



Coalition on Urban
Indian Aging



**Native Urban Elder Needs Assessment Survey:
A Survey of Urban Elders
(2021-2022)**

2023 Data Book

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Native Urban Elders Needs Assessment Survey (NUENAS) team would like to thank the following individuals and partners for their invaluable contributions to our research:

Thank You

- The Native urban Elders who took the time to participate in our study
- Title VI Leaders
- The Urban Indian Organizations who assisted with survey distribution and collection
- The Coalition on Urban Indian Aging itself, for backing this research fully
- The Administration for Community Living, and particularly the Administration on Aging
- The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH)
- The National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.
- The National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA)
- The University of North Dakota, Center for Rural Health
- AARP
- Kauffman & Associates Inc.



ABOUT THIS DATA BOOK

The National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA) serves Native Elders through education, training, and technical assistance. One of the services provided and conducted by the NRCNAA is the needs assessment *Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders*. Through this survey, insight of the current health and social needs of the Native Elder population is gained. This effort empowers tribes and Native American organizations with the necessary information to identify existing needs and subsequently address them through planning efforts, decision-making activities, policy development, and pursuit of resources.

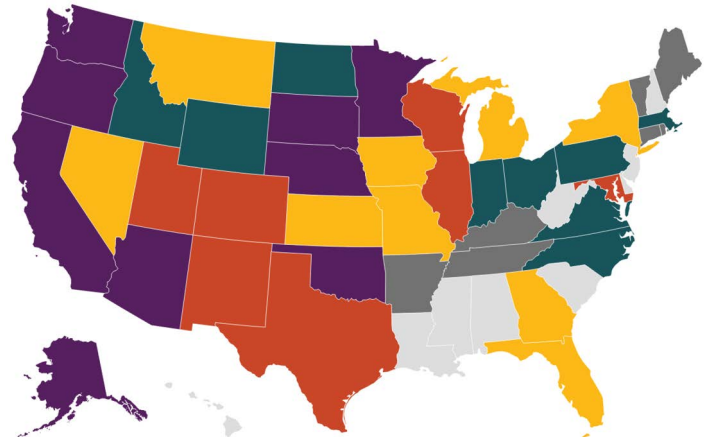
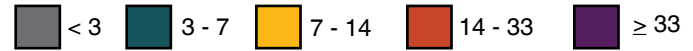
In order to explore health and social-related factors among urban Elders in the United States, the NRCNAA partnered with the Coalition on Urban Indian Aging to create a Native Urban Elder Needs Assessment Survey (NUENAS). This survey replicated many of the original needs assessment survey items, as well as the addition of several other questions which were tailored towards an urban Elder population.

Methods

There were 1,023 urban Native Elders, ages 55 and older, who were surveyed through hard copy surveys at urban centers across the United States (located in Nebraska, Minnesota, Oklahoma, California, and Massachusetts; $n = 299$), as well as through an online Qualtrics survey ($n = 724$). Surveys were completed from March 2021 through November 2022.

Respondents reported on social and health issues including general health, frequency of health screening procedures, memory and disability, alcohol and tobacco use, healthcare access, social activities, and other factors related to their health and well-being.

Number of Native Urban Elder Participants By State



Created with Datawrapper

The map above shows the number of survey participants located in each state. States in dark grey, such as Arkansas, Connecticut, and Rhode Island (among others) had the smallest numbers of respondents, whereas states such as California, Minnesota, and Oklahoma had the most participants.

This report is a comprehensive overview of the present health and social issues of urban Native Elders who participated in the survey.

Results

In the following pages, results are shown for all urban Native Elders who completed the NUENAS survey. Some survey questions allowed for multiple responses, which may result in totals greater than 100.0%.



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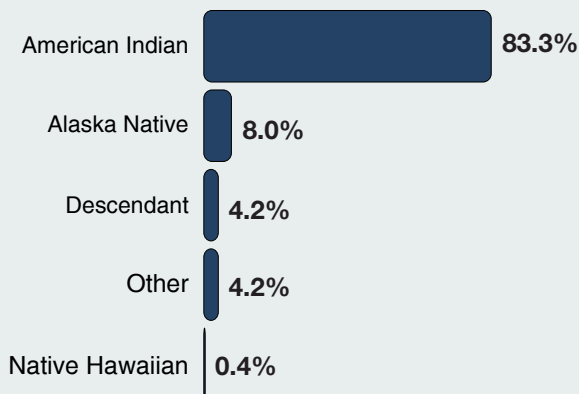
31 Social Challenges

DEMOGRAPHICS

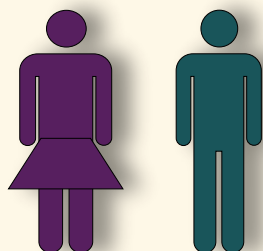
1,023

Native Elders over the age of 55 completed the Native Urban Elder Needs Assessment Survey

Ethnicity

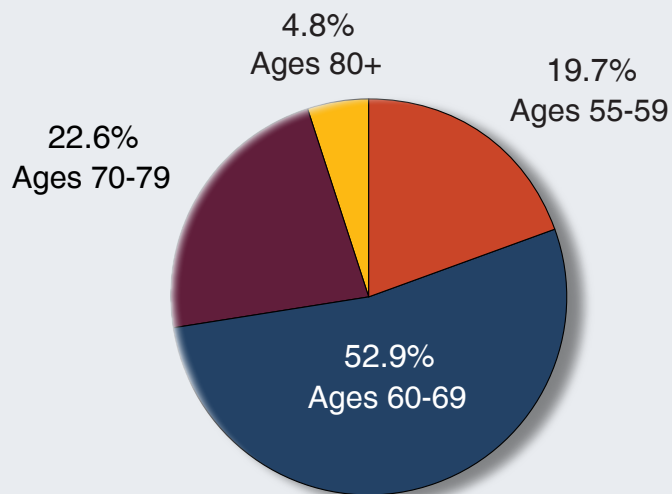


Gender

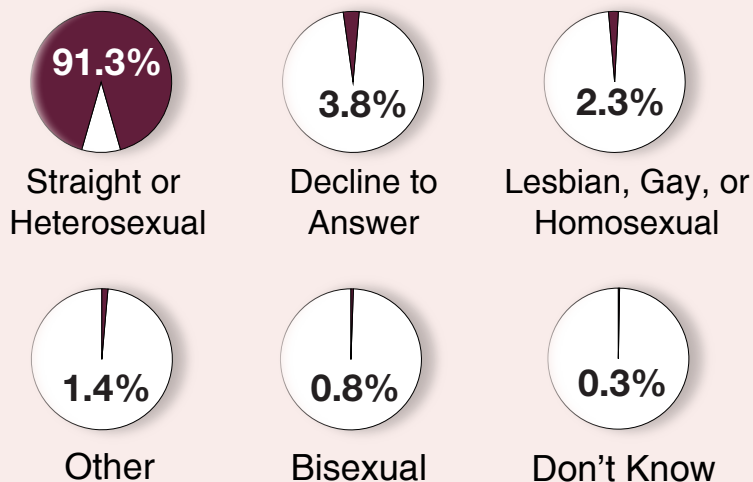


80.8% Female
17.2% Male

Age



Sexual Orientation



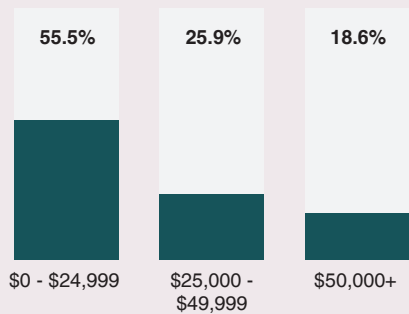
Over 1,000 surveys were processed as part of the Native Urban Elder Needs Assessment Survey (NUENAS). These included 1,023 surveys from urban Elders over the age of 55 years.

Veteran Status

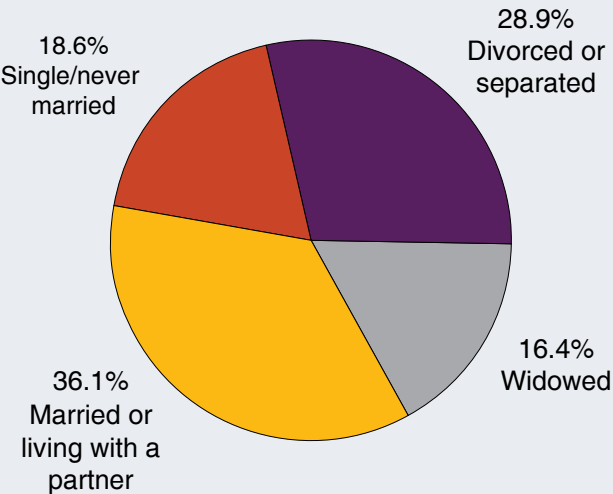
6.3%

of Native Elders served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Military Reserves, or National Guard

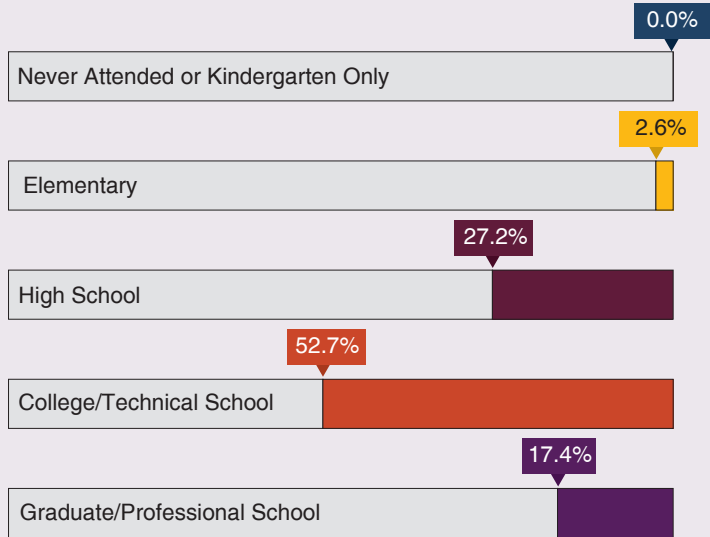
Annual Income



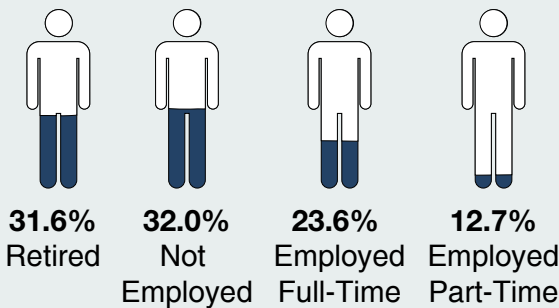
Marital Status



Highest Education Completed



Current Work Status in Past 12 Months



84.4%

of urban Native Elders were an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe

63.6%

of urban Native Elders were an enrolled member of a state recognized tribe

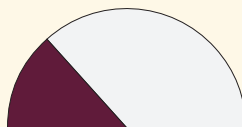
DEMOGRAPHICS

Among urban Native Elders who reported ever living in an urban area:



44.0%

Were born or grew up in an urban area



27.0%

Moved to an urban area for educational or work opportunities



13.0%

Attended a boarding school



11.3%

Accompanied a parent, guardian, or Elder who moved to an urban area for work, education, vocational training, or military service



10.9%

Moved to an urban area as an adult to be closer to family or friends



9.0%

Accompanied a family member who moved to an urban area for work, education, vocational training, or military service



8.8%

They or their family received incentives to move under the Indian Relocation Act of 1956



5.8%

Moved to an urban area for health or healthcare reasons

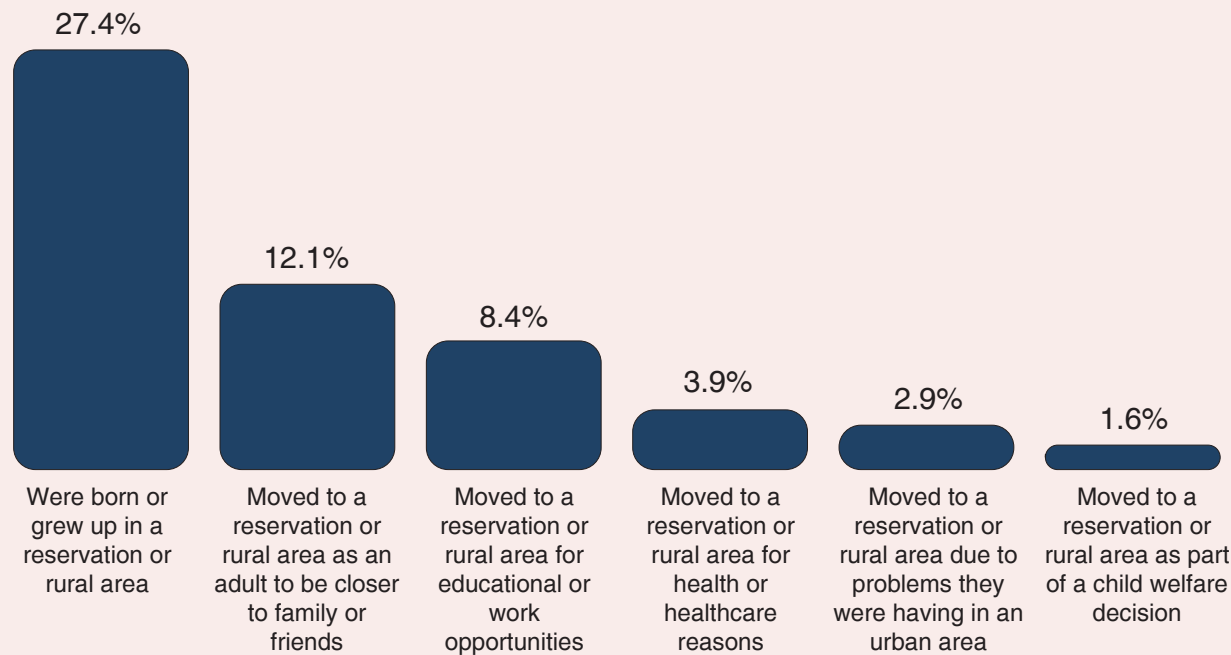


4.7%

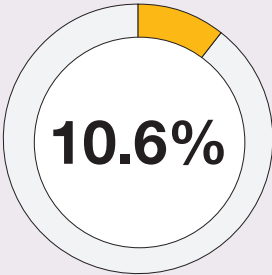
Moved to an urban area due to problems they were having at a reservation or nearby rural area

Most urban Native Elders who were born or grew up in an urban area (44.0%) moved there for school or work opportunities (27.0%), or attended a boarding school (13.0%).

Among urban Native Elders who moved from an urban area to a reservation or rural area:

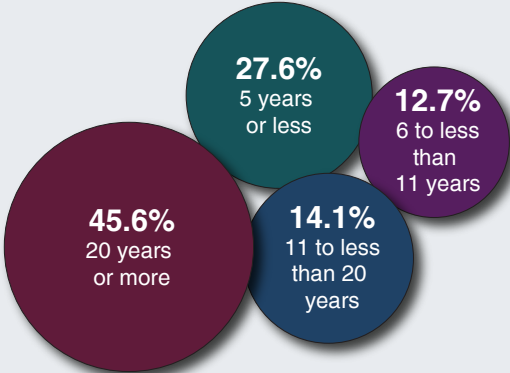


Location



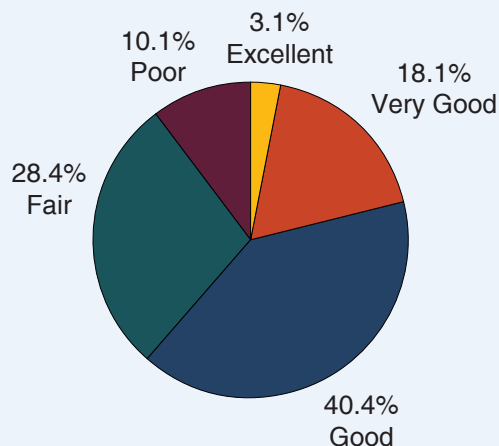
of Native Elders resided on a reservation, trust land, Alaska village, or Hawaiian homestead

Number of Years In Current ZIP Code

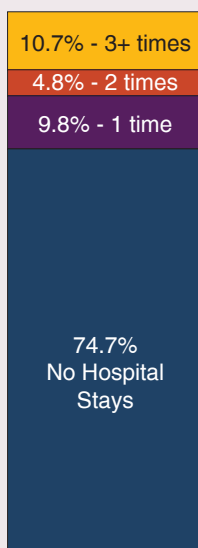


GENERAL HEALTH STATUS

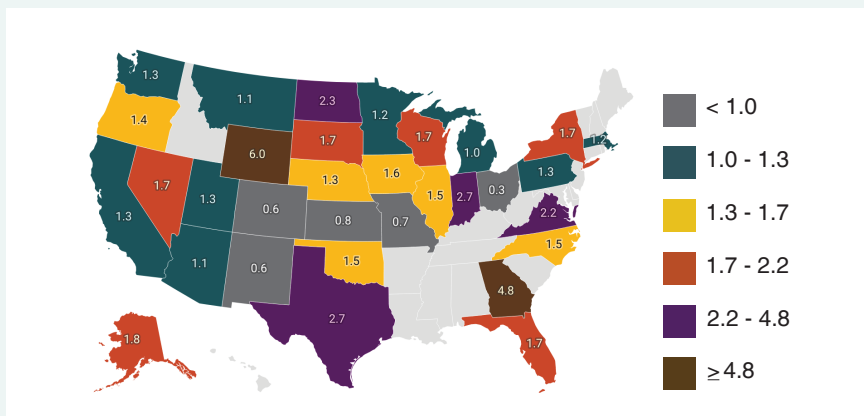
General Health Status



Hospital Stay Frequency in the Past Year

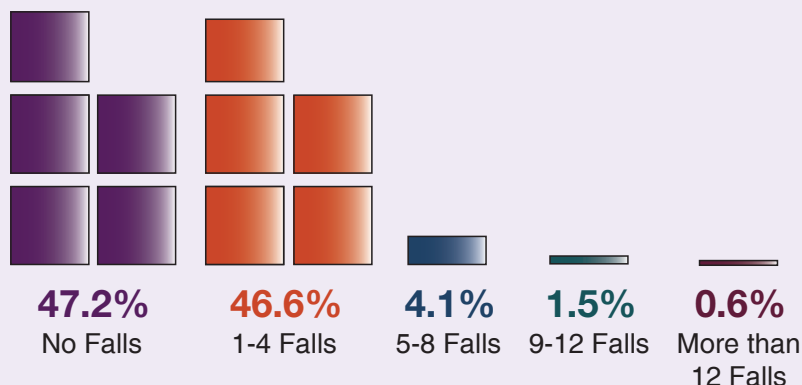


Average Number of Falls in the Past Year By State



The average number of falls across all states was 1.44. Wyoming had the average highest number of falls (6.0), and Ohio the lowest (0.3). The values listed for some states are based off of a small sample and should be interpreted with caution.

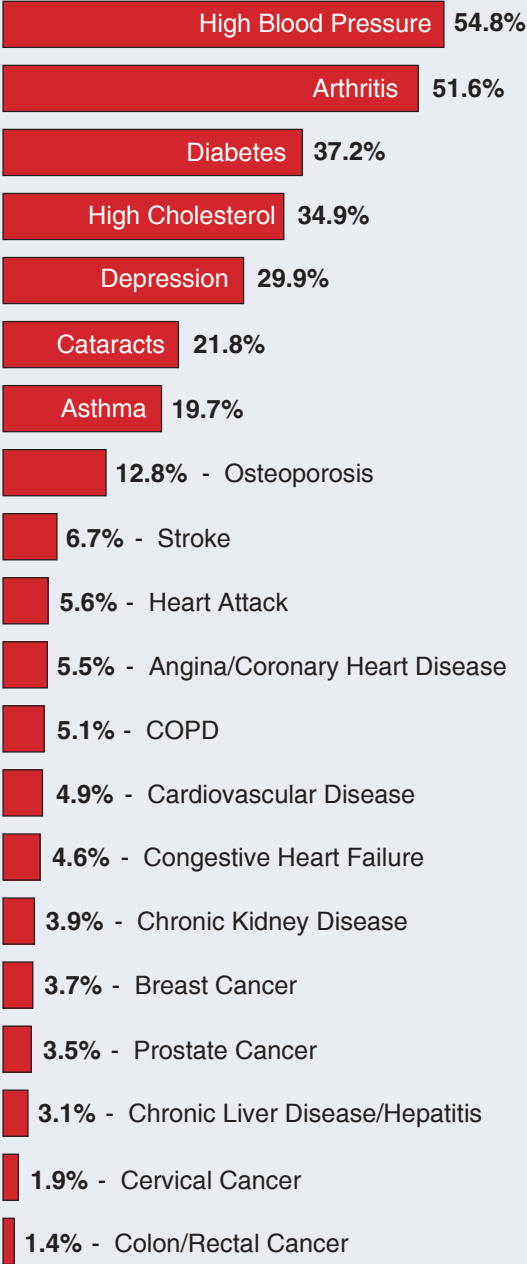
Fall Frequency in the Past Year



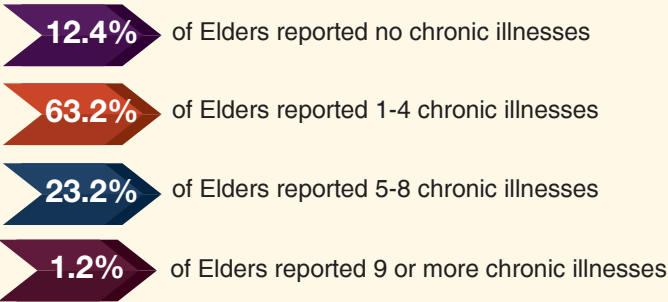
Among those who reported having a fall, 36.9% injured themselves seriously enough to need medical treatment.

Over one-third of urban Native Elders rated their health as good. Most had between one and four chronic illnesses, with the most commonly reported condition being high blood pressure.

Chronic Illness

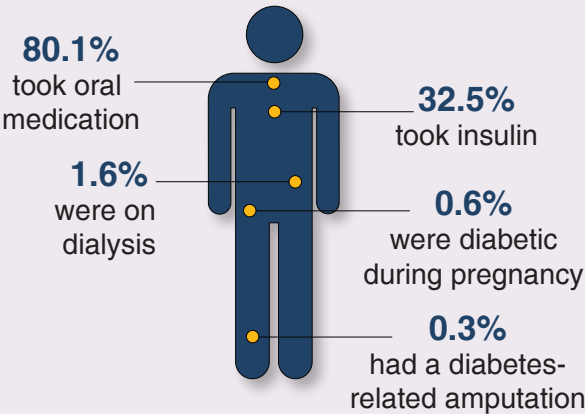


Total Number of Chronic Illnesses



Diabetes

Among the **37.2%** of Native Elders who had diabetes:

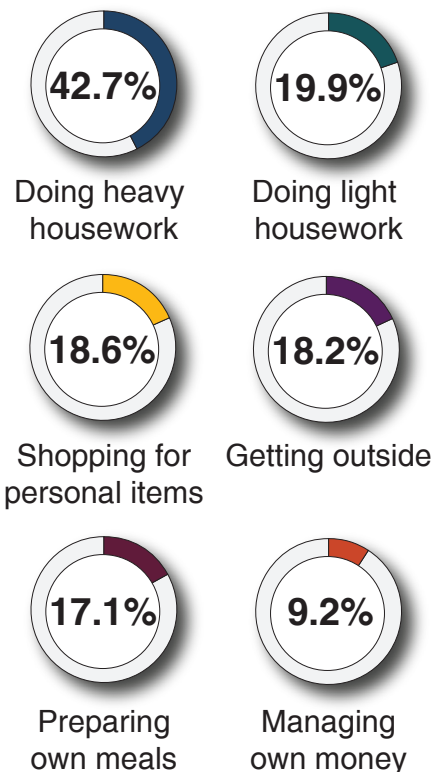


53.7
years

Average age of urban Native Elders when diagnosed with diabetes

ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

Because of a health or physical problem that lasted more than 3 months, urban Native Elders reported having difficulty...



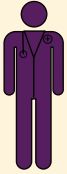
56.2%

of urban Native Elders had no activities of daily living that limited them. Approximately 17.7% reported 1 activity that limited them; 9.1% reported 2 activities; and 6.5% reported 3 activities.

49.6%

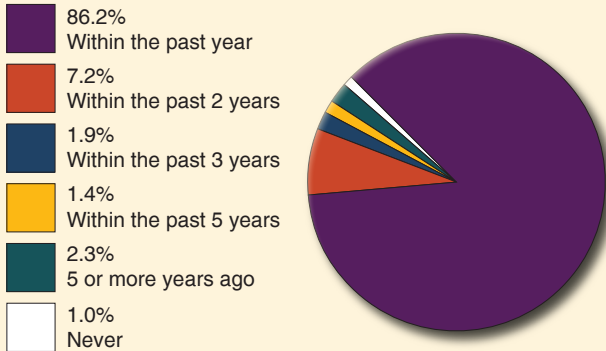
of urban Native Elders had no instrumental activities of daily living that limited them. Approximately 19.3% reported 1 activity that limited them; 9.8% reported 2 activities; and 8.6% reported 3 activities.

Last Routine Check-up

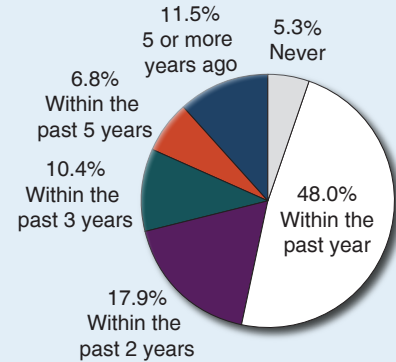


86.2%

of urban Native Elders had visited a healthcare provider for a routine checkup in the past year



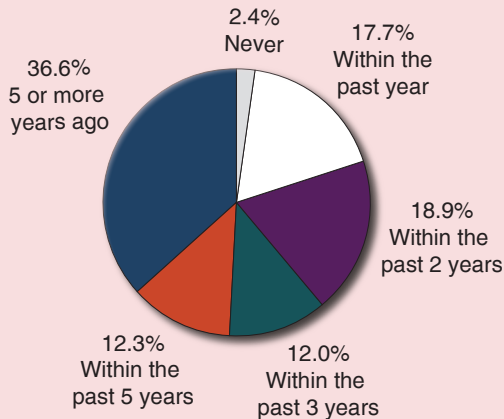
Last Mammogram



1 in 2

urban Native female Elders reported having a mammogram in the past year

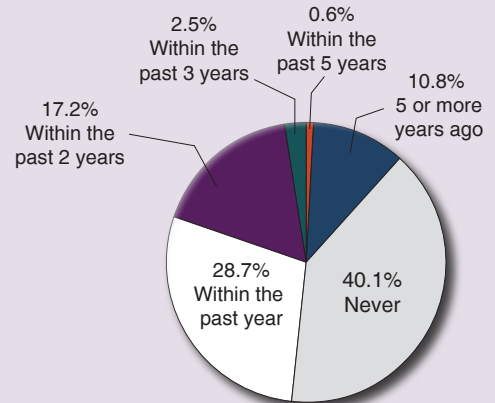
Last Pap Smear



1 in 3

urban Native female Elders reported having a pap smear 5 or more years ago

Last Prostate-Specific Antigen Test

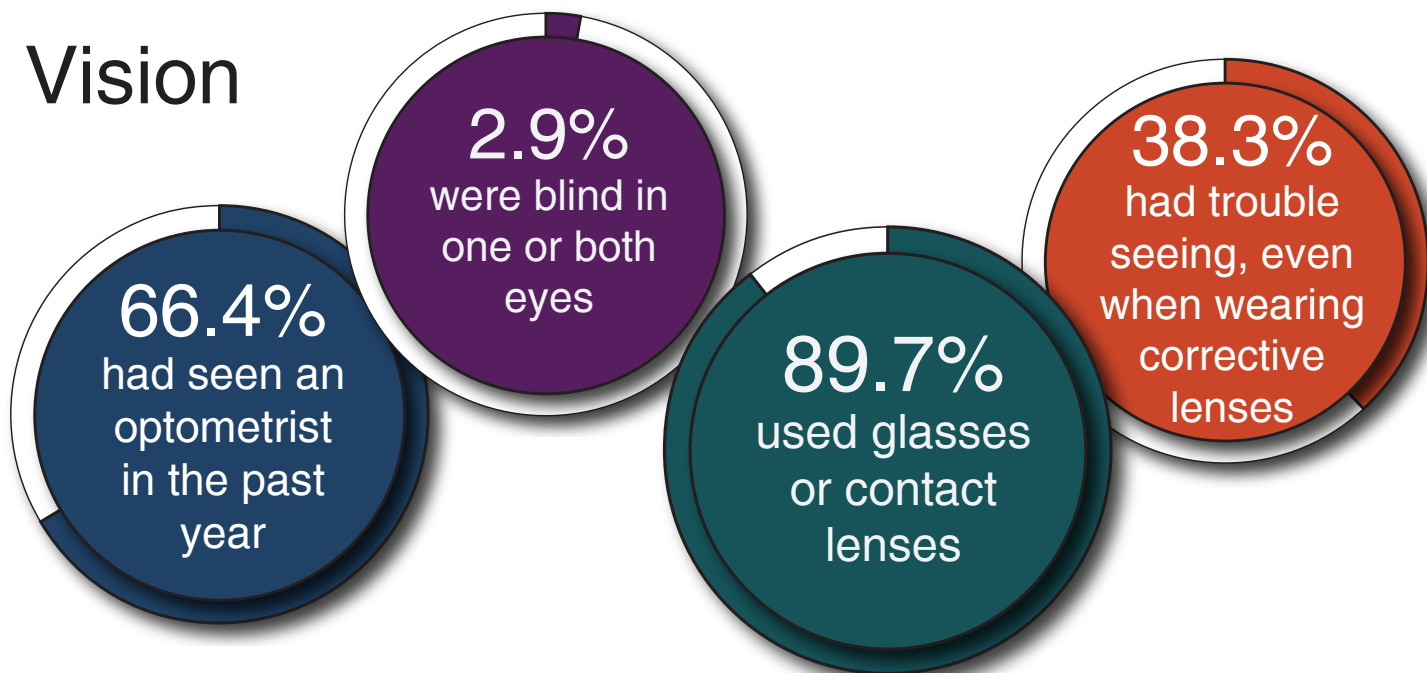


1 in 4

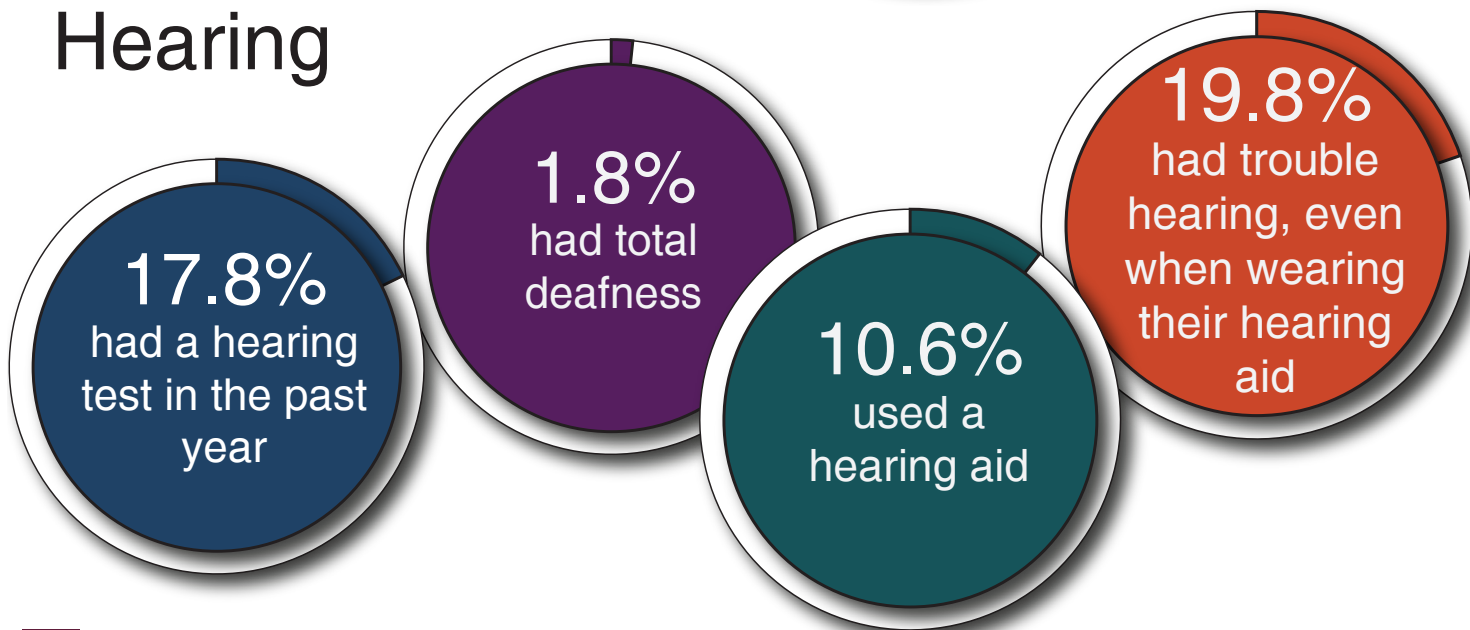
urban Native male Elders reported having a prostate-specific antigen test within the past year

VISION, HEARING, AND DENTAL

Vision

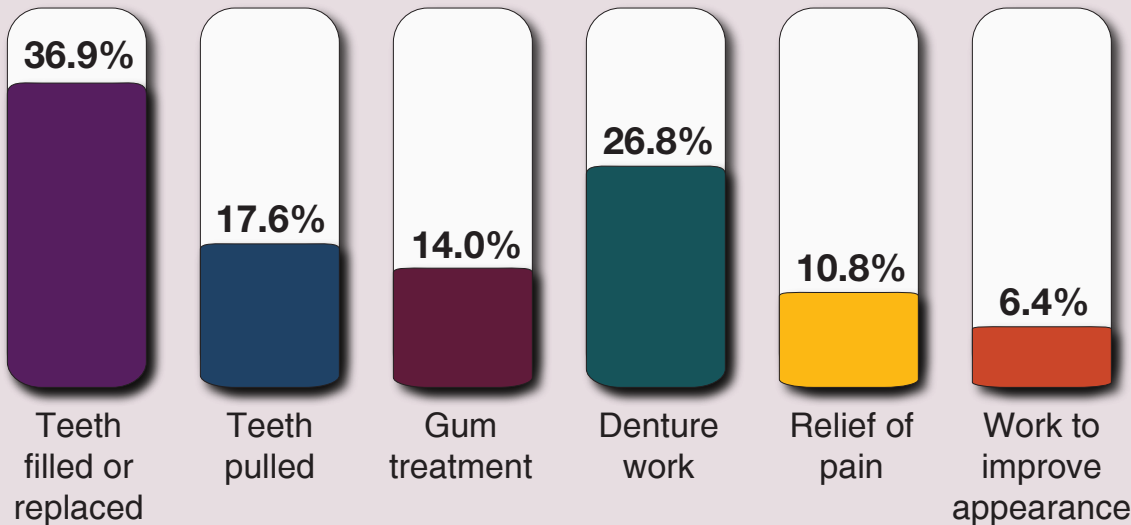


Hearing



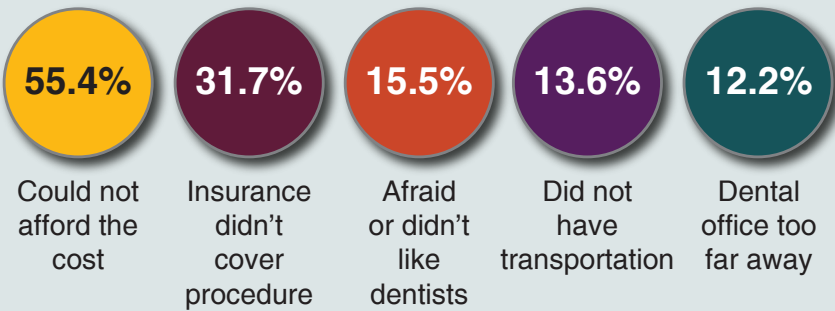
Over one-third of urban Native Elders had trouble seeing, even when wearing corrective lenses. Close to twenty percent had trouble hearing, even when wearing a hearing aid.

What type of dental care do you need?



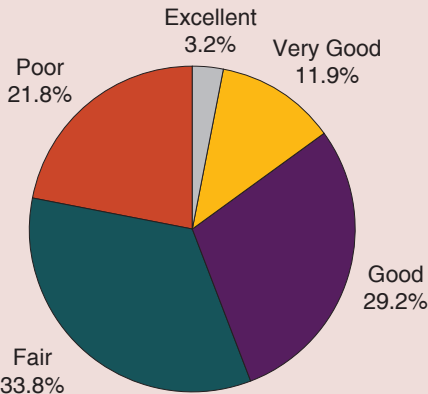
About 56.7% of urban Native Elders reported seeing a dentist or dental hygienist in the past year.

Reasons Unable to Get Needed Dental Care



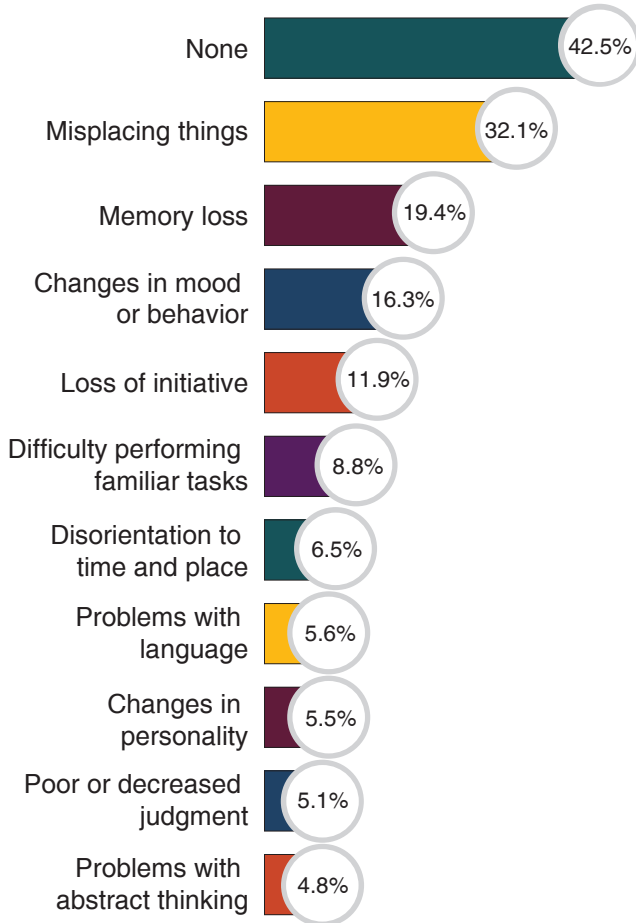
During the past year, 45.0% of urban Native Elders indicated there was a time when they needed dental care but were unable to get it at that time.

Self-Rated Health of Teeth and Gums

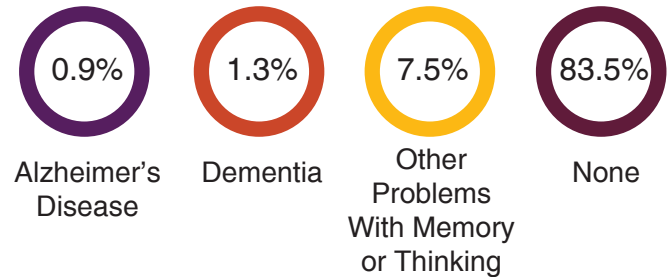


MEMORY AND DISABILITY

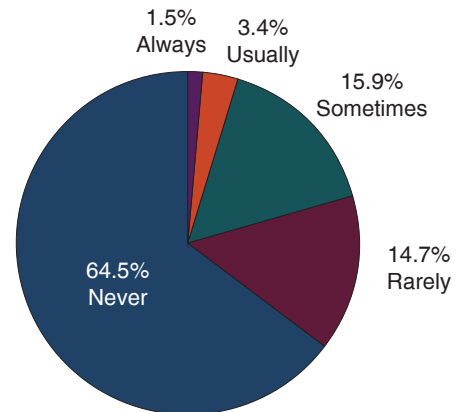
Memory Issues Experienced During the Past Year



Diagnosis of Memory Problem



How Often Given up Day-To-Day Activities Due to Confusion or Memory Loss



Confusion and Memory Loss

13.9%

Confusion is getting worse or happening more often

20.5%

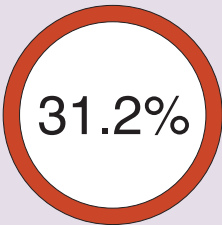
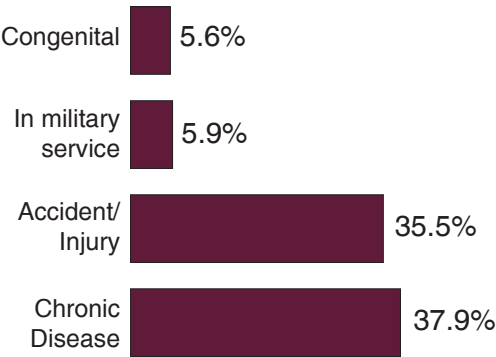
Memory loss is getting worse or happening more often

Very few urban Native Elders had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease (0.9%), dementia (1.3%) or other problems with memory or thinking (7.5%).



Approximately
1 in 3
of urban Native Elders
reported being disabled

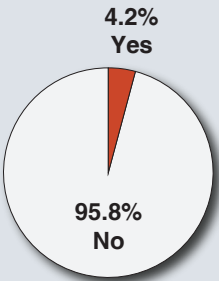
Reasons for disability, among the
39.8%
of urban Native Elders
who reported being disabled:



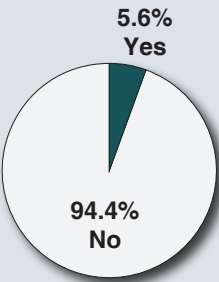
of urban Native Elders reported having a health problem that requires them to use special equipment, such as a cane, wheelchair, special bed, or special telephone

Traumatic Brain Injury

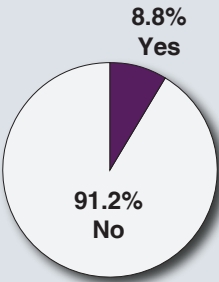
Sustained a Head Injury in the
Past 12 Months?



Diagnosed With a Traumatic
Brain Injury (TBI)?

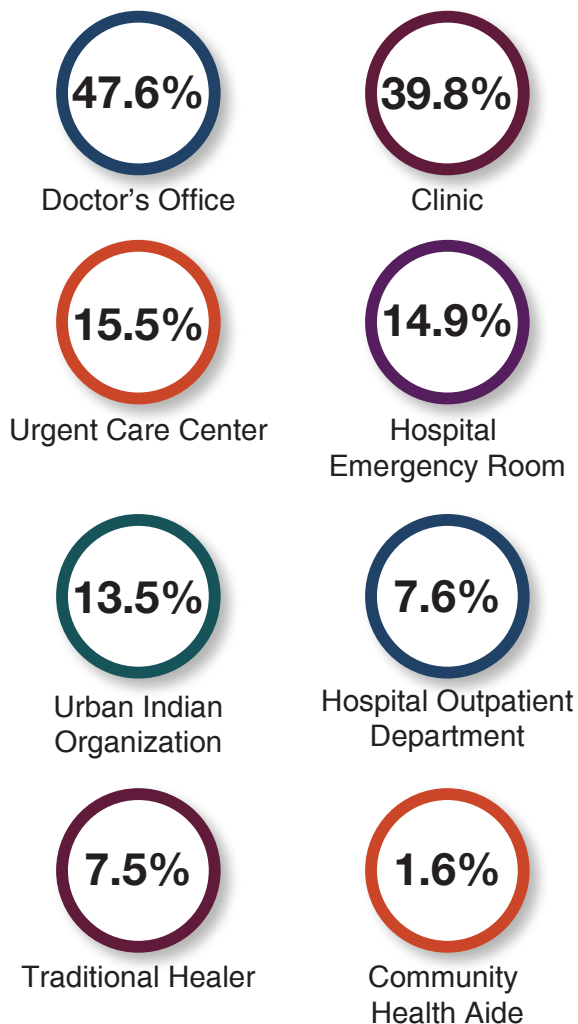


Had Brain Injury That Limited in Any
Way for More Than a Week?

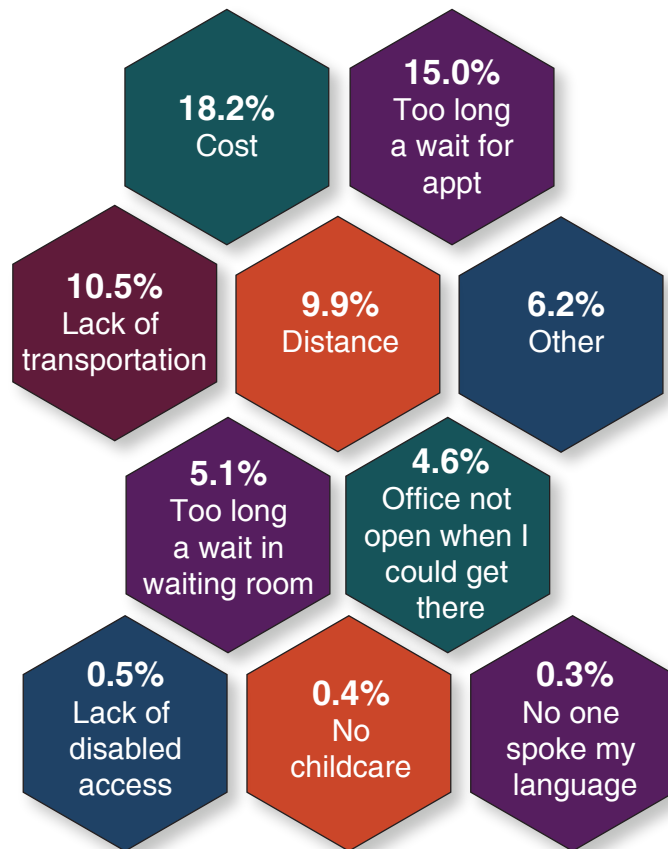


HEALTHCARE ACCESS

When you are sick or need professional advice about your health, where do you go?



Barriers to Medical Care



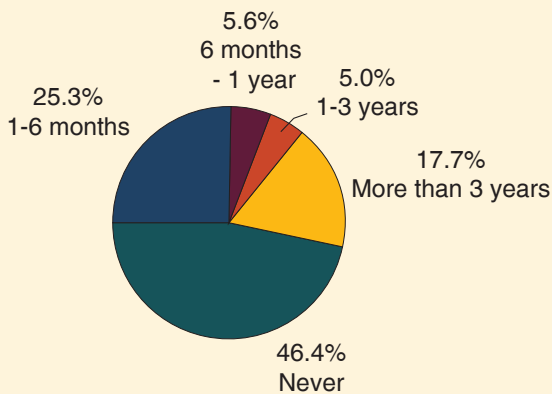
Urban Native Elders were asked what barriers had kept them from medical care in the past 12 months. Cost (18.2%) and too long a wait for an appointment (15.0%) were the most commonly reported reasons.

Urban Native Elders most commonly reported Medicare and Indian Health Services as their types of healthcare coverage. Their greatest barrier to receiving healthcare was cost.

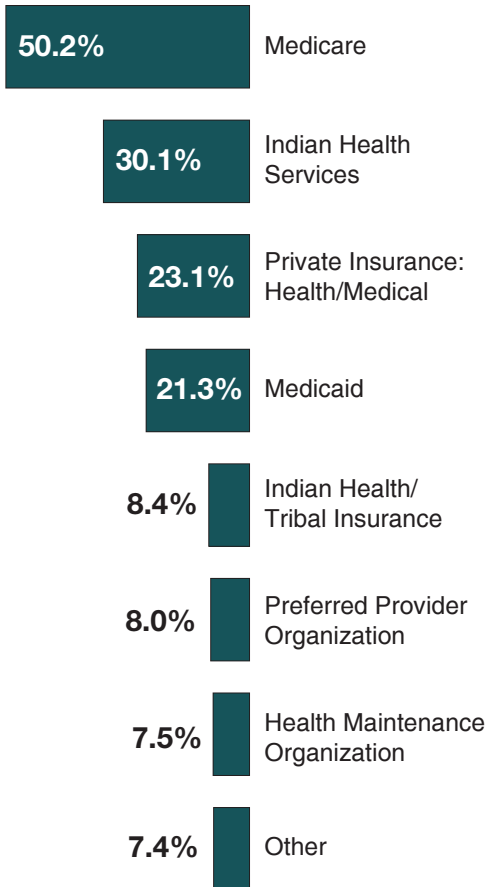
Was There Any Time in Past Year Without Health Insurance or Coverage?



Length of Time Since Last Had Healthcare Coverage



Frequently-Listed Healthcare Coverage



53.7%

of urban Native Elders had one person they thought of as their personal doctor/health provider. About 29.1% had more than one provider; 9.8% said they did not have one person they thought of as their personal doctor; 7.4% were not sure.

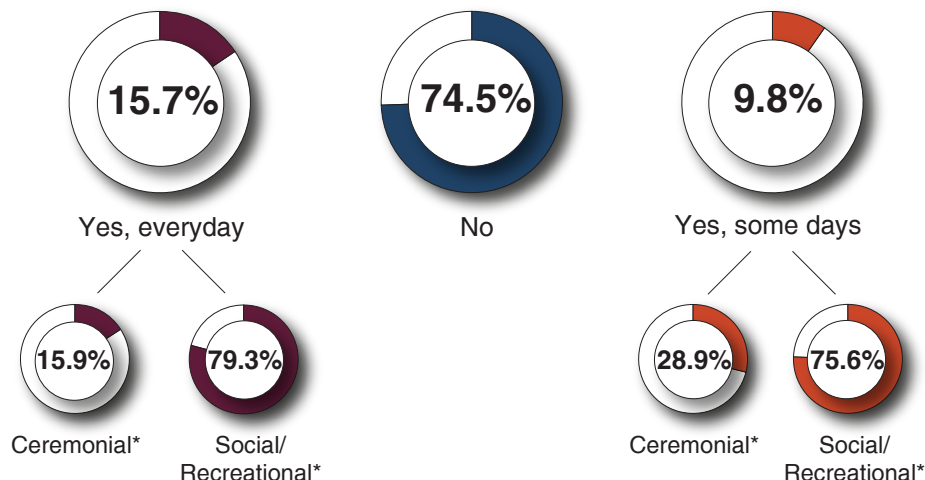
TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL USE

Most urban Native Elders reported that they did not currently smoke tobacco (74.5%).

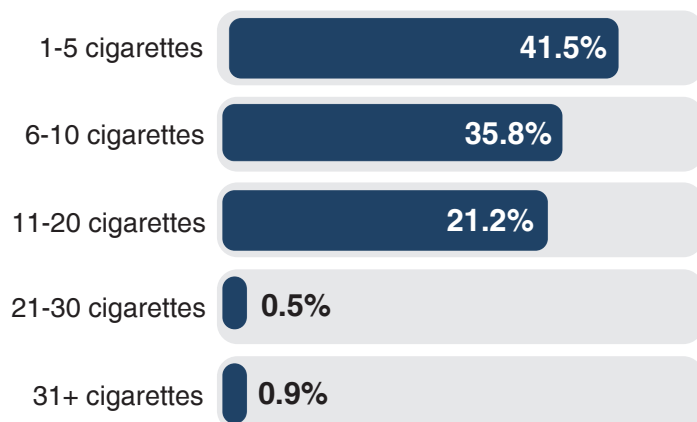
Among those who did smoke, 15.7% did so everyday - 15.9% of Elders smoked everyday for ceremonial purposes, and 79.3% for social/recreational. Among the 9.8% who smoked some days, 28.9% smoked for ceremonial purposes, and 75.6% for social/recreational.

*Please note that percentages will not add up to 100.0%.

Do You Use Tobacco Now?

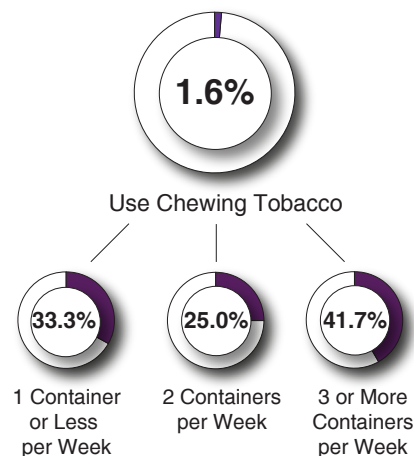


Cigarettes Smoked Per Day



Among Native Elders who smoked cigarettes, most (41.5%) smoked 1-5 cigarettes per day. This was followed by 35.8% who smoked 6-10 cigarettes. Across all smokers, the average number of cigarettes smoked per day was 8.24.

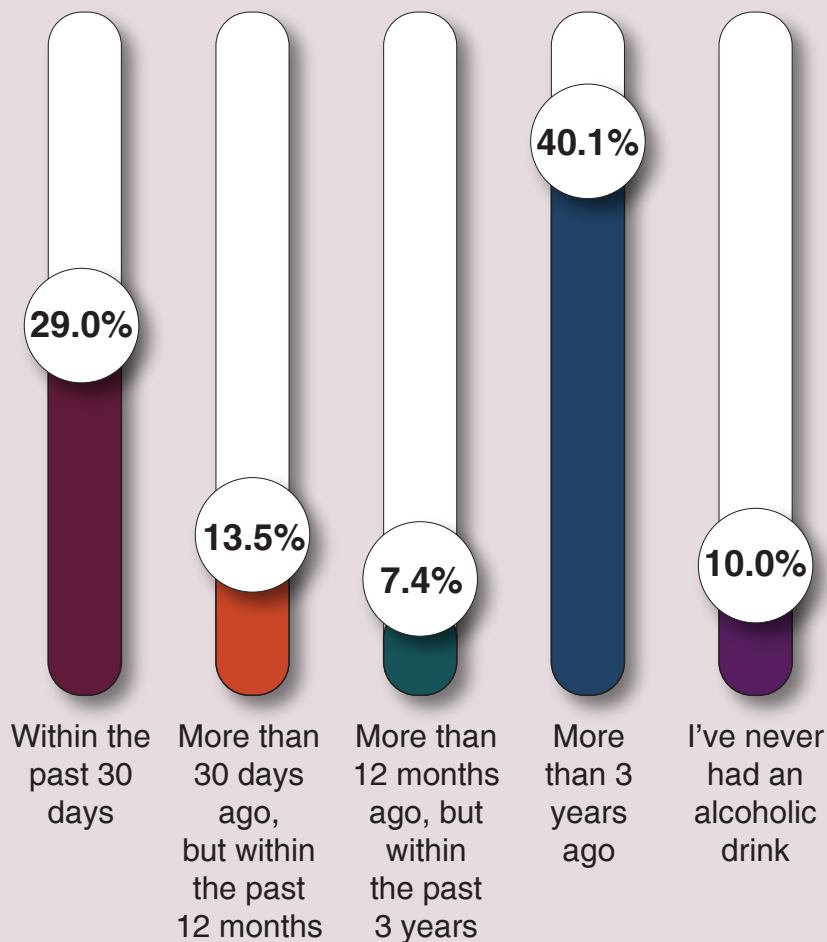
Do You Use Chewing Tobacco Now?



Most Native Elders did not report chewing tobacco (98.4%). Among the 1.6% who did report using it, the average number of containers was 2.23 per week.

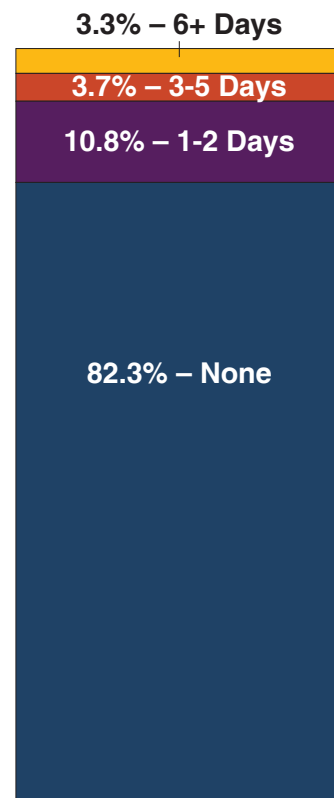
Close to three-quarters of urban Native Elders did not smoke. Over 40% had their last alcoholic drink more than 3 years ago, with 10% reporting never having an alcoholic drink before.

How long has it been since you last drank an alcoholic beverage?



Most Elders' last alcoholic beverage was more than 3 years ago (40.1%); this was followed by 29.0% who had an alcoholic beverage within the past 30 days. Approximately 10.0% had never had an alcoholic drink.

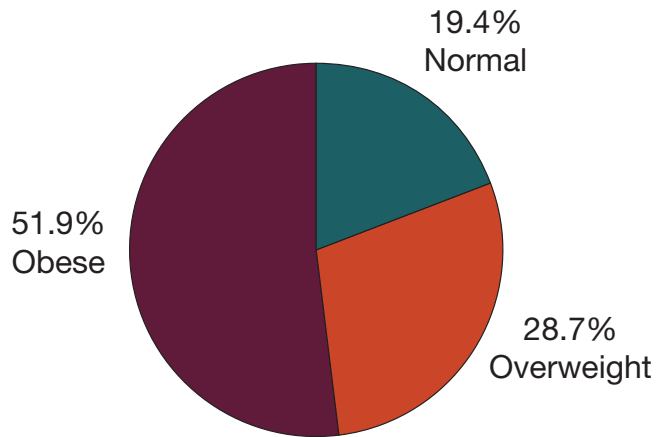
During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have 5 or more drinks on the same occasion?



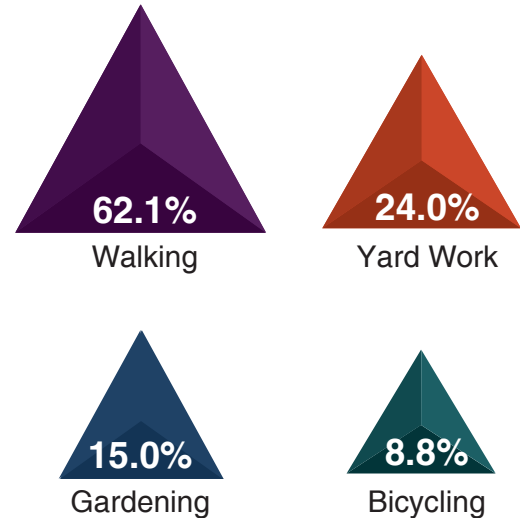
Among those who reported drinking, 82.3% reported that they did not drink 5 or more drinks on the same occasion in the past 30 days. Approximately 10.8% reported there were 1-2 days in which this occurred.

WEIGHT AND NUTRITION

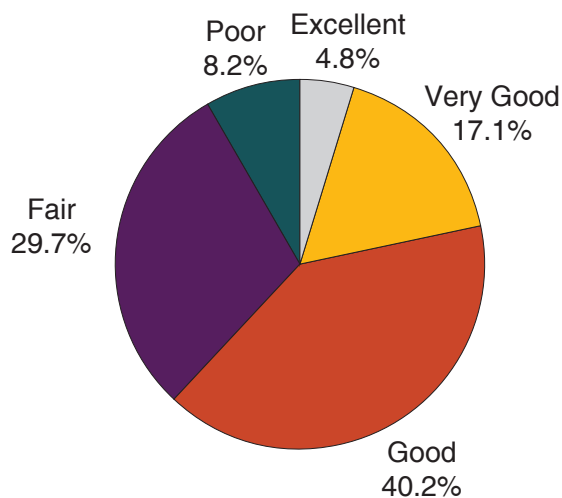
Body Mass Index



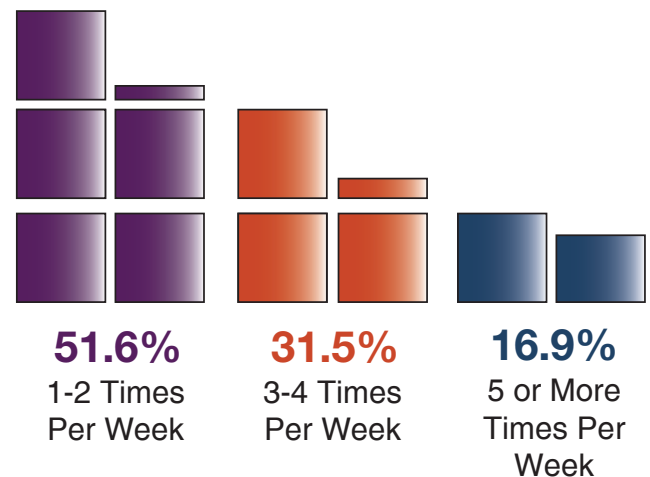
Most Commonly Listed Exercises in Past Month



Nutritional Quality Diet



Exercise Frequency



Over 40% of urban Native Elders had a good nutritional status. Most were likely to report walking as a form of exercise, and 52% were obese.

Among Urban Native Elders:



34.8%

took 3 or more prescribed or over-the-counter drugs a day



31.4%

ate few fruits, vegetables, or milk products



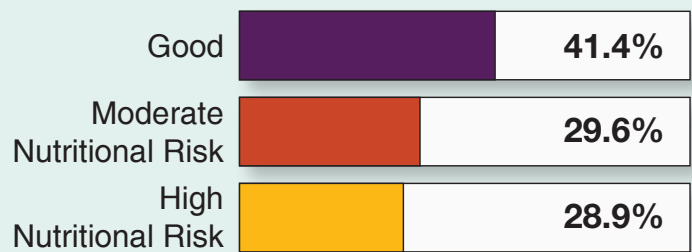
28.0%

changed the kind/amount of food they ate because of an illness



27.3%

ate alone most of the time



Based on the Nutrition Screening Initiative, 41.4% of urban Native Elders had a good nutritional status. There were 29.6% who had a moderate nutritional risk and 28.9% with a high nutritional risk.

WEIGHT AND NUTRITION

Traditional Foods Consumed Most Frequently

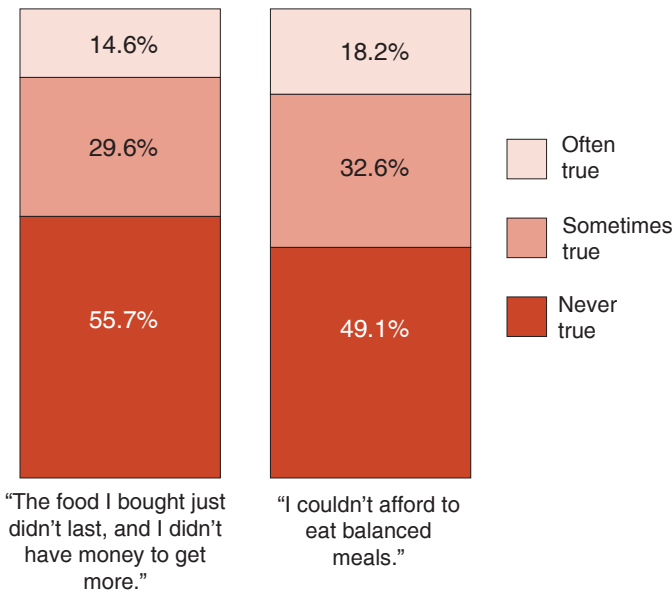


Approximately one-third of urban Native Elders reported consuming traditional foods regularly (34.9%). When asked how often they consumed traditional foods, most did so between 1-2 times per week (68.3%), followed by 3-4 times per week (22.7%), and 5 or more times a week (9.0%).

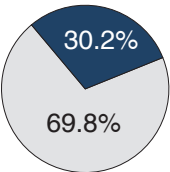
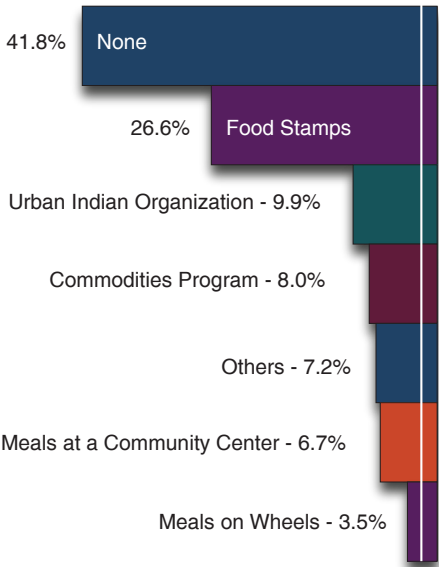
Urban Native Elders most frequently reported consuming traditional foods such as wild rice, fry bread, beans, fish, corn, salmon, berries, and meat.

Urban Native Elders were most likely to report eating wild rice, fry bread, beans, and fish. Close to one-third reported cutting the size of meals due to lack of money for food.

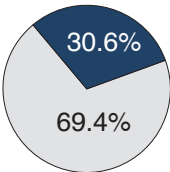
Food Insecurity and Affordability



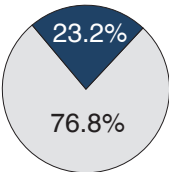
Commonly Reported Nutrition Programs



Cut size of meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food



Ate less than felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food

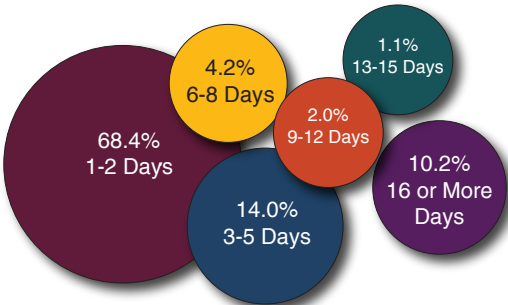


Hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food

Yes No

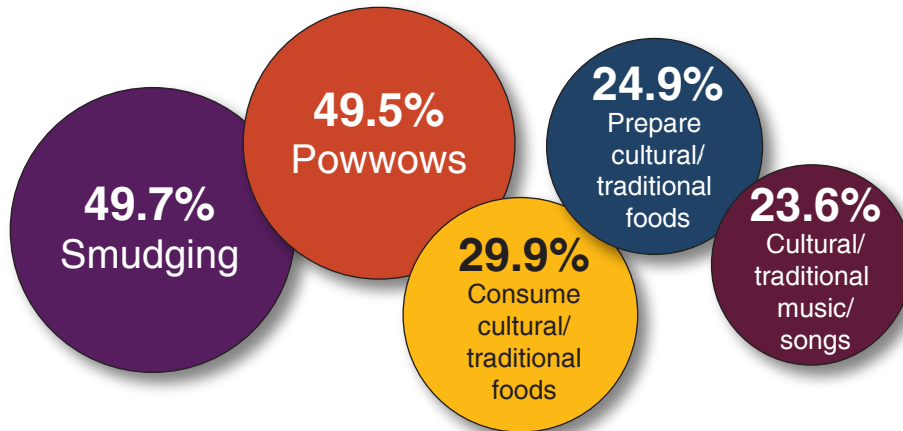
Among the 30.2% of urban Native Elders who cut the size of or skipped meals, most (51.1%) reported doing so almost every month.

Number of Days Took Part in Nutrition Programs in Past Month



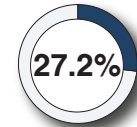
SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CAREGIVING

Common Cultural Practices And Traditions

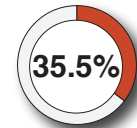


In the past month, most urban Native Elders did not engage in cultural activities (46.6%), although 43.0% did so 1-2 times per week. Another 6.1% participated 3-4 times per week, and 4.4% did so 5 or more times per week.

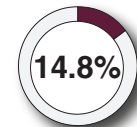
Caregiving



Had a family member who provides care for them

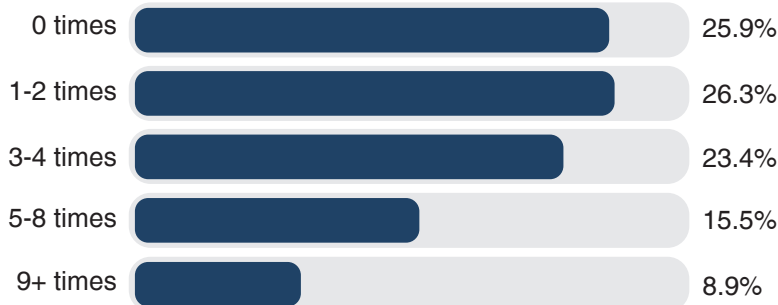


Took care of grandchildren



Were the primary caregiver of grandchildren

How often do you get out and socialize per month?



Support

Do you have someone you feel like you can depend upon to provide physical support to you?

70.4%

Do you have someone you feel like you can depend upon to provide social support to you?

77.1%

HOUSING AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Housing



60.0%

of urban Native Elders reported living in a single family residence. Approximately 31.1% lived in an apartment.

Living Situation

59.2%

of Elders lived with family members

7.1%

of Elders lived with non-family members

3.9%

of Elders lived with both family and non-family members

29.8%

of Elders lived alone

How long have you lived at your present address?

17.4%
6-10 Years

37.1%
Less than
5 Years

45.5%
Over 10 Years

Most urban Native Elders had lived in their home for over 10 years (45.5%). This was followed by those who lived in their home less than 5 years (37.1%) and between 6 and 10 years (17.4%).

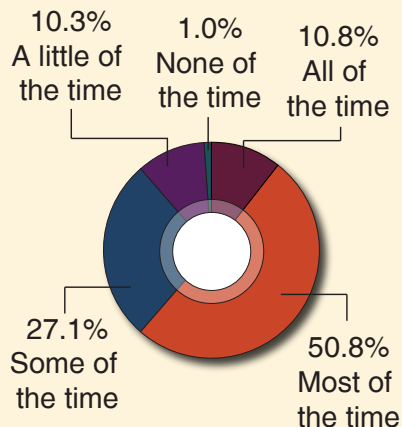
2.73

Average number of individuals living in urban Native Elders' households. The average number of children in households was .56.

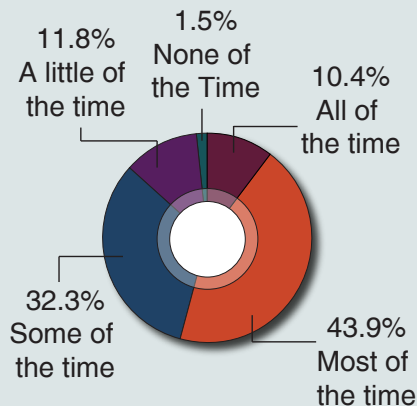
SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

In the past month, how often did you feel...

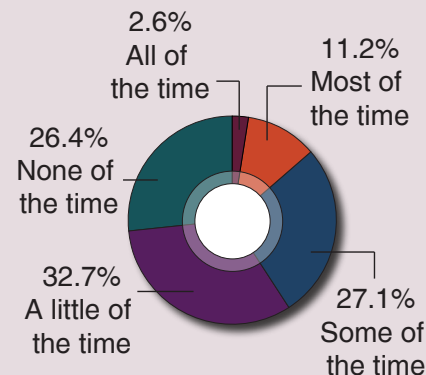
Happy



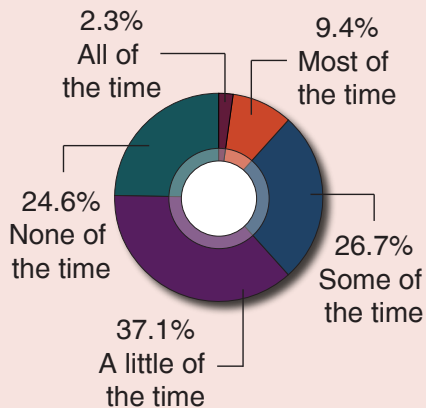
Calm and Peaceful



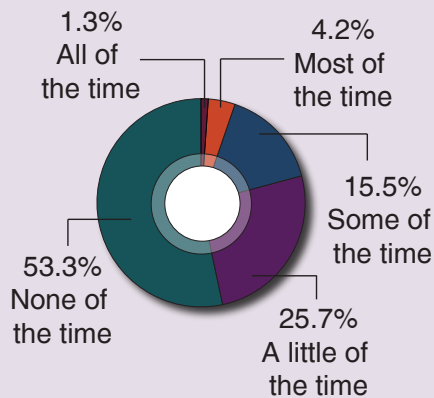
Nervous



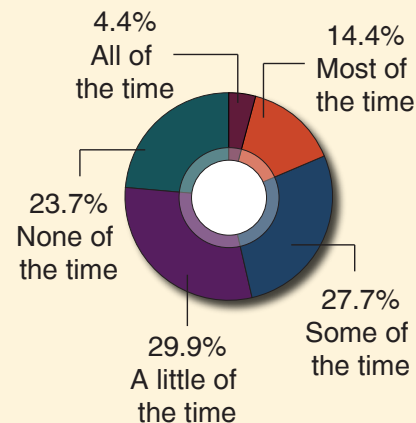
Downhearted and Blue



Down in the Dumps - Nothing Could Cheer You Up

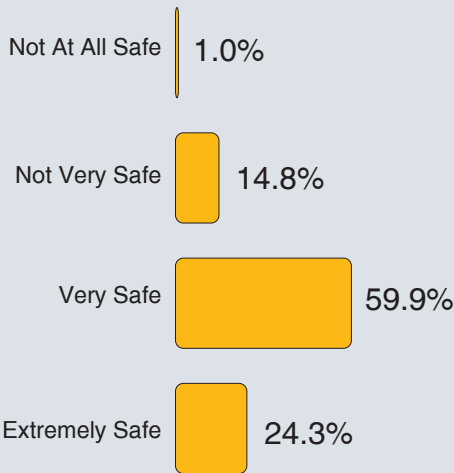


Stressed

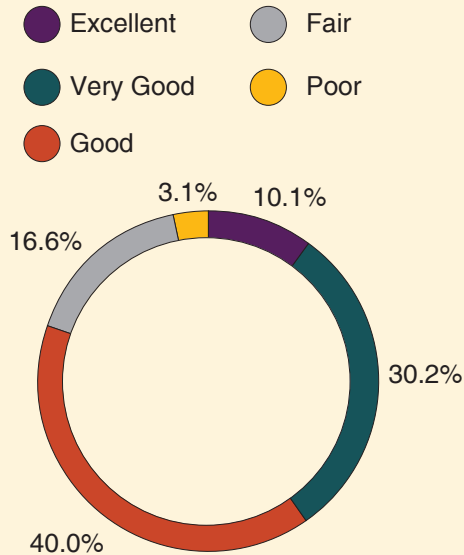


Most urban Native Elders reported being happy, calm, and peaceful most of the time.
Over half reported feeling very safe, and close to one-third rated their quality of life as very good.

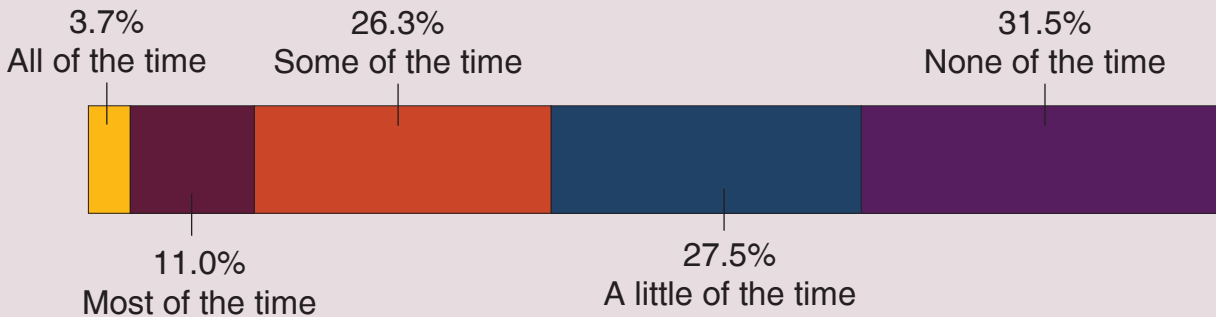
How safe do you feel in your daily life?



During the past 12 months, how would you rate your quality of life?

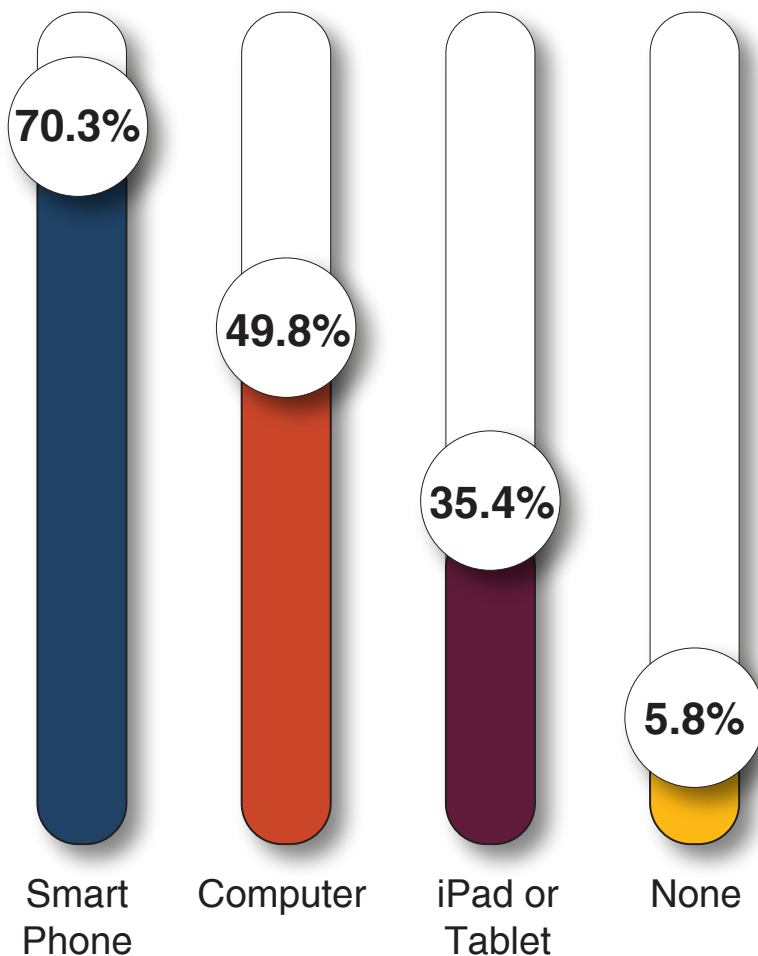


How much of the time, during the past month, has your physical or mental health interfered negatively with your day-to-day functioning?



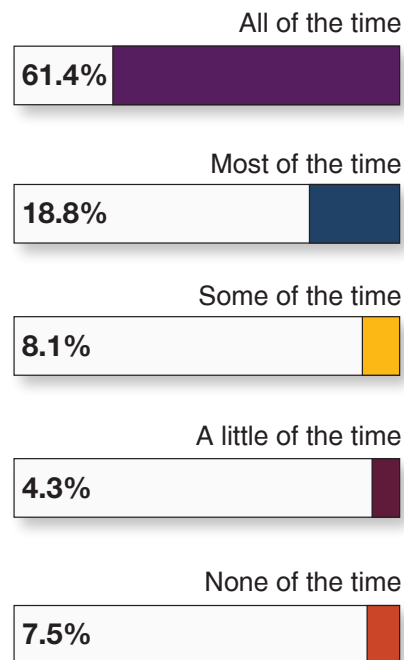
TECHNOLOGICAL CONNECTEDNESS

Technological Devices Used

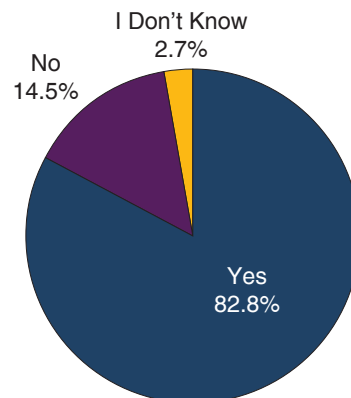


Most urban Native Elders reported using their smart phone (70.3%), computer (49.8%), or iPad or tablet (35.4%); they could select more than one answer. Approximately 5.8% of respondents did not report using any of the devices listed.

Access to Internet



Social Media Use



SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Senior Service Programs

Top 5 Services - Now Using

30.0% - Pharmacy

9.9% - Government-Assisted Housing

8.9% - Senior Center Programs

7.9% - Financial Assistance

7.0% - Physical Therapy

Top 5 Services - Would Use if Offered

59.2% - Home-Delivered Meals

43.6% - Home Health Services

39.0% - Homemaker and Chore Services

37.3% - Transportation

34.5% - Physical Therapy

Most Frequently Indicated Social Challenges

1

Nutrition

2

Infrastructure/
Transportation
and Health Facilities

3

Social Isolation

4

Facing a
Multi-Cultural
Society

Urban Native Elders were presented with a list of items, and were asked to rate the degree to which they were challenged by it. Nutrition was rated as the greatest challenge, followed by infrastructure/ transportation and health facilities, social isolation, and facing a multi-cultural society.



National Resource Center
on Native American Aging

NRCNAA

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