One in six adults has a disability. Among the adults in Virginia surveyed in 2007-2009, 18% reported having a disability that limited some activities due to a physical, mental, or emotional condition. Disability rates are about equal between men and women, but more prevalent among veterans, Native Americans, adults who are divorced or widowed, and people who are at least 65 years old.

Health and Mental Health Status

The majority of adults in Virginia have a personal doctor and have health insurance. In comparison to adults who do not have a disability, people with disabilities have much higher rates of perceived “fair” or “poor” health, unmet health needs because of cost, lack of dental insurance, and symptoms of anxiety and depression.

- In a 30 day period, people with disabilities have an average of 9 physically unhealthy days, over 4 times more than people without a disability.
- In a 30 day period, people with disabilities have an average of 7 mentally unhealthy days, over 3 times more than people without a disability.
- People with disabilities who have an emotional problem are more likely than people without a disability to receive mental health treatment or medication.

Health Conditions

Rates of arthritis, asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes are significantly higher among people with disabilities than those without disabilities.

- People with disabilities are about three times more likely to have arthritis, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes than people without disabilities.
- People with disabilities are about twice as likely to have asthma, cancer, and high blood pressure than people without disabilities.

2 out of 3 people with a disability have at least one health condition.
Health Care
In comparison to people without disabilities, people with disabilities are more likely to get an annual checkup, have their blood cholesterol checked, and be immunized against pneumonia and the flu.

- In comparison to people who do not have a disability, people with disabilities are much less likely to have visited a dentist recently and are more likely to have tooth loss due to decay or disease.

- Women with disabilities have lower rates of getting mammograms and Pap tests.

- Rates of screening are similar between people with disabilities and the general population for certain cancer screenings (e.g., oral and colorectal screenings, PSA tests for males.)

Health Behaviors
In comparison to adults without a disability, people with disabilities are more likely to be obese, be less physically active, and use tobacco.

- Although rates of being overweight are similar for people with and without disabilities, over one-third of adults with a disability (36%) are obese.

- Over one-third of adults with a disability (38.1%) do not participate in exercise, a rate twice as high as people who have no disability.

- One in four adults with a disability (25%) use tobacco in comparison to 18% of adults who do not have a disability.

Violence
People with disabilities are twice as likely to be victims of intimate partner physical violence and sexual violence.

“Disability is part of human life, and an impairment or condition does not define individuals, their health, or their talents and abilities.” –HealthyPeople.gov