

### State of Iowa

Population	3,241,488
Life Expectancy	78.2 years

The five counties with the **highest** life expectancy:

- Sioux: 82.9 years
- Dallas: 82.5 years
- Johnson: 82.2 years
- Lyon: 82.0 years
- Winneshiek: 81.9 years

### United States

Population	340,110,988
Life Expectancy	76.4 years

The five counties with the **lowest** life expectancy:

- Wapello: 74.5 years
- Lee: 74.7 years
- Webster: 75.1 years
- Marshall: 75.2 years
- Monroe: 75.2 years

(Population: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024); Life Expectancy: County Health Rankings 2025 Edition, 2021-2023)

## Access to Care



**54 counties** have a shortage of Primary Care Physicians throughout the county. (HPSA Find, 2026)



**32 counties** have a shortage of Dental Care Providers throughout the county. (HPSA Find, 2026)

Access to care includes the ability to navigate the health care system, find care locally, and pay for services. When someone lacks one or more of these abilities, disparities may emerge.

## Mental Health and Addictive Disorders

### Mental Health



**5.0** poor mental health days/month  
U.S avg: 5.1 days/mo.  
(CDC, BRFSS, 2024, age-adjusted)

Poor mental health is linked to smoking, physical inactivity, housing and food insecurity, and poor sleep. Disorders like depression and anxiety can affect people's ability to take part in healthy behaviors.



**81 counties** have a shortage of Mental Health Care Providers throughout the county. (HPSA Find, 2026)

Iowa has fewer mental health providers than the national average. Access to mental health providers varies widely across the state.

### Trends & Disparities

Nearly **one in four (23.5%) young adults ages 18-24** report frequent mental health distress.

(CDC, BRFSS, 2024, age-adjusted)



Mental health challenges are becoming more common in Iowa.

- On average, adults now experience **5 days of poor mental health each month, up from 3.5 days in 2018.**
- The share of adults who feel **mentally distressed for half the month or more has grown from 9% in 2011 to nearly 15% today.**
- The gap is bigger in rural areas, where **27% of young adults report frequent mental health distress** compared to 22% in metro areas.

**Key takeaway:** Young people and rural communities are facing unique mental health challenges and may need extra support and resources.

## Addictive Disorders



**22.1%** of adults report binge drinking.

More than 500,000 Iowa adults

U.S. avg.: 16.7%

([CDC, BRFSS, 2024, age-adjusted](#))

Alcohol is the most misused substance in Iowa. Iowa's alcohol use rates for almost every demographic are among the highest in the nation.



**20,198** residents received substance use treatment in SFY25.

([Iowa HHS, Behavioral Health, December 2025](#))

Substance use disorders involve misuse of one or more substances and may lead to social, physical, mental, and public health problems. Drug use rates in Iowa are similar to the rest of the nation.

### Trends & Disparities

**31%** of Young adults from Metro areas reported Binge Drinking



Iowa has ranked among the worst states for binge drinking for over a decade, never better than US Rank 45<sup>th</sup> since 2011.

- **Young adults (18 - 24) in metro areas binge drink the most, about 31%**, compared to 25% in rural areas.
- Among adults in metro areas, Iowa has the highest rates in the nation.
  - Ages 18 - 44: **29% binge drink**
  - Ages 45 - 64: **22% binge drink**

**Key takeaway:** Iowa's binge drinking rates are consistently high, especially for young adults and metro communities.

## Social, Economic and Environmental Factors

### Economic Stability & Income

Economic stability is the connection between the financial resources people have and their physical and mental health. People living in poverty are at greater risk for mental illness and chronic diseases.



**11.3%** live below the rate of poverty.

Approx 355,000 Iowans; U.S. avg: 12.1%

([U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2024](#))



**697,587** are enrolled in Medicaid.

([Iowa HHS, Iowa Medicaid Dashboard, June 2025](#))

### Housing & Transportation

Cost-burden, spending more than 30% of income on housing costs, is the most common housing problem in Iowa. Unstable, unsafe, unhealthy or unaffordable housing can harm a person's health, while transportation problems can delay care, be costly, and worsen health outcomes.



**23.8%** of households spend 30% or more on housing.

Approx 319,000 households; U.S. avg: 32.0%

([U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2024](#))



**5.8%** of households do not have a vehicle.

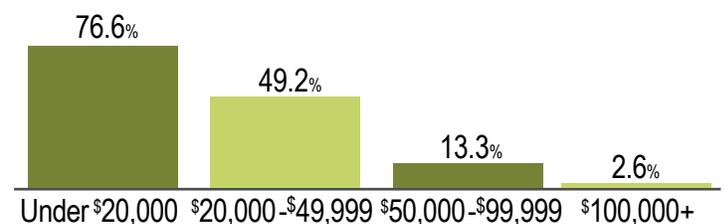
Approx 77,000 households; U.S. avg: 8.5%

([U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2024](#))

### Trends & Disparities

Housing cost burden is higher for households with lower annual incomes than for those with higher incomes and more than twice as high for renters (40%) compared with homeowners (17%). Cost burden for households with incomes less than \$50,000 has increased from 49% in 2018 to 58% in 2024.

### Housing Cost Burden by Household Income (2024)



([U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2024](#))

# Healthy Behaviors and Outcomes

## Active Living & Healthy Eating

A lack of consistent access to healthy food can lead to chronic diseases, obesity, or developmental problems. Being overweight or obese can lead to serious health issues like heart disease, diabetes, stroke, depression, and some cancers.



**36.5%** of adults have an unhealthy body weight (BMI of 30.0 or higher).

More than 800,000 Iowa adults.

U.S. avg: 34.0%

*(CDC, BRFSS, 2024, age-adjusted)*



**375,420** individuals experiencing food insecurity.

*(Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, 2023)*

## Cancer

Many unhealthy behaviors linked to cancer can be prevented such as excessive drinking, using tobacco products, physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and ultraviolet light exposure. Cancer screening tests can detect cancer early, making treatment easier and improving survival.



**498.0** Iowa incidence rate for cancer (per 100,000 people).

An estimated 21,200 new diagnoses in 2025.

U.S. avg: 439.1; *(National Cancer Institute, State Cancer Profiles, 2017-2021)*



**145.5** Iowa death rate from cancer (per 100,000 people).

An estimated 6,300 deaths in 2025.

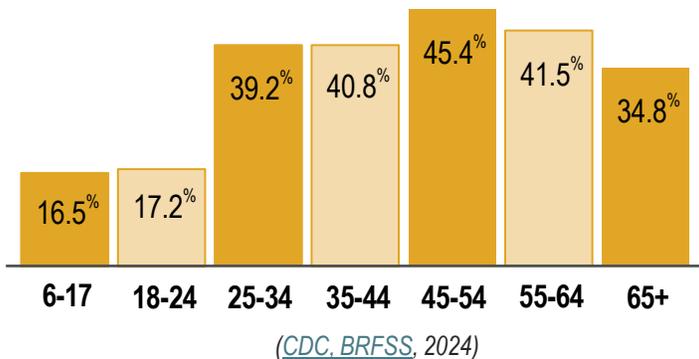
U.S. avg: 142.0; *(National Cancer Institute, State Cancer Profiles, 2018-2022)*

## Trends & Disparities

Obesity rates in Iowa keep climbing.

- **Adults ages 45–54 have the highest rates.**
- While youth and younger adults (18–24) report lower rates, **the rates more than double for ages 25–34.**
- The increase is even bigger in rural areas: ages 25–34 in non-metro areas, **43% vs. 37% in metro areas.**

Obesity rates for different age groups, 2024

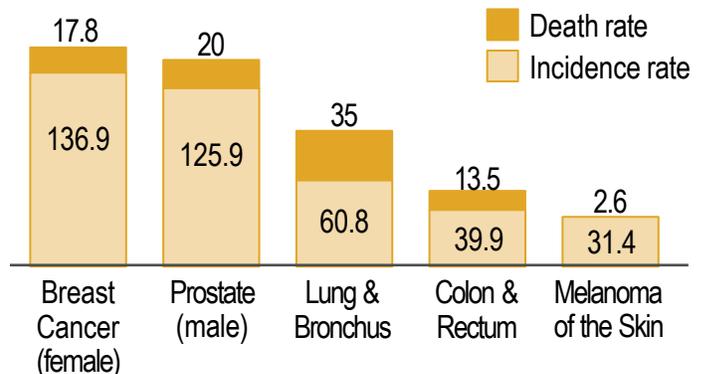


Cancer rates in Iowa remain a serious concern.

- **Iowa has the second highest rate** of new cancer diagnoses in the country and is one of only two states where rates are still rising.
- **The good news:** cancer deaths are declining, thanks to better detection, treatment, and support, dropping from 169 per 100,000 in 2013 to 146 in 2022.

**Key takeaway:** More people are surviving cancer and need long-term support from healthcare providers, communities, and caregivers. (Iowa Cancer Registry, 2025 Cancer in Iowa).

Top 5 Cancer types in Iowa by Incidence and related Death rates



*(National Cancer Institute, State Cancer Profiles)*