

**Key Measurement:** Consumption of 5+ servings of vegetables or fruit per day on a regular basis for adults aged 25 and above.

**Data source:** Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) from the Centers for Disease Control.

**The big picture: Fewer Americans are eating the recommended daily servings of vegetables and fruit**

- A low percentage of Americans ate 5+ servings of vegetables and fruit in 2011 (18%), and this number decreased slightly to 16% in 2017.
- Every age group was less likely to eat their servings of vegetables and fruit in 2017 (Figure 1).

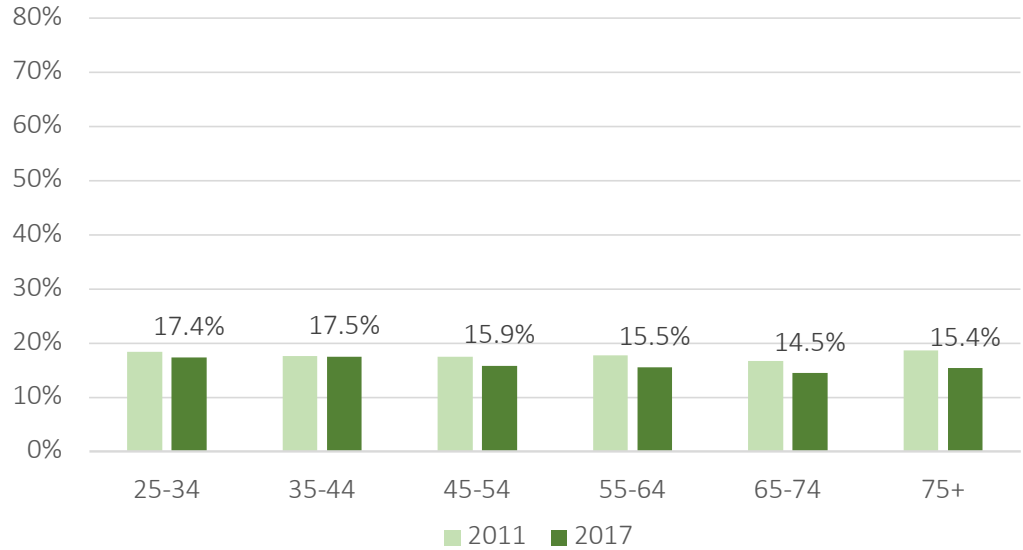


Figure 1. Percentage of adults who ate 5+ servings of vegetables and fruits per day on a regular basis in 2011 and 2017 by age

**Income and Education**

- People with higher incomes and more education continued to be more likely to get their servings of vegetables and fruits (Figures 2 and 3). This trend is explored in the Data Focus in this report’s research update.



Figure 2. Percentage of adults who ate 5+ servings of vegetables and fruits per day on a regular basis in 2011 and 2017 by income

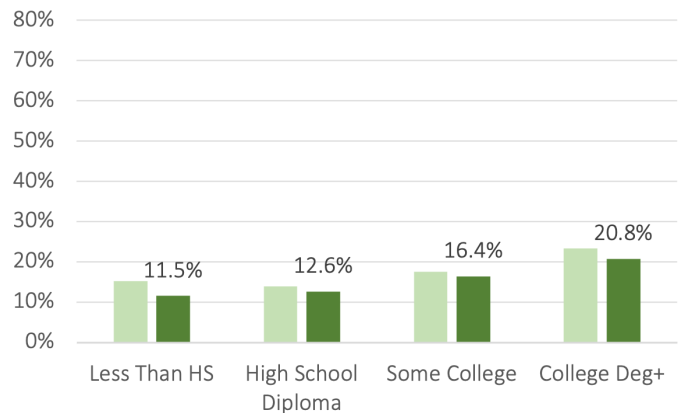


Figure 3. Percentage of adults who ate 5+ servings of vegetables and fruits per day on a regular basis in 2011 and 2017 by education

## Other Key Trends

- Diet trends from 2011-2017 are negative for most groups.
- Women are more likely to get 5+ servings of vegetables and fruit than men (19% of women in 2017, versus 13% of men).
- Married people are slightly more likely to get their servings compared with unmarried individuals (17% of married people in 2017, versus 15% of unmarried people).
- While fewer Americans overall were less likely to eat 5+ servings of vegetables and fruit between 2011 and 2017, Black Americans experienced no change (17%), and Asian Americans experienced a small increase in likelihood of eating 5+ servings, from 21% in 2011 to 22% in 2017 (Figure 4).

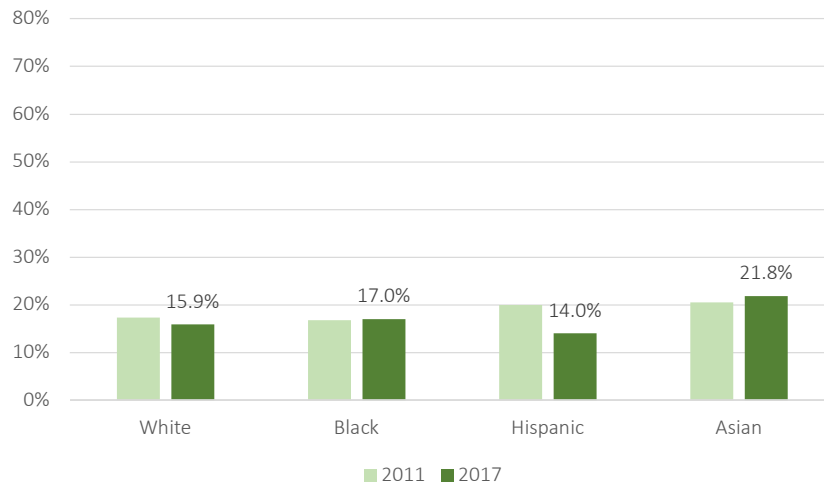


Figure 4. Percentage of adults who ate 5+ servings of vegetables and fruits per day on a regular basis in 2011 and 2017 by race/ethnicity

## Best Practices for Better Nutrition

Stanford Lifestyle Medicine has compiled a list of recommendations for a balanced eating pattern:

- 1. Substitute nutrient-dense foods** rich in vitamins, minerals, and other micronutrients in place of high-calorie foods with minimal nutritional benefits
- 2. Be mindful of caloric intake** by focusing on an appropriate combination of portion size and meal frequency
- 3. Choose a colorful diet** by consuming mostly fruits and vegetables
- 4. Maintain a balanced ratio** of macronutrients including:
  - Unrefined carbohydrates – whole grains, barley, brown rice, fruits and vegetables
  - Lean proteins – fish, minimally processed meat and poultry, egg whites, legumes (beans, peas), soy (tofu, tempeh), non-fat dairy (yogurt, cheese), nuts and seeds
  - Healthy fats – fish oils, flaxseed oils, nuts, seeds, omega-3 fatty acids
- 5. Minimize processed foods** composed of added sugars, saturated and trans fats, and excess salt
- 6. Stay hydrated** by drinking water throughout the day (8x8 rule: eight 8 oz glasses) while limiting alcohol use and sweetened beverages

## More Stanford Resources

Stanford Lifestyle Medicine: <https://longevity.stanford.edu/lifestyle-medicine-2/lifestyle-pillars/lifestyle-medicine-2-nutrition/>  
Stanford Nutrition Studies Research Group: <https://med.stanford.edu/nutrition.html>