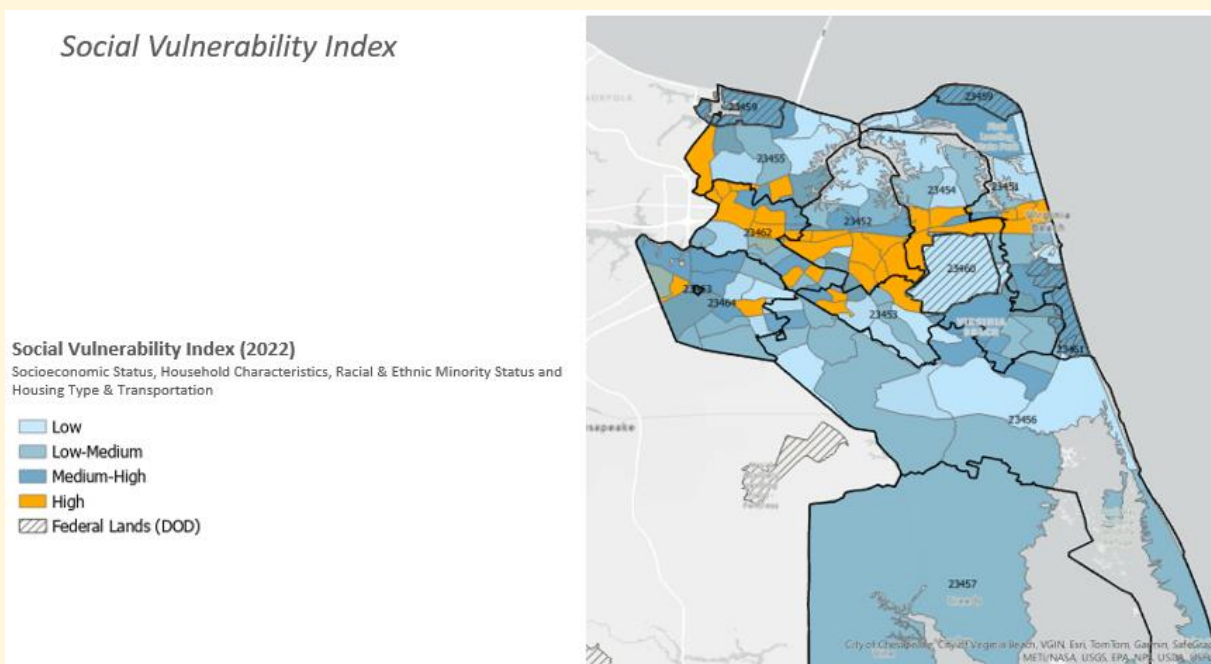
A job that pays well means that workers are able to feed themselves and their families. They can pay for more nutritious foods, have health care benefits, and live in healthier neighborhoods. Alternatively unemployed workers are at more risk of depression and stress-related conditions such as stroke and heart attacks.

*To improve health, I would...  
Make the cost of living and wages comparable. A single person in this city cannot have a decent job and afford to live alone. This drastically affects mental and physical health.*

TABLE 2. ECONOMIC STABILITY

Economic Stability	2022	Compare d to VA Estimate	Virginia 2022 Estimate*
In poverty (%) (All people in families)	7.8	▼	9.9
Children in poverty (%) (All people in families)	10.5	▼	13.0
Median Income (\$)	87,544	▲	87,249
Unemployment rate (%)	4.3	▼	4.6

FIGURE 4. SOCIAL VULNERABILITY



Data sources: US Census. American Community Survey, 2028-2022. Various Tables.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/ Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry/ Geospatial Research, Analysis, and Services Program. CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020 Database for Virginia Census tracts.

[https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/data\\_documentation\\_download.html](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/data_documentation_download.html). March 2023.



### 3.4 Neighborhood and Built Environment

**“ To improve health, I would...Be sure everyone had a roof over their head and food on the table.”**

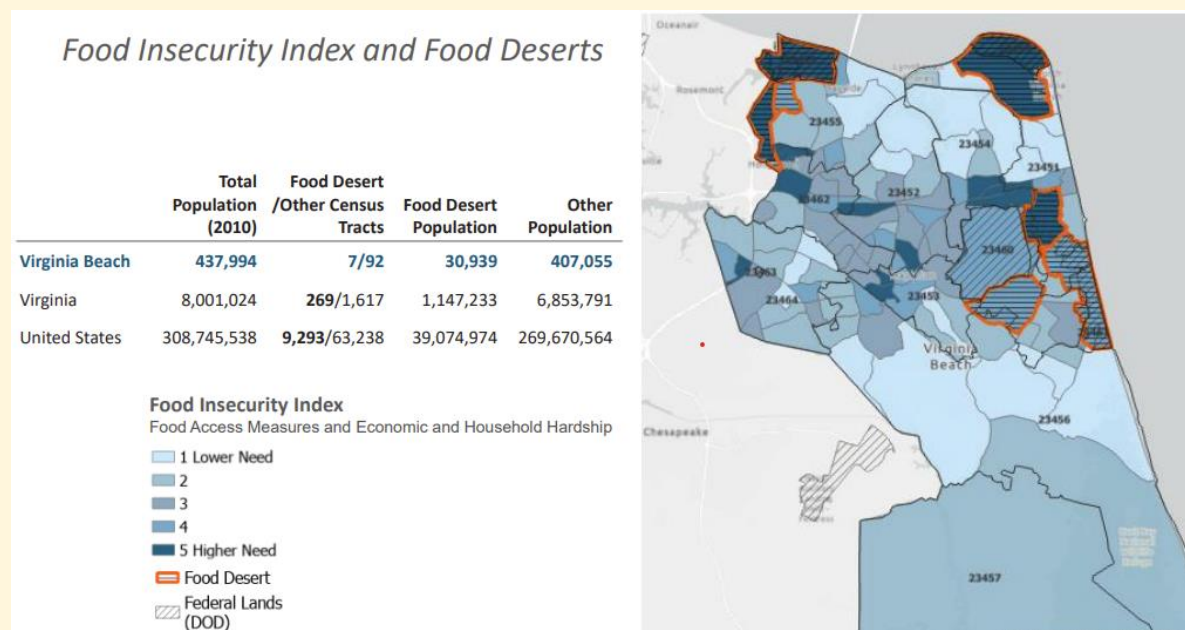
Where people live, whether they can afford to live in neighborhoods where they feel safe, can access groceries, or have opportunities for recreation matters to their physical and mental health.

TABLE 3. NEIGHBORHOOD AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Neighborhood and Built Environment	2022	Compare d to VA Estimate	Virginia 2022 Estimate <sup>2</sup>
<b>Air pollution- Particulate Matter (%)</b> (Population in neighborhoods with annual average PM2.5 concentration)	6.7		
<b>Rent burden &gt;30% (%) (Households)</b>	49.2	▲	47.2
<b>Housing with potential lead risk (%) (Housing units)</b>	8.0		
<b>Food dessert neighborhoods (%) (Census tracts )</b>	7.1		
<b>Park access (%) (Population living within 10 min walk)</b>	64.2		
<b>Walkability score</b>	32.1		
<b>Use public transportation to work (%)</b> (Population 16+ years)	0.8	▼	3.4
<b>No vehicles at home (%) (Households)</b>	4.3	▼	6.0

Data Source: American Community Survey, 2018-2022. Various Tables.

FIGURE 5. FOOD INSECURITY AND FOOD DESERTS, 2021



Data notes: The Food Insecurity Index is calculated by Conduent Healthy Communities Institute using data from Claritas, 2021. Data accessed via [Hampton Roads Connect website](#). Accessed August 2023.



### 3.5 Public Safety

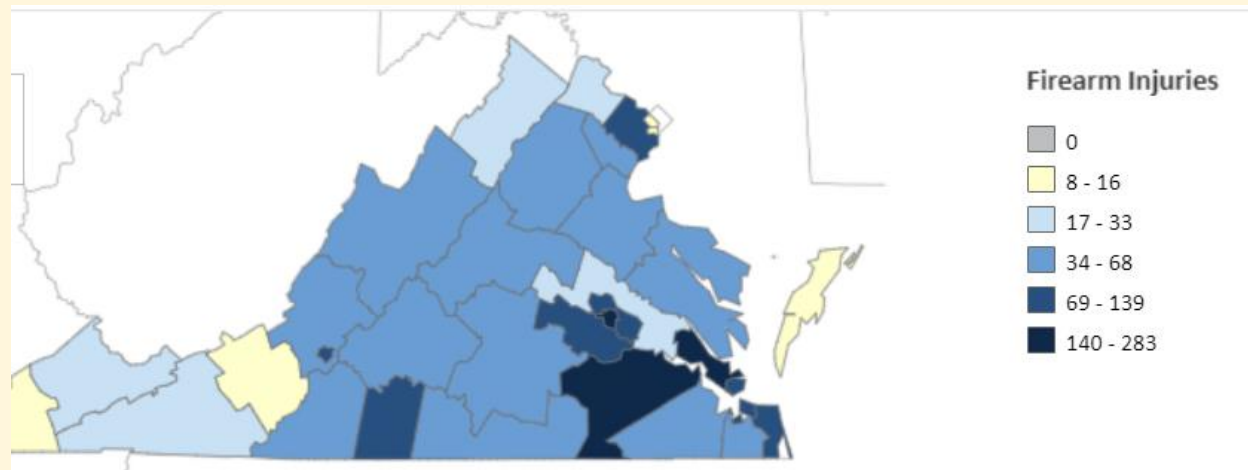
Crime and community violence impact how safe residents feel, what they can do in their neighborhoods and how they interact with their neighbors. There are many ways exposure to violence – either as a victim or witness -- can be harmful to people’s health aside from death and injury. Some of the emotional, behavioral, and physical health problems associated with exposure to violence include increased smoking, alcohol and drug abuse, mental illness and suicidality, chronic diseases, sexually transmitted infections, and social problems such as crime and further violence.<sup>b</sup>

*“To improve health, I would...  
Make good quality mental health support available to everyone, and reduce crime, especially gun violence.”*

#### In Virginia Beach:

- The rate per 100,000 of violent crime (152.4) is **much lower** than the rate of the State of Virginia (207.0)<sup>3</sup>.
- The rate per 100,000 of motor vehicle deaths (7.5) is **much lower** than the rate of the State of Virginia (11.0)<sup>3</sup>.
- From 2022 to 2023, the rate of firearm injuries (per 10,000) in Emergency Departments **increased by 32%**.<sup>4</sup>

FIGURE 6. FIREARM INJURIES BY HEALTH DISTRICT (COUNTS), EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS BY VIRGINIA RESIDENTS, 2023<sup>4</sup>



<sup>3</sup> County Health Rankings and CARES portal: [VDH Assessment – Virginia’s Plan For Well-Being \(virginiawellbeing.com\)](https://www.virginiawellbeing.com/)

<sup>4</sup> Virginia Department of Health, Syndromic Surveillance Data, Division of Surveillance and Investigation, Office of Epidemiology - Virginia Department of Health. Accessed August 2024.

### 3.6 Healthcare Access

Access to health services that include preventive care, maintaining health, and managing diseases is critical to being able to get and stay healthy. To adequately access care, people must be able to have health insurance to pay for services, have health care providers available who can provide culturally appropriate care, feel comfortable using those services, and be able to get to them.

“ Trying to find a specialist for something can put you on the wait list for quite a while. That’s frustrating.  
It took us about a month of calling various doctors to find one. ”

Figure 7 again shares barriers that Virginia Beach residents identified in the survey to accessing health services. Figure 8 shows that since 2013 the proportion of residents without health insurance has decreased and continues to decline.

FIGURE 7. SURVEY RESPONSES ON BARRIERS TO HEALTH CARE

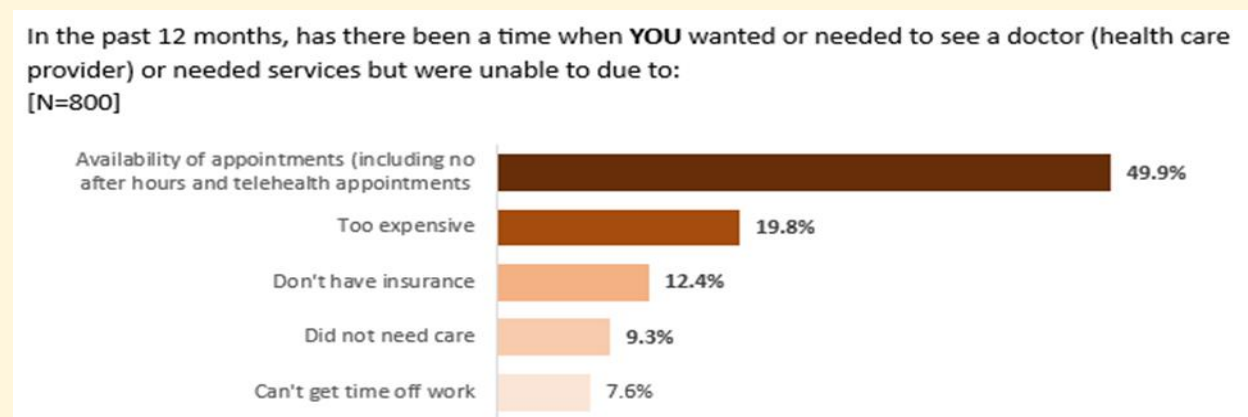
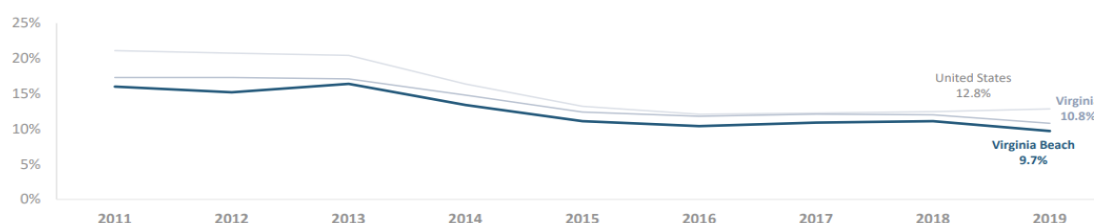


FIGURE 8. PROPORTION OF UNINSURED ADULTS

#### Proportion of Adults Ages 18-64 Uninsured

	Total Population Age 18-64	Pop. Age 18-64 w/ Insurance	Percent Pop. Age 18-64 w/ Insurance	Pop. Age 18-64 w/o Insurance	Percent Pop. Age 18-64 w/o Insurance
Virginia Beach City	277,098	250,317	90.3%	26,781	9.7%
Virginia	5,126,202	4,570,533	89.2%	555,669	10.8%
United States	195,703,724	170,567,452	87.2%	25,136,272	12.8%

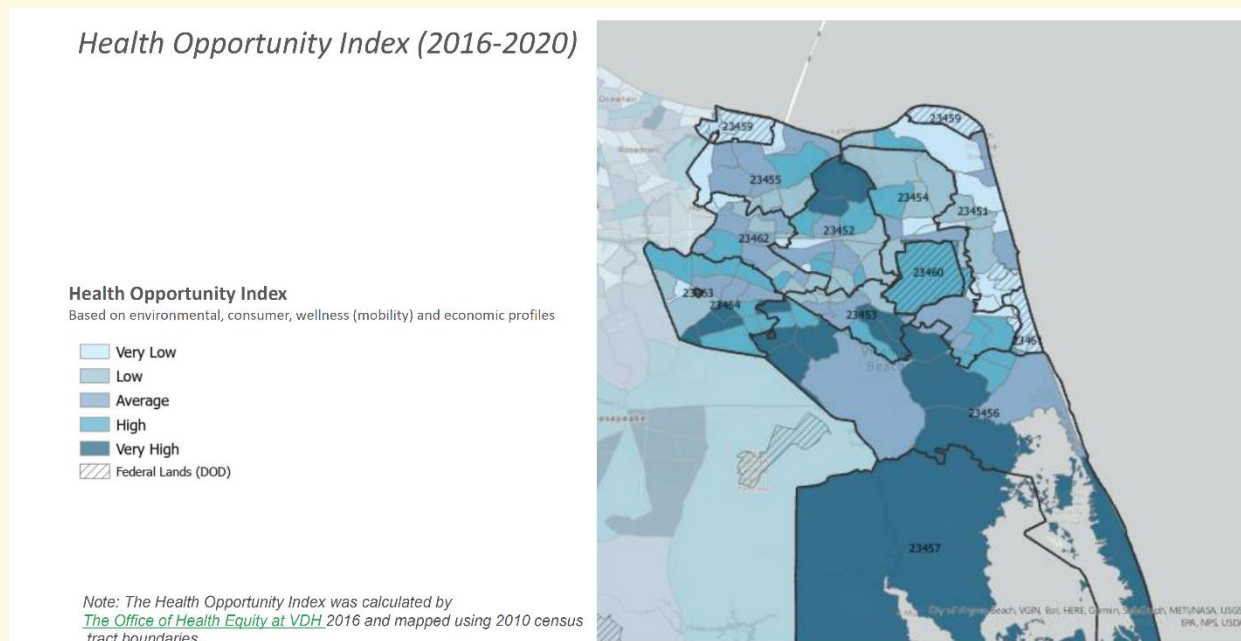
Percent Population Ages 18-64 Uninsured By Year  
Virginia Beach, Virginia, United States, 2011- 2019  
Total Population, US Small Area Insurance Estimates, 2019



Data Source: US Census Bureau, *Small Area Health Insurance Estimates*, 2019

Figure 9 shows areas of Virginia Beach with higher or lower levels of opportunity for health. About 92.9% of residents are estimated to have insurance with the majority having private insurance.

FIGURE 9. HEALTH OPPORTUNITY INDEX, 2020



Data note: This map identifies where there are more opportunities for health based on a number of environmental, consumer, wellness, and economic indicators as compiled by the Virginia Department of Health.

FIGURE 4. HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND QUALITY

Health Care Access and Quality	2022	Compared to VA Estimate	Virginia 2022 Estimate <sup>a</sup>
With health insurance coverage (%)	92.9	–	92.1
(Total population)			
Private (%)	79.8	▲	75.2
Public (%)	27.6	▼	30
Without health insurance coverage %	7.1	–	7.9
(Total population)			
Mothers with Late or No Prenatal Care (%)	2.9	▼	4.6
(Total live births)			
Primary care provider (Per Person)	1:1,350	▲	1:1,320
Mental health providers (Per person)	1:450	–	1:450
Dentist (Per person)	1:1,270	▼	1:1,350

Data Source: US Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates. 2019

### 3.7 Mental Health

Mental health means emotional, psychological, and social well-being. We can all have good days and bad days, good months and bad months. While mental health is always important, mental illness affects a person's ability to function over a long period of time.<sup>6</sup>

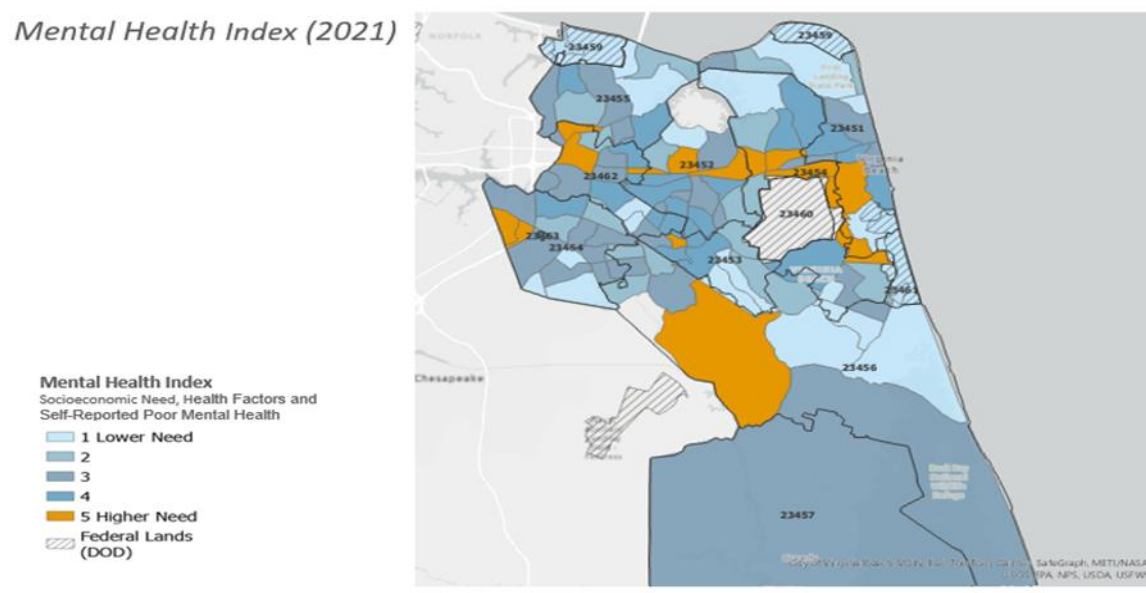
*Mental health should be more accepted. People need help, but they're often afraid to seek it because of the stigma.*

In Virginia Beach:

- In 2020, approximately **20% of adults** suffered from depression.<sup>5</sup>
- The rate of self-harm and suicide-related ED visits (578.9 per 100,000) increased from 2020 to 2021; these **rates are lower than the state** of Virginia's rate (680.9 per 100,000).<sup>6</sup>
- The rate of fatal opioid overdose deaths (16.7 per 100,000) and drug overdose ER visits (15.7 per 100,000) **increased**.

The map in Figure 10 shows that some areas of Virginia Beach disproportionately struggle with mental health-related issues.

FIGURE 10. MENTAL HEALTH INDEX, 2021



The Mental Health Index is calculated by Conduent Healthy Communities Institute using data from Claritas, 2021; American Community Survey, 2015-2019; and CDC PLACES Project, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Data Source: Virginia Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey.

<sup>6</sup> Data Source: Virginia Department of Health, Syndromic Surveillance Data, Division of Surveillance and Investigation, Office of Epidemiology - Virginia Department of Health. Data directly obtained via email from Virginia Syndromic Surveillance 2021.

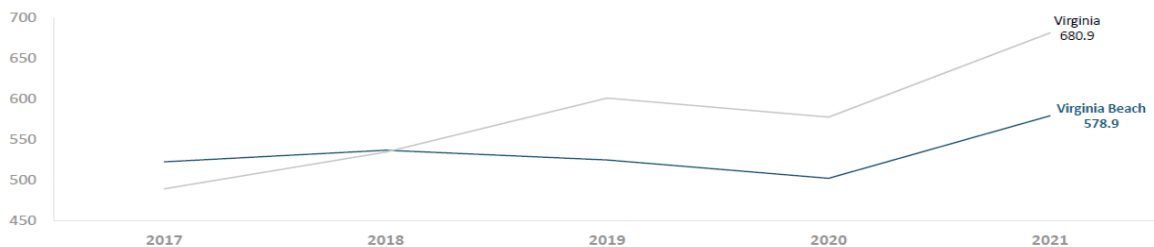
Figures 11 and 12 show the increase in self-harm and suicide and the increase in substance abuse since 2017.

FIGURE 11. SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE RELATED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS

### Rate of Self Harm and Suicide Related ED Visits by Year, 5 years and Older

	Rate
<b>Virginia Beach (Health District)</b>	<b>578.9</b>
Virginia	680.9

Rate of Self Harm and Suicide Related ED Visit by Year, 5+ age  
**Virginia Beach, Virginia, 2017-2021**  
 Per 100,000 Population



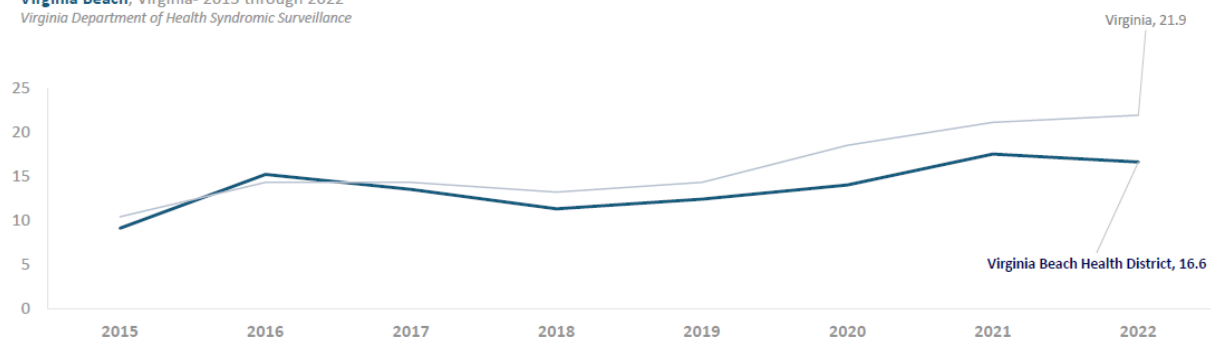
Data Source: Virginia Department of Health, Syndromic Surveillance Data, Division of Surveillance and Investigation, Office of Epidemiology - Virginia Department of Health. Data directly obtained via email from Virginia Syndromic Surveillance 2021.

FIGURE 12. EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ALL DRUG ADMISSIONS

### Emergency Department Admission Rate Due to All Drugs per 100,000 People

	Admissions	Incidence Rate
<b>Virginia Beach (Health District)</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>16.6</b>
Virginia	22,580	21.9

Emergency Department Admission Rate due to All Drugs per 100,000 by Year  
**Virginia Beach, Virginia- 2015 through 2022**  
 Virginia Department of Health Syndromic Surveillance



Data source: Virginia Department of Health, Syndromic Surveillance Data, Division of Surveillance and Investigation, Office of Epidemiology - Virginia Department of Health. Data directly obtained via email from Virginia Syndromic Surveillance 2021.

### 3.8 Chronic Conditions

In Virginia Beach, 4 of the top 5 causes of death are chronic diseases – cancers, heart disease, cerebrovascular diseases including stroke, and chronic lower respiratory diseases. Chronic diseases are conditions that last longer than a year and that require regular healthcare or limit daily living activities. Many chronic diseases can be prevented by healthy eating, exercising regularly, avoiding tobacco use, and not drinking alcohol excessively. They can also be reduced through regular health screenings.<sup>d</sup>

#### In Virginia Beach:

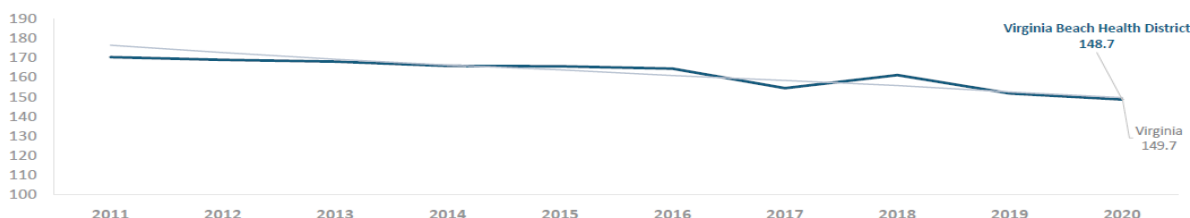
- **19.3%** of adults reported not engaging in physical activity.<sup>7</sup>
- High cholesterol among adults **decreased by 14.7%** from 2020 to 2014 and high blood pressure **decreased by 2.3%** during the same period.<sup>7</sup>
- **88.1%** of adults reported having a cholesterol screening.<sup>7</sup>
- People reporting that they had diabetes **increased** from 6.8% in 2014 to 10% in 2020. Only 55.6% reported having a diabetes screening in 2020.<sup>7</sup>
- Overall cancer rates have slowly **decreased** since 2011.
- **Blacks have higher death rates** from cardiovascular disease and stroke than people of other races.

FIGURE 13. CANCER DEATH RATE, 2021

#### Age-Adjusted Death Rate Due to Cancer, Five Year Average

	Incidence Rate (95% CL)
Virginia Beach (Health District)	148.7 (143.9-153.6)
Virginia	149.7 (148.7-150.8)

Age-Adjusted Death Rate due to Cancer per 100,000 by Year  
Virginia Beach, Virginia- 2011 through 2020  
State Cancer Profiles



Data Source: Deaths National Vital Statistics System. Bridged-Race Postcensal Population Estimates from National Center for Health Statistics.

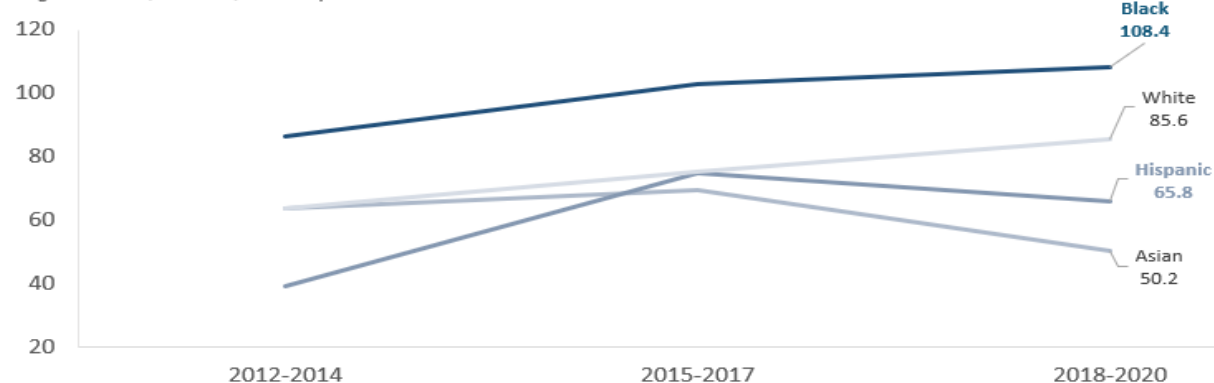
<sup>7</sup> Data Source: CDC Places accessed Dec. 2022 – Jan. 2023. Data extracted from Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) 2020, 2021.



FIGURE 14. STROKE DEATH RATE, 2020

### Stroke Death Rate by Race/Ethnicity by Year 2012-2020

Virginia Beach, Per 100,000 People



Data Source: Deaths National Vital Statistics System. Bridged-Race Postcensal Population Estimates from National Center for Health Statistics.

Data accessed via Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke [www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/maps/atlas](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/maps/atlas).

Virginia Department of Health, Inpatient hospital data, 2016-2020.

FIGURE 15. PHYSICAL INACTIVITY AMONG ADULTS, 2021

### Physical Inactivity Among Adults (18+ years) and Recreational Facilities

**Crude<sup>^</sup> Prevalence %\***  
Virginia Beach\* 19.3% (16.5- 22.6%)

**Age Adj.<sup>^</sup> Prevalence %\***  
Virginia Beach\* 19.1% (16.2- 22.2%)

\*Census population estimate 457,672 for Virginia Beach

<sup>^</sup>BRFSS Sample estimates (2021)

Physical inactivity crude prevalence (%)

12.2% - 16.6%

16.6% - 17.6%

17.6% - 19.1%

19.1% - 21.4%

21.4% - 29.6%

Federal Lands

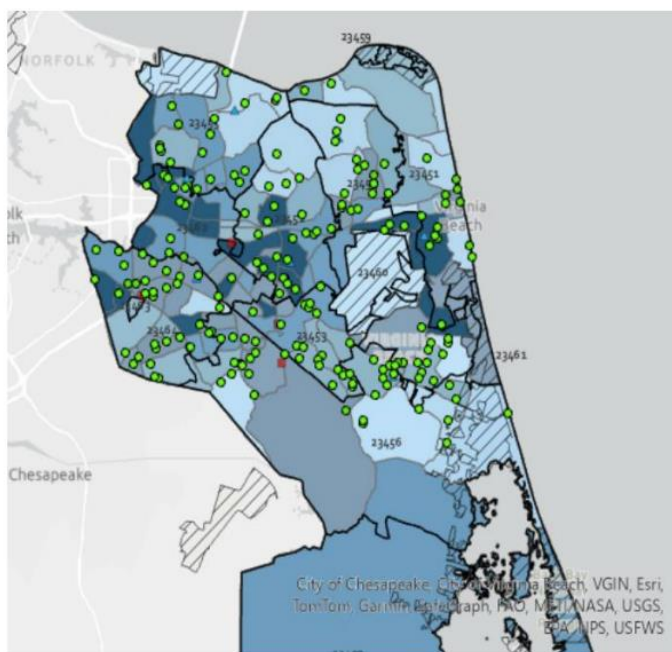
Community Center

City Park

Municipal Park

Neighborhood Park

Recreation Center



Data Source: [CDC Places](https://data.cdc.gov/places) accessed Dec. 2022 – Jan. 2023. Data extracted from- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) 2020, 2021, ACS 2015-2019, US Census 2010, 2020.

Among survey respondents, chronic conditions were highlighted as health problems that made them unhealthy (Figure 16). High blood pressure was especially mentioned among Black male respondents. Overall, 27.1% of survey respondents thought that high blood pressure was a health condition that made them unhealthy.

FIGURE 16. SURVEY RESPONSES ON HEALTH PROBLEMS- CHRONIC CONDITIONS

**What are the 3 most important HEALTH PROBLEMS that help make YOU unhealthy (bad/harmful)?**  
[N=800]

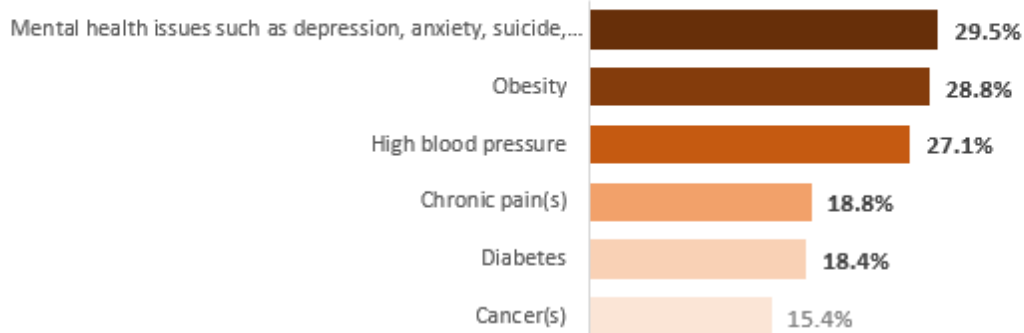


FIGURE 17. HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE PREVALENCE, 2021

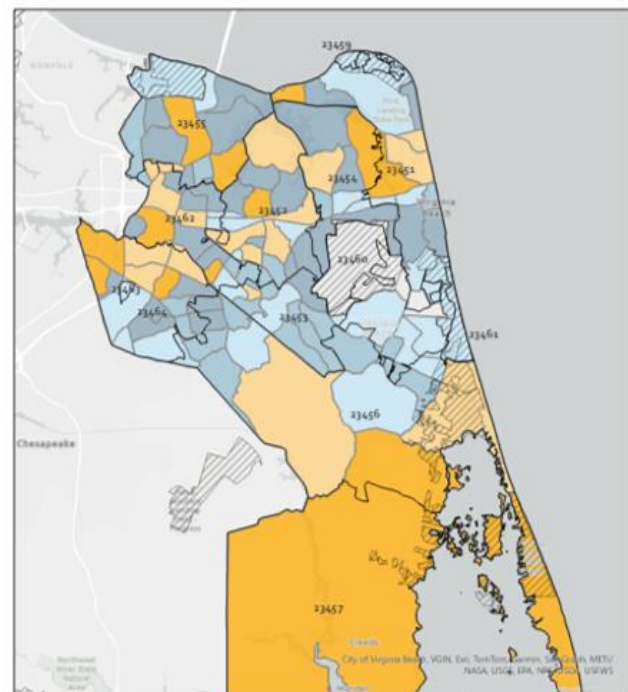
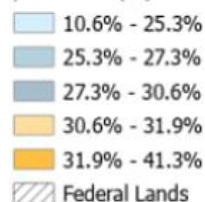
*High Blood Pressure Prevalence  
Among Adults (18 years+)*

**Crude<sup>^</sup> Prevalence %**  
**Virginia Beach\*** **29.8% (28.9– 30.6%)**

**Age Adj.<sup>^</sup> Prevalence %**  
**Virginia Beach\*** **29.1% (28.2 – 30.0%)**

\*Census population estimate 457,672 for Virginia Beach  
<sup>^</sup>BRFSS Sample estimates (2022)

**High blood pressure crude prevalence (%)**



Data Source: [CDC Places](#) accessed Dec. 2022 – Jan. 2023.

Data extracted from- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) 2020, 2019, ACS 2015-2019, US Census 2010.



### 3.9 Maternal and Child Health

Ensuring the health and well-being of pregnant mothers and their newborn babies is important to safeguard families' well-being. Babies born prematurely or with low birth weight can have disabilities that last a lifetime, including visual and hearing impairments, developmental delays, and behavioral and emotional problems.<sup>e</sup>

#### In Virginia Beach:

- The rate of teen pregnancy (per 1,000) **decreased** from 30.9 in 2014 to 18.5 in 2020 – a 40% decrease!
- The rate (per 1,000 of live births) of infant mortality has **increased by 18.4%** since 2014. This is primarily due to an increase in infant mortality among Asians and Hispanics.
- The percentage of low birth weight babies has **increased by 9.4%** since 2014. Black babies are more than 3x more likely to be born low weight.
- Rates (per 100,000 of live births) of maternal mortality continued to increase since 2017.

FIGURE 18. PERCENT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT BIRTHS BY RACE AND BY YEAR

Virginia Beach Health District Health Status- Detailed Indicators	2012- 2014	2015- 2017	2018- 2020
Health Status- Maternal and Child Health			
Low birth weight, Percent of total births <sup>31</sup>	7.8%	8.1%	8.5%
<i>Black</i>	12.4%	13.0%	14.4%
<i>Other</i>	8.0%	8.4%	8.2%
<i>White</i>	6.5%	6.5%	6.2%

Data Source: Virginia Department of Health, Vital Statistics.

Data directly obtained in Excel via Virginia Department of Health [Maternal Child Health Dashboard](#).

## 3.10 Aging and Older Adults

It is important to take care of the older adults in our community. Preventive medical care can help older adults stay healthy and keep health problems that may arise from becoming more severe.

### In Virginia Beach:

- 15% of Virginia Beach's population is older adults (65 and older). Among older adults, **31.3% have disability**.
- Among the older adult population, only 58.4% of men and 47.2% of women seek preventive services<sup>8</sup>.
- The age-adjusted death rate (per 100,000) for Alzheimer's Disease **increased by 2.8%** between 2015 and 2020.
- The death rate for Parkinson's Disease **increased by 10.3%** between 2015 and 2020.

FIGURE 19. POPULATION WITH A DISABILITY, ADULTS, 2021

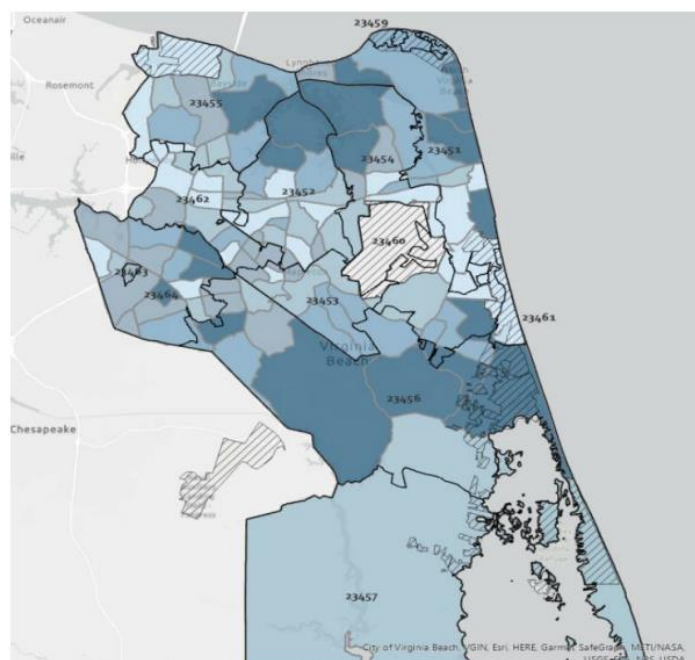
Population With a Disability  
(Adults ≥ 65 years)

	Population 65 years and over	With disability%
Virginia Beach	15% (64,815)	31.3% (20,283)

\*Census population estimate 433,172 for Virginia Beach (2021)

Percent 65 Years and Older Disabled

- 0- 21.1%
- 21.1%- 26.3%
- 26.3%- 32.8%
- 32.8%- 41.3%
- 41.3%- 69.6%
- Federal Lands



## 4. Summary and Next Steps

The survey, focus groups, and data outlined in this report highlight some of the progress that has been made over the last few years to improve the health and quality of life in Virginia Beach.

This information helps us to better understand health issues, root causes, and identify priorities for action in the next 3 years. Over the coming months, we will:

1. **Prioritize health issues** on which to focus.
2. Work with community partners to **develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)** to guide this work.
3. **Begin implementing action plans** outlined in the CHIP.

We invite you to join us in this process. Together we can make Virginia Beach a healthier community for all who live, work, and play here.

If you are interested in joining us or learning more, please email [HeathyVB@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:HeathyVB@vdh.virginia.gov).



Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement; Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems, 2014.  
Graphic designed by ProMedica.

## References cited

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<sup>a</sup> Social Determinants of Health - Healthy People 2030 | Health.gov. (n.d.).

<https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>

<sup>b</sup> Crime and Violence - Healthy People 2030 | Health.gov. (n.d.).

<https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/crime-and-violence#>

<sup>c</sup> What is Mental Health? (n.d.). SAMHSA. <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health>

<sup>d</sup> About chronic diseases. (2024, May 15). Chronic Disease. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronic-disease/about/index.html>

<sup>e</sup> Long-term health effects of preterm birth. (n.d.-b). March of Dimes. <https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/birth/long-term-health-effects-preterm-birth#>

## Additional Data Sources

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- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)- [Social Vulnerability Index](#), 2020, 2022.
- Center for Disease and Control and Prevention- [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey](#) (BRFSS) 2020. 2021. Accessed via CDC Places: Local Data for Better Health.
- Virginia Department of Health, Vital Statistics. Accessed via VDH [Data Portal](#).
- US Census- 5 Year American Community Survey, Various Tables, 2017-2021. Accessed via [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).
- National Center for Health Statistics- Multiple Cause of Death National Vital Statistics System. Accessed via [CDC Wonder](#).
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- Virginia Department of Health, Syndromic Surveillance Data, Division of Surveillance and Investigation, Office of Epidemiology. Accessed via VDH [Data Portal](#).
- Conduent Healthy Communities Institute- [Mental Health Index](#). Accessed via [GHRconnects.com](https://GHRconnects.com).