

Healthy Eating in Durham Region: Data from the Canadian Community Health Survey



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

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HIGHLIGHTS

The Healthy Eating report presents data for Durham Region from the 2015-16 and 2017-18 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), with a focus on four measures: fruit and vegetable consumption, use of Canada's Food Guide, food security, and body mass index.



72% of Durham Region residents consumed fruits and vegetables less than five times daily and 28 per cent more than five times daily.



57% of residents reported using Canada's Food Guide, most often to assess how well they were eating and to determine how much they needed to eat every day.



89% of households were food secure and 11 per cent experienced food insecurity.



41% adults were normal weight, 34 per cent overweight, and 23 per cent obese, according to the body mass index for adults.



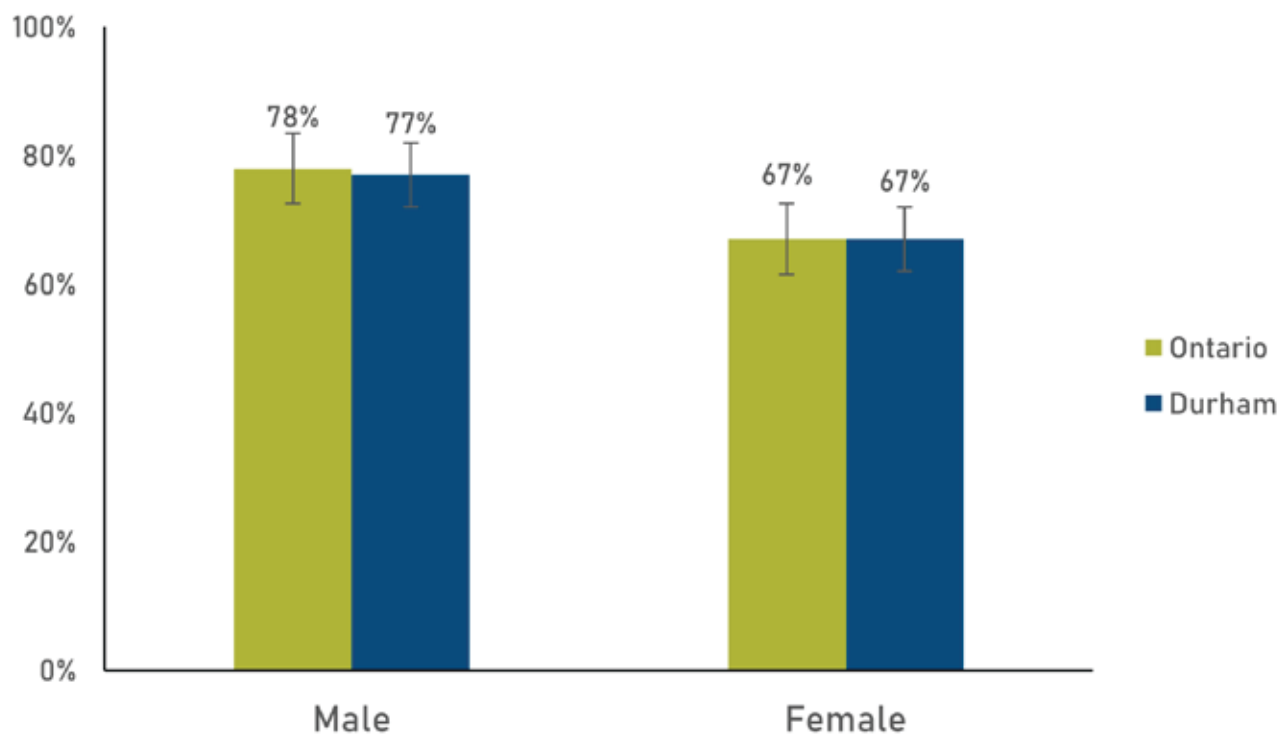
82% of youth aged 12 to 17 were normal weight, according to the body mass index for adolescents.



FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION

In 2015-16, 72 per cent of Durham Region residents aged 12 years and over consumed fruits and vegetables less than five times daily and 28 per cent more than five times daily.

Figure 1: Percentage aged 12 years and over who ate fruits and vegetables less than five times daily by sex, Durham Region and Ontario, 2015-16.



Results for fruit and vegetable consumption:

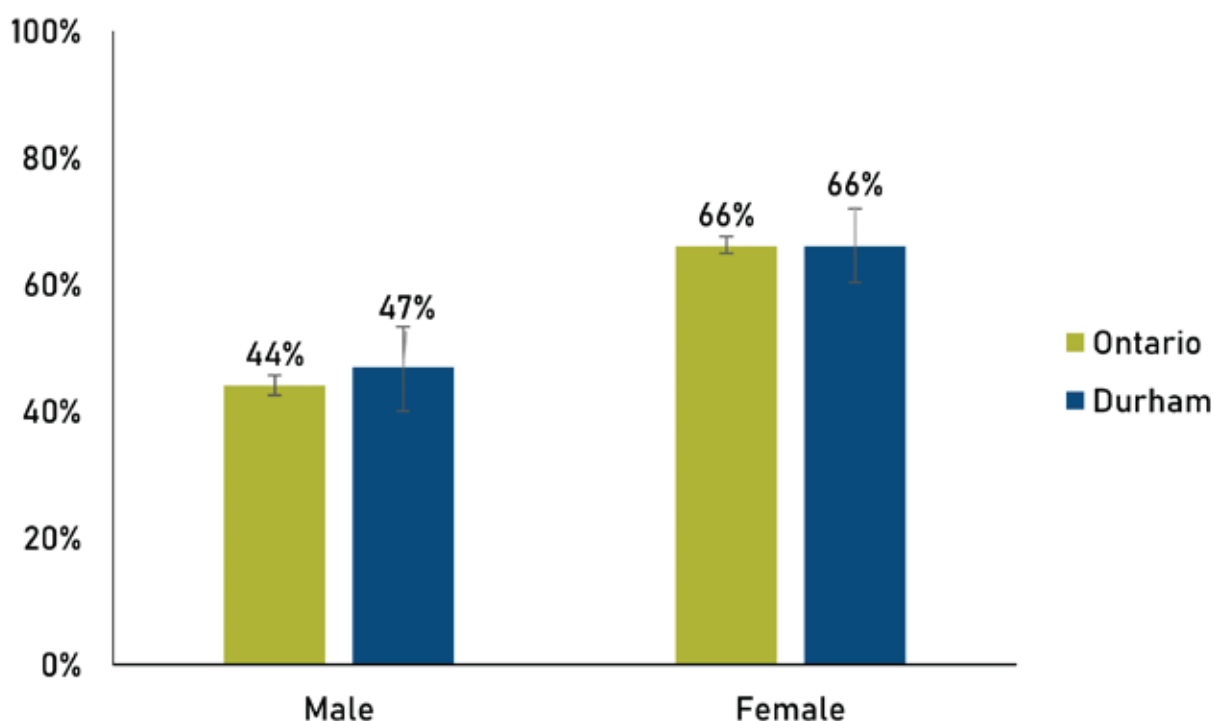
- 77 per cent of males and 67 per cent of females in Durham Region ate fruits and vegetables less than five times daily. While this was not statistically different for our local population due to wider confidence intervals and smaller sample size, results showed that Ontario males ate significantly fewer fruits and vegetables than Ontario females.
- There was no statistical difference between Durham Region residents and the overall Ontario population.

There were no statistical differences for Durham Region residents by sex, age, respondent level of education, household income or time since immigration.

USE OF CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE

- Canada's Food Guide is a set of guidelines set by Health Canada to promote healthy eating among Canadians. It provides information on how to select the amount and types of foods that are considered essential to a healthy diet. Canada's Food Guide was changed in 2019, but the CCHS data is based on the old 2007 guideline.
- In 2015-16, 57 per cent of Durham Region residents aged 12 years and over reported using Canada's Food Guide.

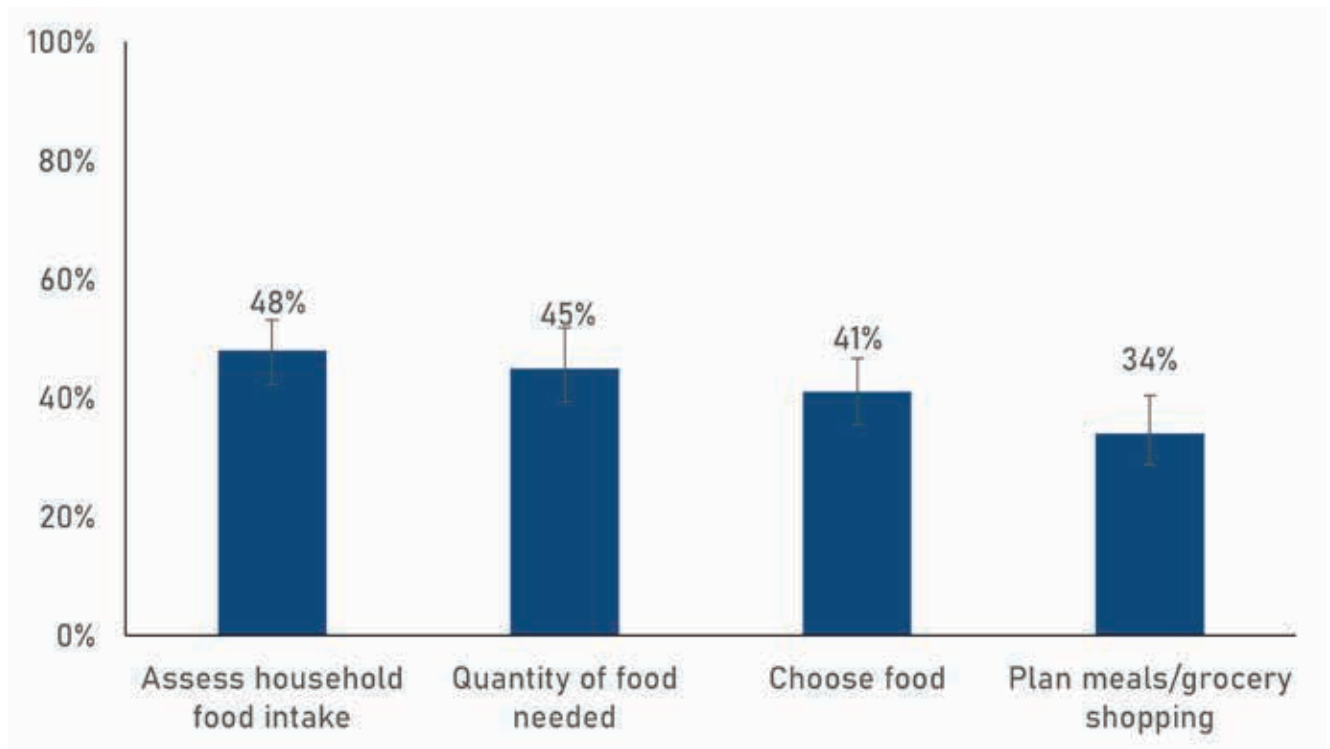
Figure 2: Percentage aged 12 years and over who used Canada's Food Guide by sex, Durham Region and Ontario, 2015-16.



Results for use of Canada's Food Guide:

- Durham Region females were significantly more likely than males to use Canada's Food Guide: 66 per cent compared to 44 per cent. Results were similar for Ontario.
- There was no statistical difference between Durham Region residents and the overall Ontario population.
- There were no statistical differences for Durham Region residents by age, respondent level of education, household income or time since immigration.

Figure 3: Percentage aged 12 years and over, according to how they used Canada's Food Guide, Durham Region, 2015-16.



Result for how Durham Region residents used Canada's Food Guide:

48%
used the guide to assess how well they and household members were eating.

45%
used the guide to determine how much they and household members needed to eat every day.

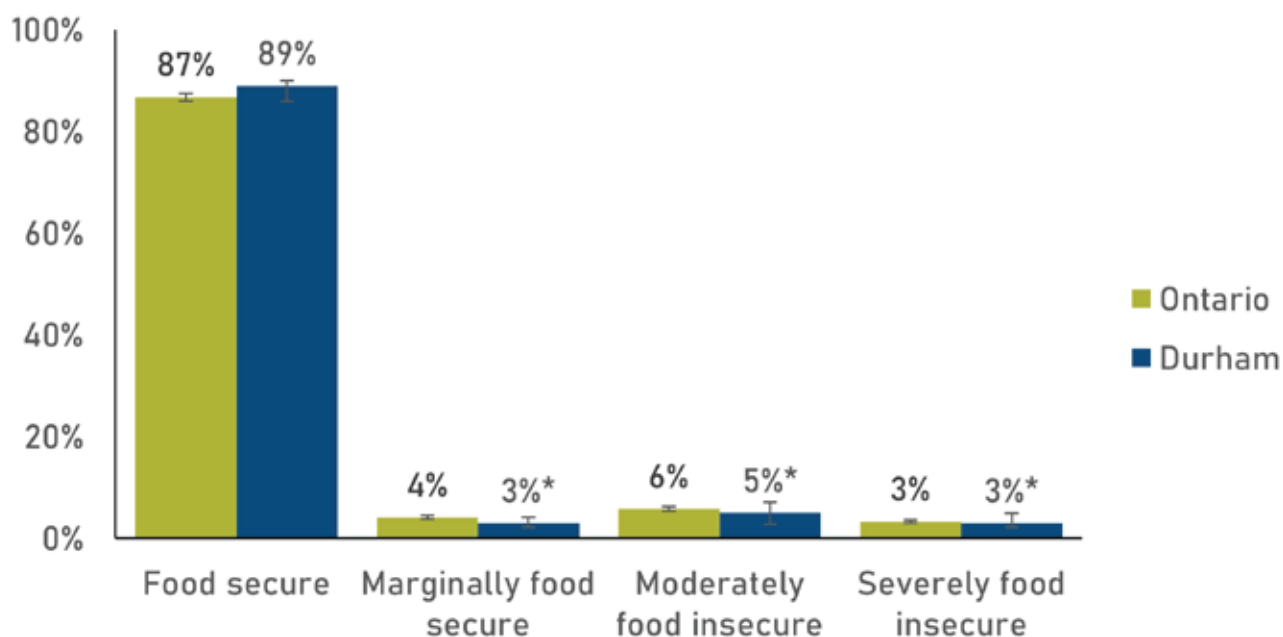
41%
used the guide to choose foods.

34%
used the guide to plan meals or to help with grocery shopping.

FOOD SECURITY

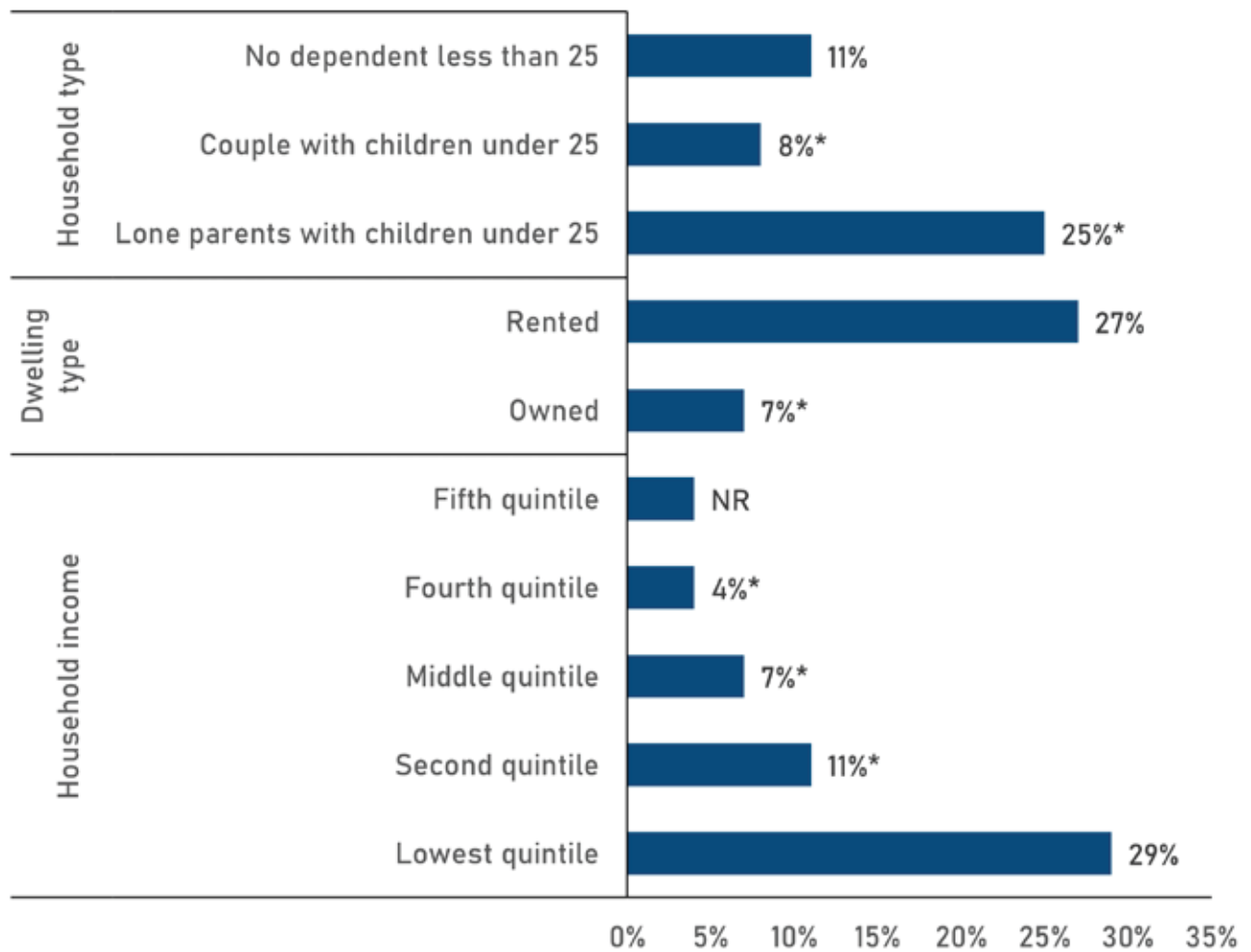
In 2017-18, 89 per cent of Durham Region households were food secure and 11 per cent experienced food insecurity with 3%* marginally, 5%* moderately and 3%* severely food insecure. There was no statistical difference between Durham Region residents and the overall Ontario population.

Figure 4: Household food security status, Durham Region and Ontario, 2017-18.



*Results are to be interpreted with caution due to high sampling variability.

Figure 5: Percentage of Durham Region households experiencing food insecurity by select sociodemographic factors, 2017-18.



*Results are to be interpreted with caution due to high sampling variability.
 NR – Not Releasable

Result for for household food insecurity:



Lone parent households with children under age 25 years were significantly more likely to be food insecure (25 per cent) compared to two parent households (8* per cent)

Lone parent households with children under age 25 years were significantly more likely to be food insecure (25 per cent) compared to households with no dependents under age 25 years (11 per cent)



Rented households were significantly more likely to be food insecure (27 per cent) compared to households where the house was owned (7* per cent)

29 per cent of households within the lowest income quintile reported food insecurity.



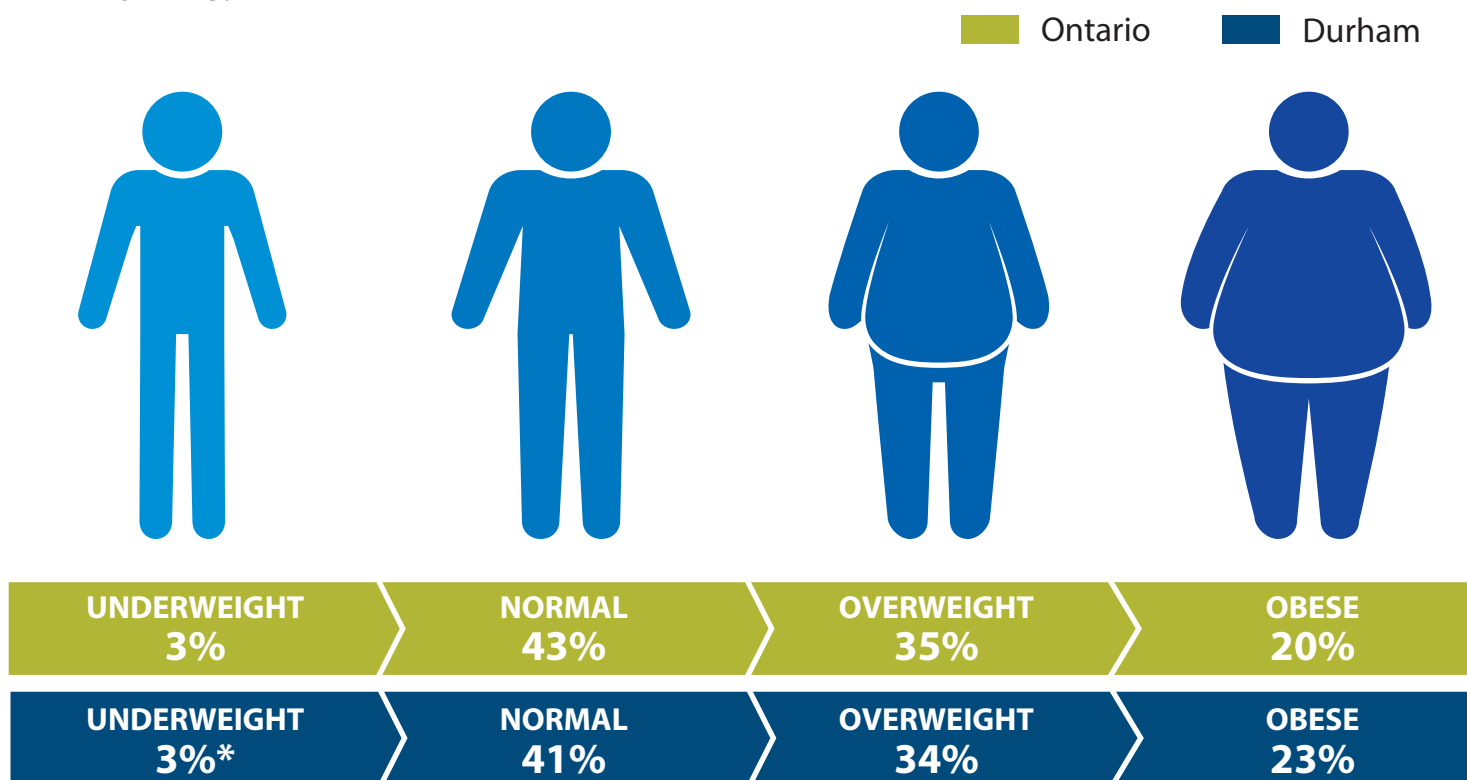
Households within this lowest income quintile were significantly more likely to be food insecure than households in the other income quintiles.



BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

- BMI is a comparison of a person's weight relative to their height. A BMI that is too high is associated with health problems such as metabolic disease, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
- In 2017-18, 3* per cent of Durham Region adults were under weight, 41 per cent normal weight, 34 per cent overweight, and 23 per cent obese.
- Among Durham Region youth aged 12 to 17 years, 82 per cent were normal weight.

Figure 6: Percentage aged 18 and over by BMI category, Durham Region and Ontario, 2017-18.

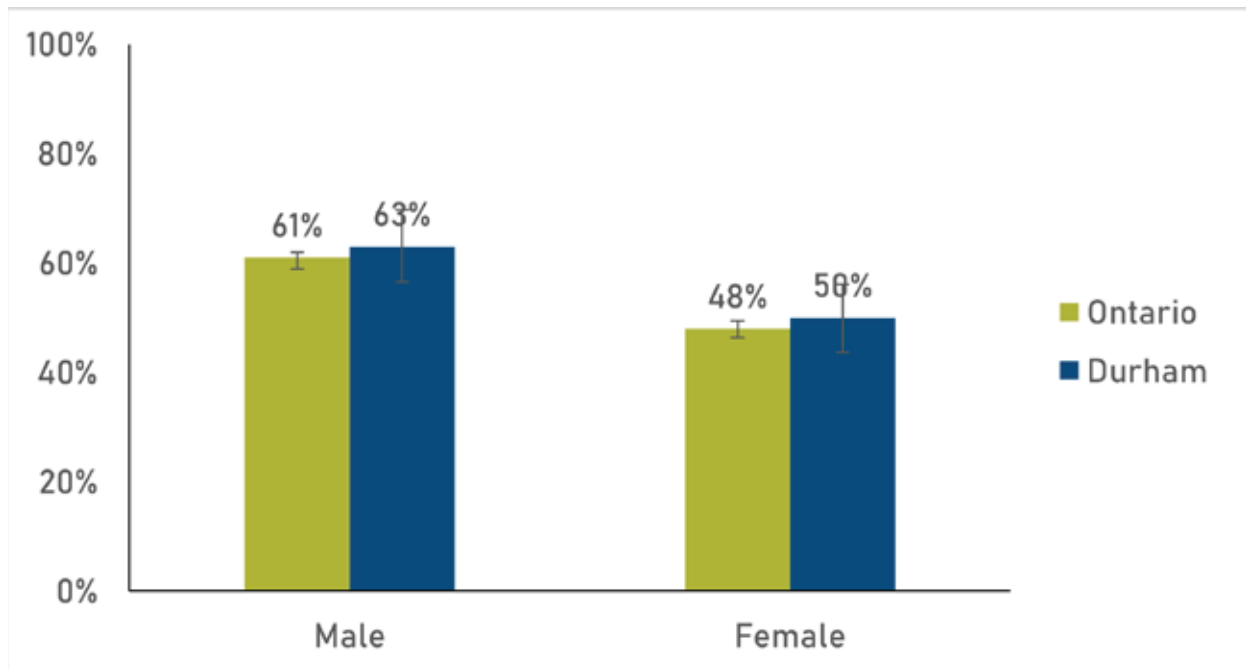


*Results are to be interpreted with caution due to high sampling variability.

Result for BMI:

- There was no statistical difference between Durham Region residents and the overall Ontario population.

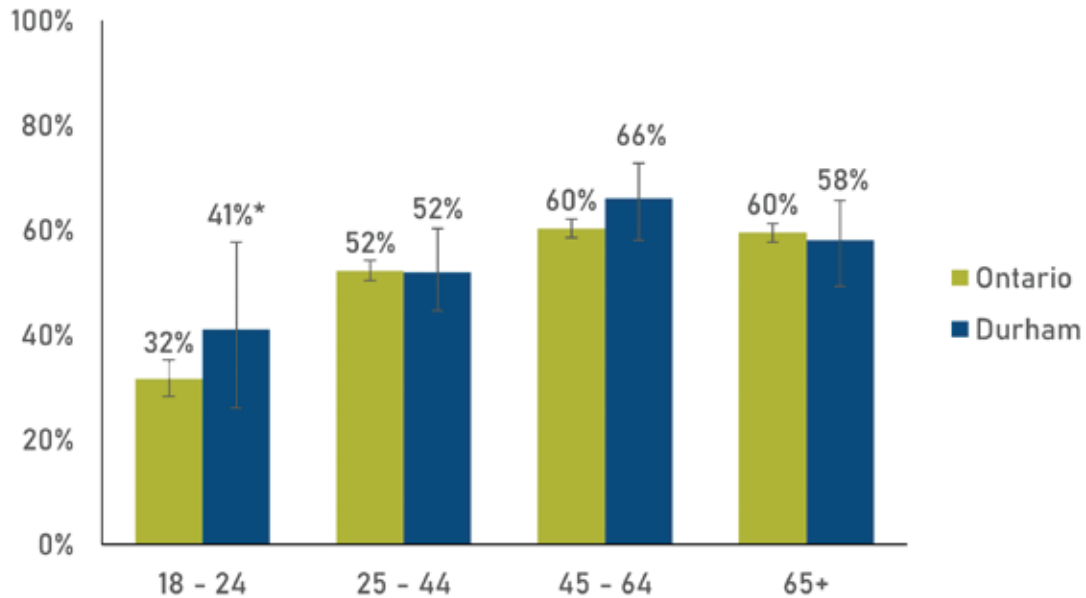
Figure 7: Percentage aged 18 and over that were overweight or obese by sex, Durham Region and Ontario, 2017-18.



Results for overweight or obese by sex:

- 63 per cent of Durham Region males were overweight or obese compared to 50 per cent of females. The difference between males and females was statistically significant in both Durham Region and Ontario.
- There was no statistical difference between Durham Region males and Ontario males, nor between Durham Region females and Ontario females.

Figure 8: Percentage aged 18 and over that were overweight or obese by age, Durham Region and Ontario, 2017/18.



*Results are to be interpreted with caution due to high sampling variability.

Results for overweight or obese by age:

- Durham Region residents aged 45 to 65 were significantly more likely to be overweight or obese compared to those aged 18 to 24.
- There was no statistical difference between Durham Region and the overall Ontario population.
- There were no statistical differences by respondent level of education, household income or time since immigration.

Data Source: The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) is a cross-sectional survey that collects information related to health status, health care utilization and health determinants for the Canadian population. It surveys a large sample of respondents and is designed to provide reliable estimates at the health region level and covers about 98 per cent of the Canadian population aged 12 and older. The CCHS underwent a major redesign that was implemented in 2015. This redesign changed about 70 per cent of the pre-existing modules, while also creating new modules to include new and emerging concepts. The collection period changed from a six two-month collection period to four non-overlapping three-month periods. The CCHS data is collected from persons aged 12 and older living in private dwellings, excluding individuals living on Indian Reserves and on Crown Lands, institutional residents, full-time members of the Canadian Forces, youth aged 12 to 17 living in foster homes, and residents of certain remote regions.

Variable definitions:

- Fruit and vegetable consumption was measured using a CCHS derived variable that classified respondents based on the total number of times per day they ate fruits and vegetables. For this analysis, we collapsed fruit and vegetable consumption 5-10 times per day and more than 10 times per day into one category (fruits and vegetables five or more times per day).
- For information about Canada's Food Guide, the CCHS asked respondents whether they used the guide and for what purpose.
- Food security was measured using [18 questions](#) that asked about food supply and quality, such as whether the respondent was worried food would run out, whether children could not eat a balanced meal or adults cut the size of their meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food. The CCHS calculated a derived variable from these questions to measure food security in a household in the past 12 months. The categories of marginally food secure, moderately food insecure and severely food insecure were combined as food insecure.
- Respondents were asked their height and weight to calculate a CCHS derived variable for adult BMI. BMI was calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height in metres squared. For adults aged 18 and over, except women aged 18 to 55 who were pregnant or did not answer the pregnancy question, BMI was assigned to the following categories: 1) underweight (below 18.5); 2) normal weight (18.5-less than 25.0); 3) overweight (25.0 to less than 30); and 4) obese (30.0 or higher). These categories were adopted from a body weight classification system recommended by [Health Canada](#) and the World Health Organization. The categories of overweight, obese class I, obese class II, and obese class III were combined into overweight/obese.
- BMI was calculated differently for children because they are still growing. The CCHS used age-and-sex-specific cut-off points as defined by [Cole and Lobstein](#) to calculate a derived variable for youth aged 12-17 creating the following categories: 1) thinness, 2) normal, 3) overweight, 4) obese. Female respondents aged 15-17 who were pregnant or did not answer the pregnancy question were excluded. Because the CV was greater than 35% for the percentage of Durham Region youth in the categories of thinness, overweight and obese, only the percentage with a normal BMI was reported.

Data Analysis: The analysis used the CCHS share file obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Health. Stata version 16.1 was used to analyze the data. The final CCHS sampling weight formed the estimates. Error bars in the graphs represent the 95% confidence interval (CI) around the estimate. The true or actual estimate falls within the range of values 95 out of 100 times. Confidence intervals were used to determine level of significance. Sampling variability is measured through the coefficient of variation (CV). Estimates with high CV (>35%) are not considered reliable and hence were labelled as “NR - Not Releasable”. A CV between 15.1% and 35% (inclusive) denotes an estimate that needs to be interpreted with caution due to high sampling variability. All analyses excluded response options of “refusal”, “don’t know”, “not stated” and “valid skip”.