



## Key Facts

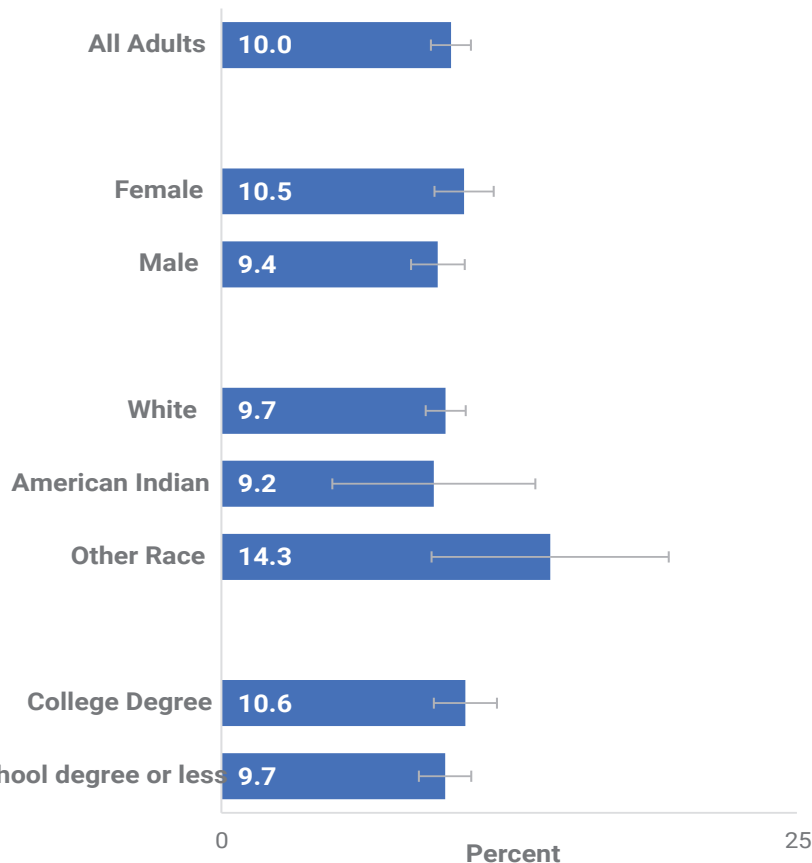
- 81,000 Montana adults are cancer survivors.
- 1 in 5 cancer survivors reported having frequent poor physical health.
- 14% of cancer survivors report having pain related to their cancer or their cancer treatment.
- Over half of cancer survivors (58%) didn't report receiving a summary of their treatment and a follow-up care plan when their treatment was complete.

## Cancer Survivorship among Montana Adults

Cancer survivors include all people ever diagnosed with cancer (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) from the time of their diagnosis through the end of their life! Cancer survivors have many unique concerns that need to be addressed. Their physical health may be impacted (even after completing treatment) by long-term side effects of their treatment and higher risk of subsequent cancers developing. Their mental and emotional health may be impacted by the financial and social impact of cancer. Additionally, cancer survivors are becoming more common as innovations in medical technology have led to earlier diagnoses and improved treatment for many cancers. This report describes characteristics of Montana adult cancer survivors.

In Montana, an estimated 81,000 adults (about 10%) were cancer survivors in 2020 (Figure 1). There was no significant difference in the prevalence of cancer survivors by sex, race, or educational attainment in Montana (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proportion of Montana Adults who Reported Ever being Diagnosed with Cancer, BRFSS, 2020



1 American Cancer Society, *Survivorship: During and After Treatment*. Accessed on Sept 20, 2021 at <https://www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment.html>

2 National Cancer Institute, *Cancer Survivorship*. Accessed on Sept 20, 2021 at <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/survivorship>

### Montana Cancer Control

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Figure 2: Frequent poor health days among cancer survivors compared to adults with no cancer history in Montana, BRFSS, 2020

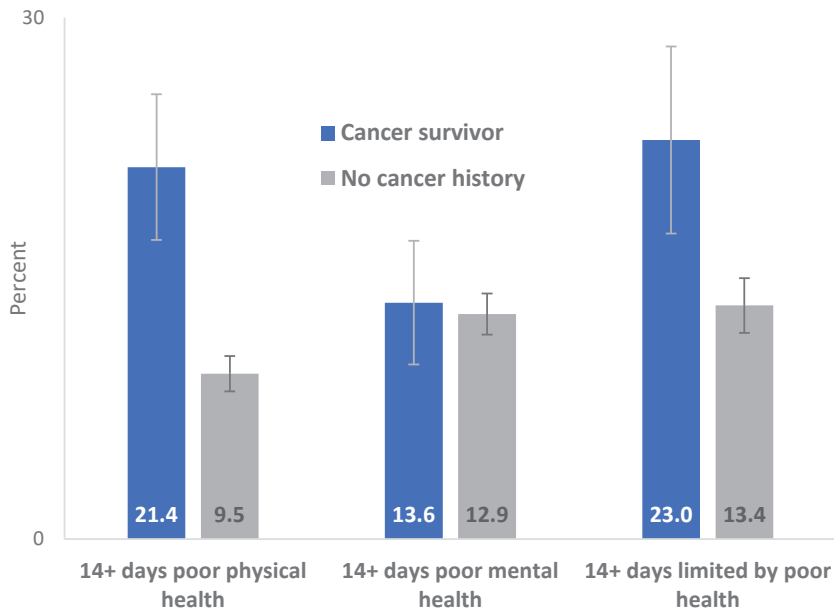
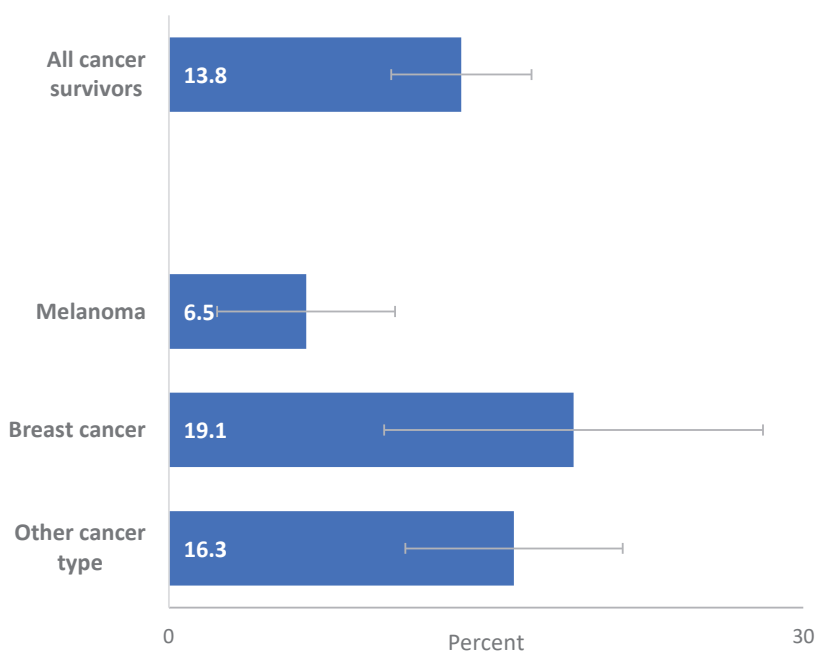


Figure 3: Percent of cancer survivors with current pain due to cancer or cancer treatment by type of cancer, BRFSS, 2020



Among Montana cancer survivors, 80% reported only having one type of cancer and about 70% reported being first diagnosed with cancer after the age of 44. Among cancer survivors, melanoma was the most common type of cancer reported. Breast and prostate cancer were the second and third most common cancers (data not shown).

### Health Status of Cancer Survivors

Cancer survivors reported having frequent poor physical health (14 or more of the past 30 days) two times more often than adults with no cancer history (Figure 2). Cancer survivors also reported being frequently limited in their usual activities by poor health more often than adults with no cancer history. However, there was no significant difference in how often cancer survivors and other adults reported having frequent poor mental health.

Fourteen percent of cancer survivors in Montana (about 10,000 people) reported currently having pain related to their cancer or cancer treatment (Figure 3). Cancer survivors whose most recent cancer diagnosis was melanoma reported having cancer-related pain significantly less often than survivors with other types of cancer. Among cancer survivors who reported having cancer-related pain, almost 1 in 4 (23%) reported that their pain was not well controlled. That means there were about 2,300 adults living with uncontrolled cancer pain in Montana during 2020.

### Survivorship Care Plans

Survivorship care plans are an important tool to empower cancer survivors to manage their own health as they transition back to their primary care provider. They include the following key components:

- summary of cancer treatment received



- schedule for future check-ups and cancer tests
- potential long-term or late effects of the treatment received
- and ideas for improving overall health.

The Institute of Medicine recommends that all cancer survivors receive a survivorship care plan when they complete treatment.<sup>3</sup> Less than half of cancer survivors in Montana (47%) reported receiving a summary of their cancer treatment (Figure 4). Cancer survivors with less education (a high school degree or less) reported getting a summary of their treatment significantly less often than cancer survivors with more education. Seventy-nine percent of Montana cancer survivors reported receiving a follow-up care plan (Figure 5). There were no significant differences in the proportion of survivors who received a follow-up care plan based on sex or education level. Forty-two percent of survivors reported receiving both a treatment summary and a follow-up care plan. That means that 58% of cancer survivors didn't report getting both of these important parts of the survivorship care plan. Additionally, 17% of cancer survivors reported they received neither a summary of their treatment nor a follow up plan.

### Access to Healthcare among Cancer Survivors

Significantly more cancer survivors in Montana reported having some type of health care coverage than adults with

Figure 4: Proportion of cancer survivors who report having received a care summary after completing their cancer treatment, BRFSS, 2020

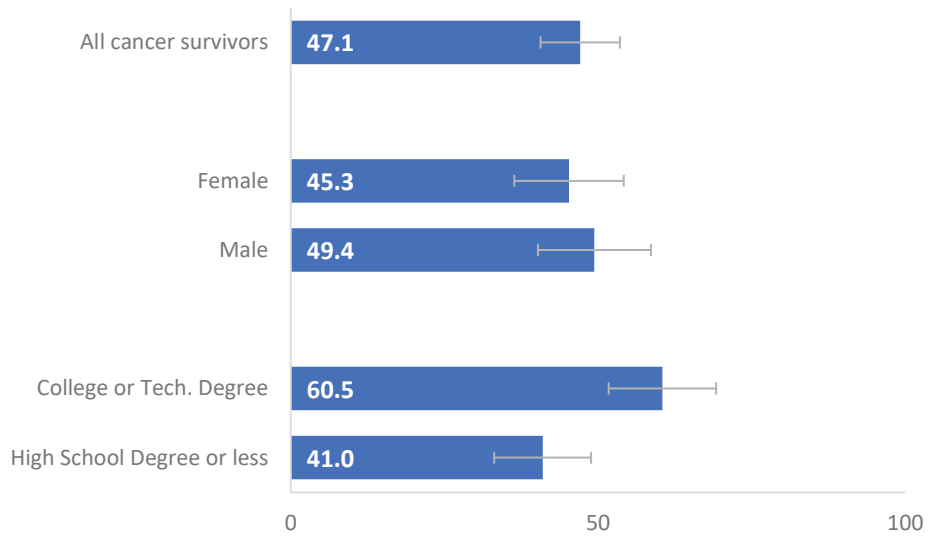
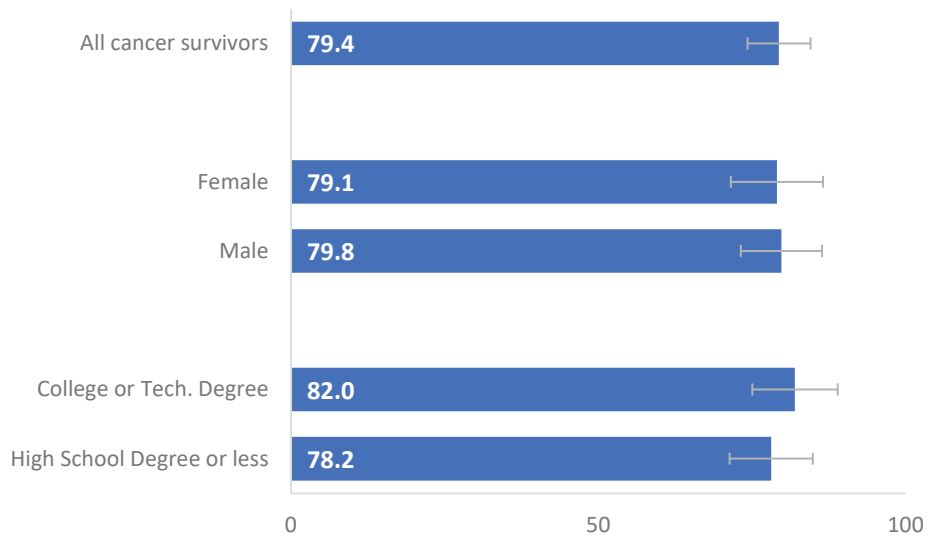


Figure 5: Proportion of cancer survivors who report having received a follow-up care plan after completing their cancer treatment, BRFSS, 2020



<sup>3</sup> Institute of Medicine. 2013. *Delivering High-Quality Cancer Care: Charting a New Course for a System in Crisis*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/18359>.

Figure 6: Health care access indicators among cancer survivors compared to adults with no cancer history in Montana, BRFSS, 2020

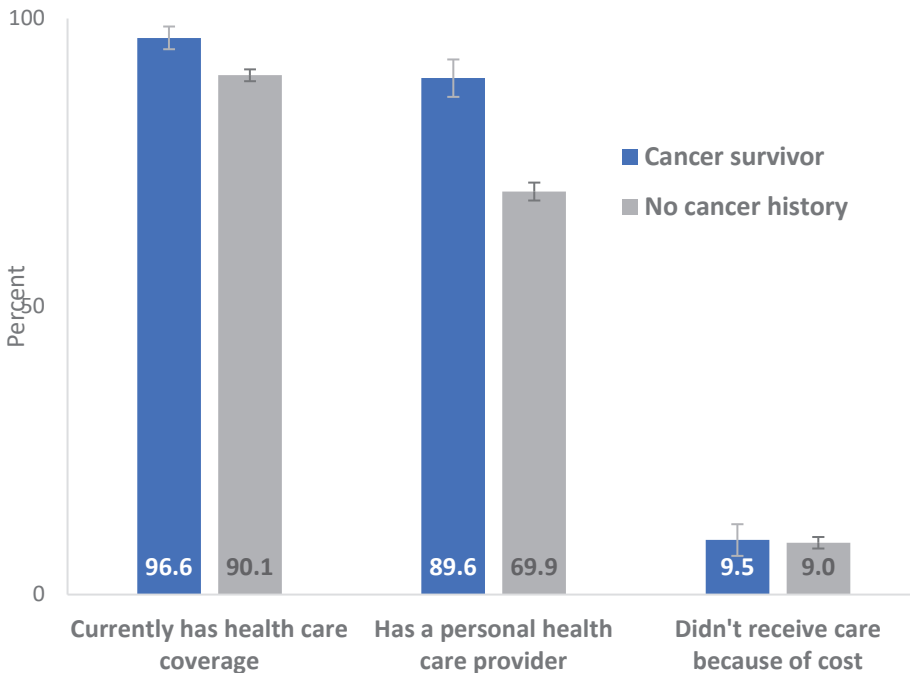
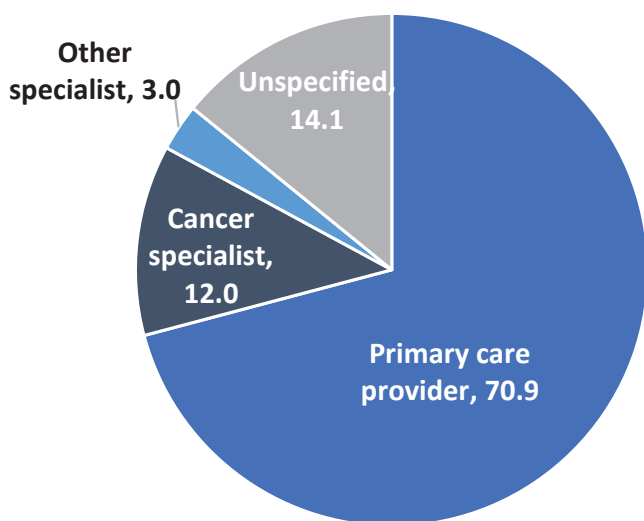


Figure 7: Type of medical professional who provides most of a cancer survivor's health care after completing their cancer treatment, BRFSS, 2020



no cancer history (Figure 6). The higher proportion of cancer survivors with health care coverage may be due to cancer survivors being more likely to be over 65 years of age and eligible for Medicare coverage. Additionally, cancer survivors reported having at least one person they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider significantly more often than adults with no cancer history (Figure 6). Among cancer survivors who have completed their treatment, most (71%) reported that they get the majority of their health care from a primary care provider (Figure 7). However, 12% reported that they still get most of their medical care from a cancer specialist (a cancer surgeon, gynecologic oncologist, medical oncologist, or radiation oncologist).

### Methods and Limitations

The data presented in this report are from the cancer survivor optional module in the 2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) questionnaire. BRFSS is a random digit dialed telephone survey of non-institutionalized adults. It is weighted to be representative of the Montana adult population based on gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, geographic region, home ownership, and marital status<sup>4</sup>. The data is all self-reported and may be subject to recall and social desirability bias. As only one year of data is currently available for the cancer survivor module in Montana, this analysis is based on a sample size of 717 individuals. This small sample size limited the ability to analyze the data by some demographic groups.

4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *BRFSS Frequently Asked Questions*. Accessed on Sept 23, 2021 at [https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/about/brfss\\_faqs.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/about/brfss_faqs.htm)