

Report: Healthy eating, physical activity low among high school students

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Daily consumption of fruits, vegetables, and breakfast and rates of

meeting aerobic and muscle-strengthening guidelines are low for U.S. high school students in grades 9 to 12, according to research published in the April 28 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Shannon L. Michael, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues used data from the 2021 national Youth Risk Behavior Survey to update estimates of dietary and physical activity behaviors among U.S. high school students in grades 9 to 12. In addition, two-year comparisons of these behaviors were conducted for 2019 versus 2021.

The researchers found that daily consumption of fruits, [vegetables](#), and breakfast during the past seven days remained low in 2021 and decreased from 2019 to 2021 overall, with specific disparities seen by sex and race/ethnicity. From 2019 to 2021, there was a decrease observed in the overall prevalence of students attending [physical education classes](#) daily, exercising to strengthen muscles on three or more days/week, and playing on at least one sports team.

Being physically activity for 60 minutes or more per day on all seven days and meeting both aerobic and muscle-strengthening guidelines remained low, but stable.

"Understanding current dietary and physical activity behaviors among [high school students](#) nationwide can support schools, communities, and families to make decisions about strategies needed to improve these behaviors during the pandemic recovery phase and beyond," the authors write.

More information: [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

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