CHAPTER 17: DISABILITY AND FALLS

Disabled: Limited in any way in any activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems.

State Prevalence	26.4% (95% CI: 24.7-28.0); 1 st among 54 BRFSS participants. National prevalence: 18.7% (95% CI: 18.5-19.0).
Time Trends	The prevalence of disability in West Virginia has increased each time it has been measured (from 18.1% in 1995 to 24.0% in 2001 to 26.4% in 2003). The increase from 1995 to 2003 was statistically significant.
Gender	Men 28.1% (95% CI: 25.5-30.7); Women 24.8% (95% CI: 22.8-26.9). There was no significant gender difference in the prevalence of disability.
Age	Disability rates increased until age 64. Adults aged 55 to 64 had the highest prevalence of disability (36.2%) – significantly higher than those aged 18 to 24 (10.9%) , 25 to 34 (16.8%) , and 35 to 44 (26.3%) . At ages 45 to 54, men were significantly more likely to be disabled than women (37.5%) versus 23.6%).
Education	There was a significant inverse relationship between disability and educational attainment. Adults without a high school diploma were more than twice as likely to be disabled as college graduates (37.5% versus 17.8%).
Household Income	The prevalence of disability significantly decreased until household income reached \$35,000, and significantly declined again when it reached \$75,000. More than 47% of adults in the poorest households were disabled, compared with approximately 12% of those in the wealthiest homes.

Table 17.1: Prevalence of disabil	ity: WVBRFSS, 2003
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Characteristic	Men			Women			Total		
	# Resp.		95% CI	# Resp.	%	95% CI	# Resp.	%	95% CI
TOTAL	1,314	28.1	(25.5-30.7)	2,022	24.8	(22.8-26.9)	3,336	26.4	(24.7-28.0)
Age									
18-24	91	14.3	(6.7-21.9)	111	7.2	(2.0-12.4)	202	10.9	(6.2-15.6)
25-34	187	18.6	(12.9-24.2)	267	15.1	(10.5-19.6)	454	16.8	(13.2-20.4)
35-44	231	23.5	(17.7-29.4)	322	28.8	(23.3-34.3)	553	26.3	(22.2-30.3)
45-54	283	37.5	(31.4-43.5)	387	23.6	(19.1-28.0)	670	30.5	(26.7-34.3)
55-64	249	36.3	(29.8-42.7)	397	36.1	(30.9-41.2)	646	36.2	(32.1-40.3)
65+	272	34.6	(28.6-40.6)	527	31.2	(27.0-35.4)	799	32.6	(29.1-36.1)
Education									
Less than H.S.	244	40.5	(33.5-47.5)	390	34.6	(29.5-39.7)	634	37.5	(33.2-41.7)
H.S. or G.E.D.	524	28.6	(24.5-32.7)	790	25.0	(21.7-28.2)	1,314	26.7	(24.1-29.3)
Some Post-H.S.	264	25.7	(20.0-31.4)	476	21.5	(17.4-25.6)	740	23.3	(19.9-26.7)
College Graduate	279	17.1	(12.1-22.0)	365	18.5	(14.1-22.8)	644	17.8	(14.5-21.0)
Income									
Less than \$15,000	169	55.8	(46.8-64.7)	354	41.3	(35.6-47.1)	523	47.4	(42.4-52.4)
\$15,000- 24,999	261	36.9	(30.5-43.2)	461	30.7	(26.1-35.3)	722	33.4	(29.6-37.2)
\$25,000- 34,999	194	27.8	(21.0-34.7)	269	19.4	(14.4-25.0)	463	23.4	(19.2-27.6)
\$35,000- 49,999	211	19.6	(14.0-25.3)	267	19.5	(14.0-24.4)	478	19.6	(15.6-23.5)
\$50,000- 74,999	168	20.1	(13.6-26.7)	224	13.6	(8.8-18.4)	392	16.9	(12.8-20.9)
\$75,000+	183	11.3	(6.3-16.3)	146	13.2	(7.4-18.9)	329	11.9	(8.1-15.8)

Use of Special Equipment: A health problem requires the use of special equipment such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone. *Includes occasional use or in certain circumstances*.

State Prevalence	 8.6% (95% CI: 7.6-9.6) of all adults use special equipment; 1st among 54 BRFSS participants. National prevalence: 6.3% (95% CI: 6.1-6.4). 25.8% (22.8-28.8) of disabled adults use special equipment; 17th among 54 BRFSS participants. National prevalence: 25.0% (95% CI: 24.3-25.7).
Time Trends	Between 2001 and 2003, the use of special equipment increased slightly among all adults (from 8.3% to 8.6%) and decreased among disabled adults (from 27.7% to 25.8%).
Gender	There were no significant gender differences in the use of special equipment.
Age	The use of special equipment significantly increased at ages 45 to 54 and 65 and older. Rates of special equipment use were highest among elderly adults and lowest among those aged 25 to 34.
Education	Overall, special equipment use significantly decreased as educational attainment increased. Adults without a high school diploma/GED were significantly more likely to use special equipment than those at all higher levels of education.
Household Income	The rate of special equipment use also declined with increasing income. Among all adults, the use of special equipment significantly decreased until annual income reached \$35,000. Disabled adults with an income less than \$25,000 were significantly more likely to use equipment than those with a higher income.

Characteristic	A	mong All	Adults	Among Disabled Adults			
	# Resp. %		95% CI	# Resp.	 %	95% CI	
TOTAL	3,341	8.6	(7.6-9.6)	955	25.8	(22.8-28.8)	
Sex							
Males	1,317	7.8	(6.3-9.3)	404	23.0	(18.6-27.4)	
Females	2,024	9.2	(7.9-10.6)	551	28.7	(24.6-32.8)	
Age							
18-24	202	3.1	(0.6-5.6)	22	18.5 ^a	(1.6-35.3)	
25-34	455	1.6	(0.3-2.8)	79	8.7	(1.7-15.7)	
35-44	555	4.2	(2.1-6.2)	141	11.0	(5.6-16.5)	
45-54	671	8.8	(6.5-11.1)	209	26.7	(20.2-33.3)	
55-64	645	10.8	(8.2-13.4)	234	27.7	(21.4-34.1)	
65+	801	19.2	(16.3-22.0)	268	42.0	(35.6-48.3)	
Education							
Less than H.S.	634	19.2	(15.9-22.6)	260	36.1	(29.7-42.5)	
H.S. or G.E.D.	1,317	6.8	(5.4-8.2)	388	22.6	(18.1-27.1)	
Some Post-H.S.	741	7.0	(5.1-8.9)	188	24.4	(17.9-30.9)	
College Graduate	645	3.4	(1.9-4.8)	116	16.5	(9.3-23.7)	
Income							
Less than \$15,000	525	20.5	(16.5-24.5)	267	32.1	(25.9-38.4)	
\$15,000- 24,999	723	12.8	(10.2-15.4)	253	32.8	(26.4-39.2)	
\$25,000- 34,999	463	4.2	(2.3-6.1)	109	13.3	(6.7-19.9)	
\$35,000- 49,999	478	3.0	(1.4-4.6)	89	14.2	(6.7-21.7)	
\$50,000+	722	2.6	(1.5-3.7)	108	13.1	(6.6-19.6)	

Table 17.2: Use of special equipment: WVBRFSS, 2003

a. Use caution in interpreting percentages with N<50.

------ Chapter 17: Disability and Falls -----

Fall: Adults aged 45 and older who experienced a fall in the past three months.

Fall Injury: Adults aged 45 and older who were injured by a fall in the past three months. *Expressed as a percentage of adults who fell in the past 3 months.*

State Prevalence	<i>Fall:</i> 16.0% (95% CI: 14.3-17.7) of adults experienced a fall; 4 th highest among 54 BRFSS participants. National prevalence: 12.7% (95% CI: 12.4-13.0).					
	<i>Fall Injury:</i> 37.4% (95% CI: 31.8-43.0) of adults who fell were injured; 24 th among 54 BRFSS participants. National prevalence: 38.2% (95% CI: 37.0-39.5).					
Gender	<i>Fall:</i> Men 17.1% (95% CI: 14.3-20.0); Women 15.0% (95% CI: 12.9-17.1). <i>Injury:</i> Men 29.7% (95% CI: 21.5-38.0); Women 44.9% (95% CI: 37.5-52.3). There was no significant gender difference in the prevalence of falls or injuries.					
Age	Elderly adults were most likely to fall (17.3%) but least likely to experience an injury as the result of a fall (36.6%). There were no significant age differences in the prevalence of falls or fall injuries.					
Education	Adults without a high school diploma reported the highest prevalence of falls and fall injuries (18.7% and 48.3%, respectively). These adults were significantly more likely to be injured than college graduates (48.3% versus 22.1%).					
Household Income	Adults with an income less than \$15,000 were most likely to fall (19.0%) and be injured (49.9%). These adults had a significantly higher rate of injury than those in the wealthiest households (49.9% versus 24.2%).					
Quick Stats	• 24.4% of disabled adults aged 45 and older experienced a fall in the past three months; 47.6% of them were injured as a result of the fall.					

Table 17.3: Adults aged 45 and older who experienced a fall and were injured by a fall in the past three months: WVBRFSS, 2003

Characteristic	Exp p	erienced a ast three	fall in the months	Were injured by a fall in the past three months (of those that fell)			
	# Resp.	%	95% CI	# Resp.	%	95% CI	
TOTAL	2,114	16.0	(14.3-17.7)	336	37.4	(31.8-43.0)	
Sex							
Males	804	17.1	(14.3-20.0)	137	29.7	(21.4-38.0)	
Females	1,310	15.0	(12.9-17.1)	199	44.9	(37.5-52.3)	
Age							
45-54	671	15.7	(12.7-18.6)	105	38.0	(28.0-47.9)	
55-64	644	14.7	(11.6-17.7)	93	38.0	(27.1-48.9)	
65+	799	17.3	(14.4-20.2)	138	36.6	(27.9-45.3)	
Education							
Less than H.S.	487	18.7	(14.9-22.4)	91	48.3	(37.2-59.4)	
H.S. or G.E.D.	838	13.2	(10.7-15.7)	110	36.0	(26.3-45.7)	
Some Post-H.S.	422	17.5	(13.5-21.6)	73	38.5	(26.2-50.8)	
College Graduate	365	16.3	(12.1-20.5)	60	22.1	(11.6-32.7)	
Income							
Less than \$15,000	384	19.0	(14.7-23.4)	73	49.9	(37.1-62.7)	
\$15,000-24,999	449	18.8	(14.8-22.7)	82	35.1	(23.8-46.4)	
\$25,000- 34,999	293	14.3	(9.9-18.7)	43	24.7 ^a	(10.0-39.4)	
\$35,000- 49,999	267	14.2	(9.7-18.6)	38	42.6 ^a	(25.9-59.3)	
\$50,000+	411	14.0	(10.3-17.7)	54	24.2	(12.8-35.5)	

a. Use caution in interpreting percentages with N<50.