



Epi Data Brief

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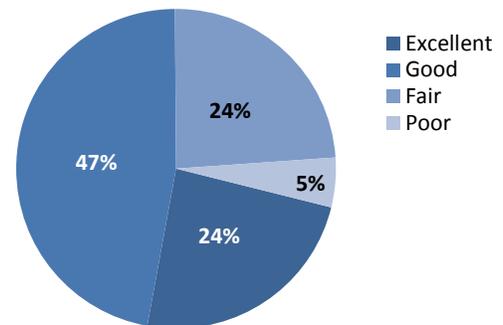
Perceived Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables in New York City

Consumption of healthy foods including fresh fruits and vegetables is associated with better health outcomes; however, access to these foods can vary.¹ An important aspect of fruit and vegetable consumption is the perception of availability. In 2011, the New York City (NYC) Health Department collected data on perceived availability, quality, and cost of fresh fruits and vegetables to understand these perceptions among NYC residents.

Perceived access among all New Yorkers

- In 2011, about four in five (79%) NYC adults reported they could walk in 10 minutes or less to a store² that sold fresh fruits or vegetables.
- One in three (33%) NYC adults reported they rarely or never need to travel outside their neighborhood to go to a supermarket. In general, supermarkets provide greater variety and quantities of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- One in four (24%) NYC adults reported excellent overall quality of fresh fruits and vegetables in their neighborhoods.
- Just over one in three (38%) NYC adults thought the cost of fruits and vegetables in their neighborhoods was 'just about right' or 'inexpensive.'

Reported quality of fresh fruits and vegetables available in neighborhood stores, New York City 2011



Source: NYC Physical Activity and Transit Survey, 2011

Perceived access among New Yorkers by race/ethnicity

- Asians and blacks were less likely to report they could walk in 10 minutes or less to a store that sold fresh fruits and vegetables, compared with whites (71% and 76%, respectively vs. 82% among whites).
- One in five (21%) Hispanic adults reported they rarely or never need to travel outside their neighborhood to go to a supermarket.
- Blacks and Hispanics were much less likely than whites to report excellent overall quality of fresh fruits and vegetables in their neighborhoods (14% and 20%, respectively vs. 33% among whites).
- Just over half (55%) of Asian New Yorkers thought the cost of fruits and vegetables in their neighborhoods was 'just about right' or 'inexpensive', compared with only one in three (33%) whites.

Data Source:

The New York City (NYC) Physical Activity and Transit Survey (PAT) 2011 was conducted by the Health Department in 2010-2011 to better understand patterns of physical activity and other factors that facilitate a healthy lifestyle. Approximately 3800 adults aged 18 and older completed the survey. Data presented in this Brief are age adjusted to the US 2000 Standard population. The survey was made possible in part by funding from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Notes:

¹ Morland, K., Filomena, S. Disparities in the availability of fruits and vegetables between racially segregated urban neighborhoods. *Public Health Nutrition*. 2007;10(12):1481-1489.

² In NYC, produce is found at both supermarkets and small corner stores known as 'bodegas'.

³ The Community Health Survey is a random-digit-dial health survey conducted annually in NYC. The survey sample is weighted to be representative of all New Yorkers. For more information, visit nyc.gov/health/survey

⁴ For more information on the Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) program, visit nyc.gov/html/misc/html/2009/fresh.shtml

Perceived access among New Yorkers living in high or low obesity neighborhoods

Based on estimates from three years of Community Health Survey³ data (2007 to 2009), approximately one third of NYC neighborhoods were designated as high obesity. These high obesity neighborhoods were oversampled in the PAT survey. All other neighborhoods were considered low obesity. The majority of residents in high obesity neighborhoods are racial/ethnic minorities and living in poverty.

- Residents who lived in low obesity neighborhoods were more likely than those in high obesity neighborhoods to report being able to walk in ten minutes or less to the nearest store that sold fruits or vegetables (81% vs. 75%).
- New Yorkers living in low obesity neighborhoods were more likely than those in high obesity neighborhoods to report not having to travel outside of their neighborhood to go to a supermarket (36% vs. 29%).
- Perceived quality of produce as being excellent was lower in residents of high obesity versus low obesity neighborhoods (19% vs. 28%).
- Perceived cost of fruits and vegetables as ‘just about right’ or ‘inexpensive’ was similar in high and low obesity neighborhoods (37% and 38%, respectively).

Health Bucks and Green Carts

In an effort to address health disparities between neighborhoods, the NYC Health Department, along with other City agencies, has introduced many initiatives to increase access to fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods in high poverty areas. These include:

- Zoning and tax incentives to increase the number of supermarkets in eligible areas (Food Retail Expansion to Support Health)⁴
- Distribution of \$2 Health Bucks coupons that can be redeemed at farmers markets, which also helps to increase the number of farmers markets in neighborhoods that need them the most

Health Bucks



- Working with small corner stores (Shop Healthy) to increase healthy food options
- Creating special permits for Green Carts that can only sell whole fresh fruits and vegetables in specific precincts where consumption of fruits and vegetables was lowest, prevalence of diet related diseases highest, and availability (access) was limited

A NYC Green Cart vendor



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- For complete tables of data presented in this Brief, visit nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/epi/datatable49.pdf
- Visit EpiQuery – the Health Department’s online, interactive health data system at nyc.gov/health/EpiQuery

Data & Statistics at nyc.gov/health/data