

Alaska Health Status Indicators

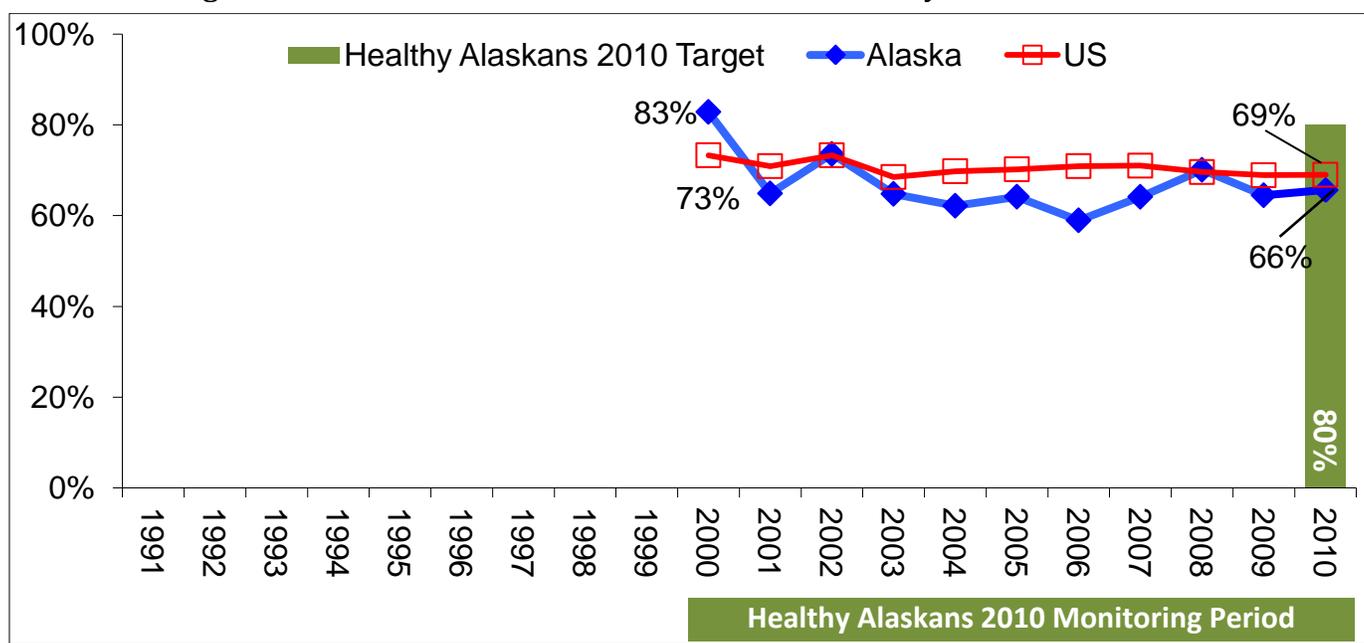
Indicator: Dilated Eye Exams for Adults with Diabetes

Why is this important?

About one in five US adults with vision impairment or legal blindness have diabetes.¹ Among US adults with diabetes, more than one-fourth have diabetic retinopathy (28.5%) and one in twenty have vision-threatening diabetic retinopathy (4.4%).² Diabetes also increases risk for cataract (60% increased risk compared to people without diabetes), glaucoma (40% increased risk), macular edema and retinal detachment.³ Compared to those with no visual impairment, medical costs were \$1,000 higher for people with visual impairment and \$2,000 higher for those with legal blindness.¹ Screening and early treatment prevents vision loss associated with diabetic retinopathy.

How are we doing?

Percentage of Adults with Diabetes Who Have Annual Dilated Eye Exams: Alaska and the U.S.



This indicator has been measured reliably as of 2000. The percentage of Alaska adults with diabetes who receive annual dilated eye exams has fluctuated between 83% and 59% in the past decade.

❖ How is Alaska Doing Relative to the Healthy Alaskans 2010 Target?

The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target for the prevalence of obtaining annual dilated eye exams (among adults with diabetes) is 80% or higher. The percentage of adult Alaskans with diabetes who receive annual dilated eye exams has decreased during the *Healthy Alaskans 2010* monitoring period, from 83% in 2000 to 66% in 2010. **The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target of 80% has not been met.**

❖ How does AK compare with the US?

The AK and US rates for annual eye exams are similar.

❖ How are different populations affected?

Adults 35-44 were less likely to have had an eye exam than adults in the 45-64 and 65 or over age groups (46% vs. 69% and 72% respectively). Gulf Coast residents were less likely to have had an eye exam than any other BRFSS region (51% - 71%). There are no significant differences in prevalence of obtaining dilated eye exams by race,

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education, or income level. Note that the small sample size for this indicator may limit the ability to detect significant differences between groups. (Source: 2008-2010 BRFSS)

What is the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services doing to improve this indicator?

- 1) The AK Diabetes Program develops and disseminates recommendations for the clinical management of adults with diabetes to health care providers statewide.⁴ These recommendations include eye exam guidelines for clinicians to prevent diabetic eye complications.
- 2) The Diabetes Program advocates for formal diabetes self-management education coverage by health care insurers, including the Alaska Medicaid Program. Research has shown a strong correlation between receiving diabetes self-management education and self-management activities.⁵

Indicator Definition and Notes

Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older with diabetes who answer “Within the past month” or “Within the past year” to the following question: *When was the last time you had an eye exam in which the pupils were dilated? This would have made you temporarily sensitive to bright light.* Diabetes status is indicated by a respondent answering “Yes” to the following question: *Have you ever been told by a doctor that you have diabetes?*

Data Sources

Alaska: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services; US: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Alaska data were obtained from the Standard AK BRFSS from 2000 through 2003, and from the Standard and Supplemental AK BRFSS surveys combined from 2004 through 2010. The Supplemental BRFSS survey is conducted using identical methodology as the Standard BRFSS and allows a doubling of the BRFSS sample size for those measures included on both surveys.

References

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3. ADA. Blindness or Vision Problems. <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/complications/mens-health/serious-health-implications/blindness-or-vision-problems.html> (printed 5/10/11)
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5. Norris S, Nichols P, et al. Increasing Diabetes Self-Management Education in Community Settings: A Systematic Review. *Am J Prev Med* 2002; 22(4S): 39-66.



Available at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/>

