



# ACT General Health Survey 2011–2021 Adults report: Results in Brief

## Background

The ACT General Health Survey has been undertaken annually since 2007 to monitor health-related trends in the ACT. It collects information about traditional risk factors such as nutrition, physical activity, obesity, alcohol and smoking and more recently, wellbeing factors such as life satisfaction, personal wellbeing, resilience and safety. It is conducted using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing with a random sample of ACT residents.

This short summary presents key findings from the 2011-21 trends report, which examines key health indicators for adults aged 18 years and over. It is available here: [ACT General Health Survey, 2011–2021 adult health trends report](#).

## Key findings

- Between 2011 and 2021, the proportion of adults who reported that they do not have a mental health condition significantly decreased while the prevalence of anxiety, depression and stress-related problems all significantly increased. Females were significantly more likely to report being diagnosed with these conditions than males in most years.
- Between 2011 and 2021, of those respondents who reported having a mental health condition, the proportion currently receiving treatment significantly increased.
- Probable serious mental illness significantly increased between 2011 and 2021.
- The use of e-cigarettes significantly increased between 2015 and 2021.
- The proportion of adults reporting risky drinking significantly increased between 2016 and 2021. Since 2018, males have been significantly more likely to be risky drinkers than females.
- The proportion of adults who met the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines for fruit and vegetable consumption significantly decreased between 2011 and 2021 and the average number of fast-food meals/snacks eaten per month significantly increased. Adults aged 18 to 24 years were significantly more likely to eat more fast food per month on average than adults aged 65 years and over in most years.
- There was a significant decrease in the proportion of adults in the healthy weight category and a significant increase in the proportion of adults classified as overweight or obese between 2011 and 2021. Males were significantly more likely to be overweight than females in most years and adults aged 18 to 24 years were significantly more likely to be in the

healthy weight category than adults aged 45 to 64 years and 65 years and over in most years.

## Implications

This report highlights some concerning trends. Prevalence of mental health conditions have increased, particularly for women. Risky drinking behaviour has increased over the 10-year period and the use of e-cigarettes has also increased.

The proportion of Canberrans meeting the Australian Dietary Guidelines has decreased alongside an increase in consumption of fast food. The proportion of Canberrans who are overweight or obese has increased over the 10-year period.

Ongoing data collections such as the ACT General Health Survey are important tools to monitor population health and the success of interventions to improve population health outcomes. The trends identified in this report will continue to be a focus for monitoring the health status of our community.

ACT General Health Survey statistics are updated annually and published on the HealthStats ACT website (<https://health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/data-and-publications/healthstats>). While all efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of data presented in this report, any updates made to ACT General Health Survey data following publication will be available on the HealthStats ACT website.



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