

Saint Lucia STEPS Survey 2019

Fact Sheet

The STEPS survey of noncommunicable disease (NCD) risk factors in Saint Lucia was carried out from November 2019 to October 2020 (on hold March-June 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic). Saint Lucia carried out Step 1, Step 2 and Step 3. Socio demographic and behavioural information was collected in Step 1. Physical measurements such as height, weight and blood pressure were collected in Step 2. Biochemical measurements were collected to assess blood glucose and cholesterol levels in Step 3. The survey was a population-based survey of adults aged 18-69. A multi-stage systematic random sample design was used to produce representative data for that age range in Saint Lucia. A total of 2,964 adults participated in the survey from a sample size of 4,197. The overall response rate was 70.6 percent. A repeat survey is planned for 2024 if funds permit.

Results for adults aged 18-69 years (incl. 95% CI)	Both Sexes	Males	Females
Step 1 Tobacco Use			
Percentage who currently smoke tobacco	12.9% (11.6 – 14.2)	25.2% (22.8 – 27.8)	3.4% (2.5 – 4.6)
Percentage who currently smoke tobacco daily	8.5% (7.4 – 9.6)	16.8% (14.8 – 19.0)	2.1% (1.4 – 3.1)
<i>For those who smoke tobacco daily</i>			
Average age started smoking (years)	17.5 (16.9 – 18.1)	17.0 (16.5 – 17.5)	*
Percentage of daily smokers smoking manufactured cigarettes	80.0% (75.2 – 84.6)	80.3 (75.1 – 85.7)	77.6 (63.2 – 92.3)
Average number of cigarettes smoked per day (among daily cigarette smokers)	6.1 (5.1 – 7.1)	6.3 (5.2 – 7.3)	*
Step 1 Alcohol Consumption			
Percentage who are lifetime abstainers	14.6% (13.1 – 16.2)	9.0% (7.2 – 10.9)	18.9% (16.9 – 21.1)
Percentage who are past 12-month abstainers	11.6% (10.3 – 13.0)	9.6% (8.0 – 11.3)	13.1% (11.4 – 15.1)
Percentage who currently drink (drank alcohol in the past 30 days)	61.9% (59.8 – 63.9)	72.3% (69.5 – 74.9)	53.9% (51.1 – 56.6)
Percentage who engages in heavy episodic drinking (6 or more drinks on any occasion in the past 30 days)	19.1% (17.4 – 20.9)	28.8% (26.1 – 31.6)	11.6% (10.1 – 13.4)
Step 1 Diet			
Mean number of days fruit consumed in a typical week	4.1 (4.0 – 4.2)	4.1 (3.9 – 4.2)	4.1 (4.0 – 4.2)
Mean number of servings of fruit consumed on average per day	1.5 (1.4 – 1.6)	1.6 (1.5 – 1.7)	1.4 (1.3 – 1.5)
Mean number of days vegetables consumed in a typical week	4.2 (4.1 – 4.4)	4.1 (4.0 – 4.3)	4.3 (4.2 – 4.5)
Mean number of servings of vegetables consumed on average per day	1.3 (1.2 – 1.3)	1.2 (1.2 – 1.3)	1.3 (1.2 – 1.3)
Percentage who ate less than 5 servings of fruit and/or vegetables on average per day	83.2% (81.7 – 84.7)	81.7% (79.3 – 84.0)	84.3% (82.3 – 86.3)
Percentage who always or often add salt or salty sauce to their food before eating or as they are eating	6.3% (5.2 – 7.4)	5.6% (4.3 – 7.0)	6.7% (5.3 – 8.2)
Percentage who always or often eat processed foods high in salt	17.6% (16.0 – 19.2)	16.9% (14.7 – 19.2)	18.2% (16.1 – 20.2)
Step 1 Physical Activity			
Percentage with insufficient physical activity (defined as < 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity per week, or equivalent) *	17.1% (15.3 – 18.9)	13.9% (11.7 – 16.1)	19.5% (17.2 – 21.9)
Median time spent in physical activity on average per day (minutes) (Presented with inter-quartile range)	118.6 (35.7 – 320.0)	191.4 (52.6 – 415.7)	90.0 (30.0 – 214.3)
Percentage not engaging in vigorous activity	65.9% (64.1 – 67.8)	42.8% (39.8 – 45.8)	83.7% (81.5 – 85.8)

* Indicates estimate based on less than 50 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

*For complete definitions of insufficient physical activity, refer to the GPAQ Analysis Guide (<http://www.who.int/chp/steps/GPAQ/en/index.html>) or to the WHO Global recommendations on physical activity for health (http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet_recommendations/en/index.html)

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Step 1 Cervical Cancer Screening			
Percentage of women aged 30-49 years who have ever had a screening test for cervical cancer			80.8% (77.7 – 83.8)
Percentage of women who have never had a breast exam			19.3% (17.3 – 21.3)
Percentage of women aged 50-69 years who have never had a mammography			58.8% (54.7 – 62.8)
Step 2 Physical Measurements			
Mean body mass index - BMI (kg/m ²)	28.4 (28.1 – 28.7)	26.1 (25.7 – 26.6)	30.2 (29.8 – 30.6)
Percentage who are overweight or obese (BMI ≥ 25 kg/m ²)	65.0% (63.0 – 66.9)	50.0% (46.9 – 53.2)	76.8% (74.3 – 79.3)
Percentage who are obese (BMI ≥ 30 kg/m ²)	34.9% (32.9 – 36.9)	20.6% (18.0 – 23.2)	46.1% (43.5 – 48.7)
Average waist circumference (cm)		84.3 (83.0 – 85.5)	89.9 (88.4 – 91.3)
Mean systolic blood pressure - SBP (mmHg), including those currently on medication for raised BP	128.5 (127.6 – 129.4)	131.8 (130.5 – 133.1)	126.0 (124.8 – 127.2)
Mean diastolic blood pressure - DBP (mmHg), including those currently on medication for raised BP	82.6 (82.1 – 83.2)	82.7 (81.9 – 83.2)	82.6 (82.1 – 83.2)
Percentage with raised BP (SBP ≥ 140 and/or DBP ≥ 90 mmHg or currently on medication for raised BP)	39.4% (37.4 – 41.4)	38.0% (35.0 – 41.0)	40.6% (38.1 – 43.0)
<i>For those with raised BP (SBP ≥ 140 and/or DBP ≥ 90 mmHg or currently on medication for raised BP)</i>			
Percentage with raised BP, not previously diagnosed	37.3% (34.4 – 40.2)	52.8% (48.0 – 57.7)	26.0% (22.5 – 29.5)
Percentage with raised BP, previously diagnosed, not currently on medication	22.5% (19.9 – 25.1)	21.8% (17.6 – 26.0)	23.1% (19.4 – 26.7)
Percentage with raised BP, previously diagnosed, currently on medication, not controlled	26.1% (23.3 – 28.9)	18.1% (14.4 – 21.7)	31.9% (28.2 – 35.7)
Percentage previously diagnosed, currently on medication, controlled (SBP<140 and DBP<90 mmHg)	14.1% (12.1 – 16.1)	7.3% (4.9 – 9.8)	19.0% (16.0 – 22.0)
Step 3 Biochemical Measurement (unweighted)**			
Mean fasting blood glucose, including those currently on medication for raised blood glucose [mg/dl]	100.0	97.8	101.7
Percentage with impaired fasting glycaemia - plasma venous value ≥110 mg/dl and <126 mg/dl	9.5%	9.4%	9.6%
Percentage with raised fasting blood glucose as defined below or currently on medication for raised blood glucose - plasma venous value ≥126 mg/dl	15.9%	14.4%	17.0%
Mean total blood cholesterol, including those currently on medication for raised cholesterol (mg/dl)	166.9	154.9	176.2
Percentage with raised total cholesterol (≥ 190 mg/dl or currently on medication for raised cholesterol)	31.9%	23.4%	38.5%
Cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk (unweighted)**			
Percentage aged 40-69 years with a 10-year CVD risk ≥ 30%, or with existing CVD**	9.3%	8.7%	9.8%
Summary of combined risk factors			
- current daily smokers - less than 5 servings of fruits & vegetables per day - insufficient physical activity - overweight (BMI ≥ 25 kg/m²) - raised BP (SBP ≥ 140 and/or DBP ≥ 90 mmHg or currently on medication for raised BP)			
Percentage with none of the above risk factors	3.9% (3.0 – 4.7)	5.9% (4.4 – 7.4)	2.3% (1.4 – 3.2)
Percentage with three or more of the above risk factors, aged 18 to 44 years	23.5% (20.9 – 26.0)	18.3% (15.1 – 21.4)	27.6% (23.7 – 31.6)
Percentage with three or more of the above risk factors, aged 45 to 69 years	46.3% (43.6 – 49.0)	43.4% (39.3 – 47.4)	48.5% (44.7 – 52.3)
Percentage with three or more of the above risk factors, aged 18 to 69 years	35.4% (33.5 – 37.3)	31.3% (28.6 – 34.0)	38.7% (36.1 – 41.3)

** Results for biochemical measurements and cardiovascular disease risk are presented unweighted, given that the response rate for Step 3 was lower than 60%

** A 10-year CVD risk of ≥30% is defined according to age, sex, blood pressure, smoking status (current smokers OR those who quit smoking less than 1 year before the assessment), total cholesterol, and diabetes (previously diagnosed OR a fasting plasma glucose concentration >7.0 mmol/l (126 mg/dl)).

For additional information, please contact: STEPS Country Focal Point, Ministry of Health, St. Lucia - Tel # 758-468-5300