

Title: Cardiovascular Health (CVH) Status among KSU Students: Implications for Campus-wide CVH Promotion

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) has been the leading causes of death in the US and include coronary heart disease, stroke, deep vein thrombosis, rheumatic heart disease, to name a few. Most CVD cases occur in individuals with various levels of risk factors. In order to cut down on the risk of CVD and improve cardiovascular health (CVH), the American Heart Association (AHA) proposed seven metrics. Each of these metrics has recommended levels of each which help maintain CVH, and to aid those with prior conditions to achieve longer healthier lives.

KSU has collected data on the priority health behaviors from students every two years since 2010, including four CVH metrics: not smoking, healthy body weight, physically active, and healthy diets. Those data show a positive non-smoking trend from 2010-2018 (60 to 77.7%) with a slight reversal to 67.4% in 2020 . Students who met the recommended moderate to vigorous exercises increased from 40-48% in 2010-2018 to 66% in 2020. Normal body mass index was seen among slightly over 50% of the students between 2010-2018, with a slight dip to 49.3% in 2020. Students who had at least 3 servings of fruits and/or vegetables fluctuated around 30% between 2010 and 2018 but dropped to 18.4% in 2020.

Results reveal that a large proportion of KSU students have engaged one or more behaviors that put them at risk for CVD. While some of the numbers shown positive changes in student activities, exposure and ease of access along with peer pressure and stress can run the risk of students engaging in these risky lifestyles. Healthier food options and restrictions, more readily available groups and classes to maintain a healthier body weight along with exercising groups who provide motivation, and smoking restrictions, can all add to an increase in a healthier lifestyle for those at KSU.