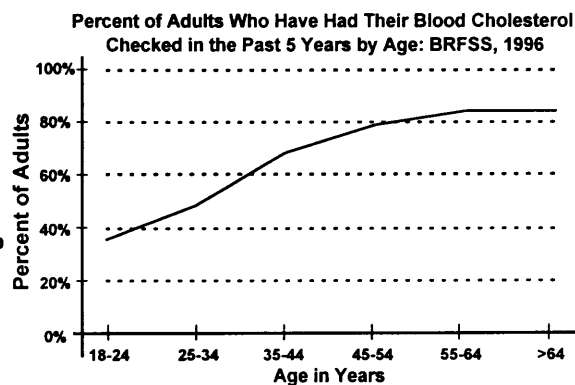


CHOLESTEROL AWARENESS

Data are from the

MAINE BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (BRFSS): 1995/1996

- ➔ The association between high blood cholesterol and increased risk of coronary heart disease is well documented.¹ The American Heart Association estimates that 20% of American adults have high cholesterol levels (with an additional 31% borderline-high).²
- ➔ In 1995, 31% of Maine adults reported that they had never had their cholesterol level checked; in 1996, although that proportion had improved, 26% of Maine adults still had never had this tested.
- ➔ Of the adults who reported in 1995 that they had at some point had their cholesterol checked, 30% reported that they had been told by a doctor or other health professional, that their blood cholesterol was high; this proportion was comparable to what was reported in 1996 (31%).
- ➔ Nationally, Maine reported the 13th highest proportion of adults being told that they had an elevated cholesterol level.
- ➔ As age increased so did the proportion of residents who had their cholesterol checked within the past 5 years. This increased from a low of 35% for Maine's youngest adults, to a high of 84% for Maine adults 65 and older.
- ➔ Increased education was positively associated with having cholesterol levels checked. While more than 75% of Maine college graduates had their cholesterol checked within the past 5 years, only about 60% of high school graduates* had.



Blood Cholesterol Screening Status - Percent of Adults by Education: BRFSS, 1996

Highest Level of Education	Blood Cholesterol Screening Status		
	Checked Within Past 5 Years	Checked But Not Within Past 5 Years	Never Checked
Less Than High School	65%	5%	30%
High School or G.E.D.	61%	6%	33%
Some Post-High School	68%	7%	25%
College Graduate	79%	7%	14%

- ➔ More than 1/3 of the college graduates who reported they had their cholesterol checked had been told that their cholesterol level was high; this compared to 1/4 of high school graduates.

Footnotes: FN1: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, April 29, 1988. FN2: American Heart Association Scientific Statistics, 1998. Full citations are available upon request.

* includes adults with Graduate Equivalency Diplomas (GEDs)

For further data on this topic, please contact:

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