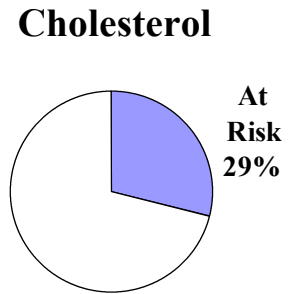


Cholesterol: Respondents who have had their blood cholesterol checked and been told they have high blood cholesterol.



CHOLESTEROL

Background

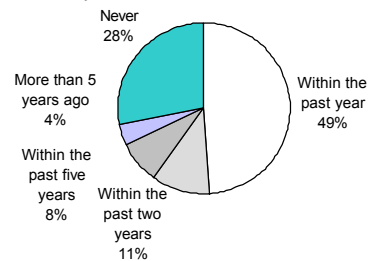
Persons with high blood cholesterol have about twice the risk of developing coronary heart disease as persons with normal cholesterol levels.

High blood cholesterol is associated with an increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease, especially coronary heart disease. Studies have shown that the risk of coronary heart disease increases as the level of cholesterol in the blood increases. Approximately 30% of coronary heart disease in the United States is attributed to high blood cholesterol¹, and persons with a blood cholesterol level of 240 mg/dL or higher have approximately twice the risk of developing coronary heart disease as persons with normal cholesterol levels. The results of the Second National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES II) indicate that 30% of adults nationwide have border-line high cholesterol levels and 27% have high cholesterol levels (200 to 239 mg/dL). The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that persons aged 18 and older have a blood cholesterol screening every five years.¹ Risk factors for high blood cholesterol which can not be eliminated are a family history of high blood cholesterol and advancing age. Modifiable risk factors that contribute to high blood cholesterol are high dietary fat intake (especially saturated fats), being overweight, physical inactivity, and cigarette use.

Cholesterol Awareness

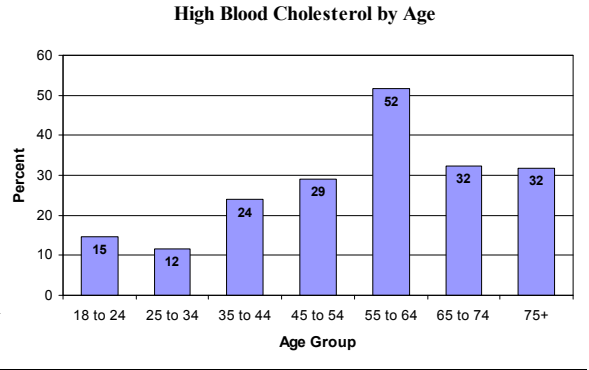
Seventy-three percent of Saline County respondents reported ever having their blood cholesterol checked; the same statistic was reported statewide in 1999. Nearly half reported having had their cholesterol checked within the past year.

About how long has it been since you last had your blood cholesterol checked?

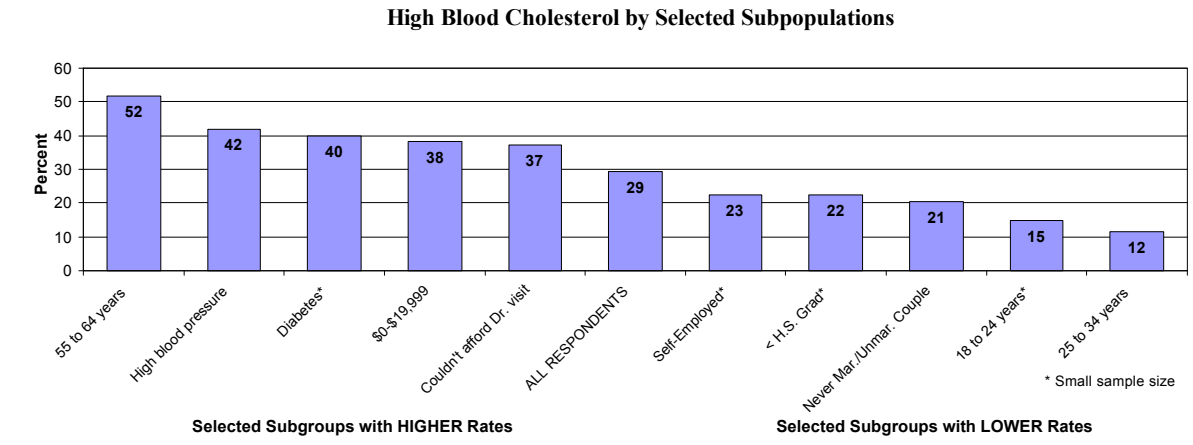


Who's at Risk in Saline County

Twenty-nine percent of Saline County respondents who reported having had their blood cholesterol checked had been told by a doctor or other health professional that their cholesterol was high. This compares to 27% of respondents statewide and 30% nationally in 1999. Although a slightly greater percentage of Saline County females than males were at-risk (31% versus 27%), this difference was not significant. Reported risk in Saline County varied by age, with the highest risk observed among those aged 55 to 64. There was some evidence that those in the lowest income bracket in Saline were at a higher risk, but this difference was also not significant. Nationally in 1999, risk for high blood cholesterol appeared to increase with increasing age, decreasing household income, and decreasing educational attainment.



Forty-two percent of Saline County respondents at risk for high blood pressure and 40% at risk for diabetes were also at risk for high blood cholesterol.



Reference

¹ Anda RF. Elevated Blood Cholesterol. IN: Brownson RC, Remington PL, Davis JR, eds. Chronic Disease Epidemiology and Control. APHA, Baltimore, MD: Port City Press, 1993: pp 123-135.