



British Columbia 2011 Regional Cancer Report

Section 4 » Preventative Behavioural Risk Factors



It is projected that by 2019 an estimated 29,000 new cancer diagnoses will occur annually in BC and 84,000 British Columbians will be alive and have had a cancer diagnosis in the preceding 5 years; an increase of 30% in a decade (projected incidence and prevalence rates

for individual cancer sites are found in the Incidence, Mortality, Survival and Prevalence Section of this report). The goal for cancer prevention is simply stated: “keeping healthy people healthy.” But the simplicity of the message may underestimate the complexity of the task. While it is possible to reduce the risk of developing cancer it is not possible to prevent all cancer; the World Health Organization predicts that 50 percent of cancers are preventable. To that end, tracking individual behaviours related to the four main modifiable cancer risk factors: tobacco use, high body mass index, activity levels and alcohol consumption, are important for cancer control.

The data presented here have been extracted from the 2009/2010 CCHS (complete definitions of the indicators can be found in Appendix A). Figure 4-1 through Figure 4-8 show that behavioural risk factors for cancer vary in their prevalence across the province with NH consistently appearing well above the provincial averages. This is of concern. Over the last decade, smoking rates have generally been on the decline; however, NH’s smoking rates consistently trend higher than other health regions and, not surprisingly, poorer lung cancer outcomes are also observed in NH (see Section 8).

The other three prevention indicators: alcohol consumption, obesity and physical activity have remained stable over time. NH had the highest obesity rates and matched the IH for having the highest alcohol consumption rates.

In contrast, VCH had the lowest obesity rates and shared some of the lowest rates for smoking and alcohol consumption with FH. Interestingly, FH was the least active health region yet only 45% of the population reported being obese or overweight in 2009/2010.





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4.1. Smoking Habits

Figure 4-1: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 12) in 2009/2010 who Reported Smoking Cigarettes Every Day, by HSDA

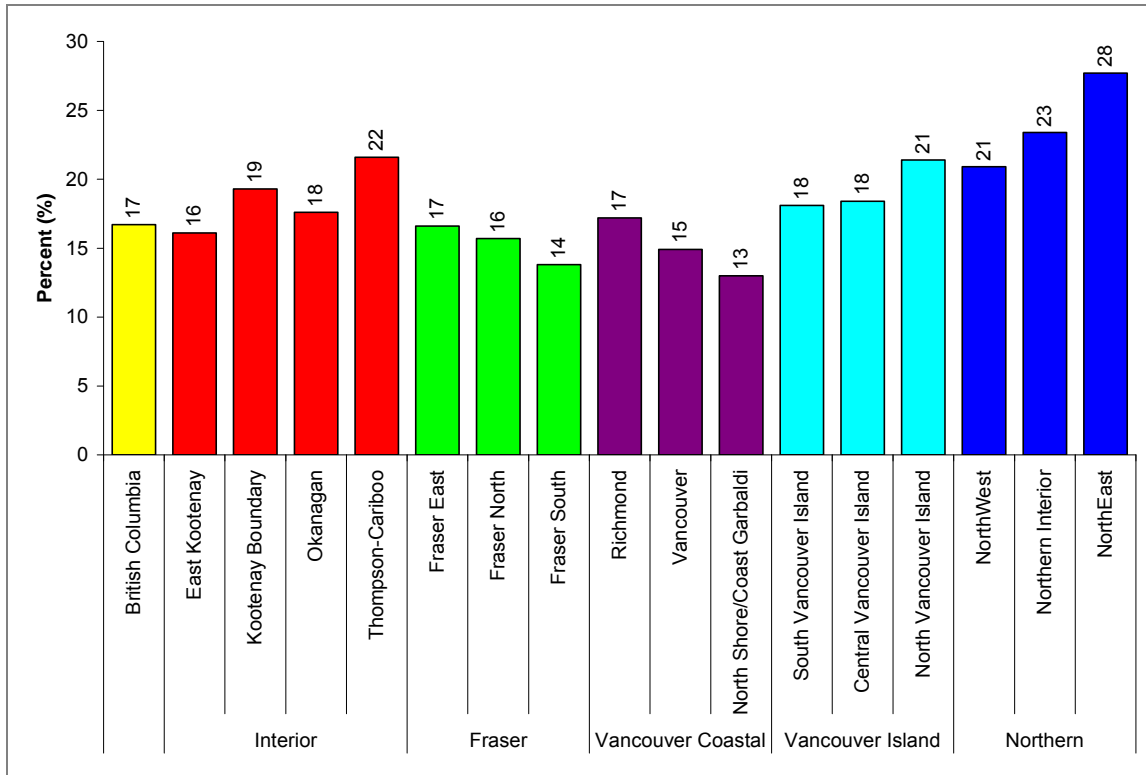
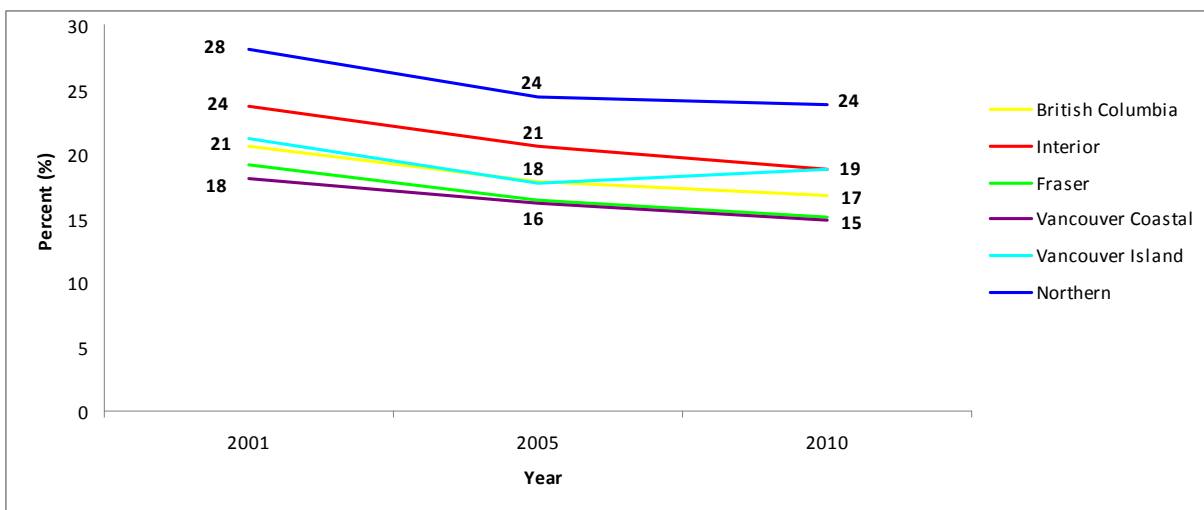


Figure 4-2: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 12) who Reported Smoking Cigarettes Every Day, Over Time by HA





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4.2. Alcohol Consumption

Figure 4-3: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 12) in 2009/2010 who reported Having 5 or More Drinks on One Occasion, at Least Once a Month in the Past Year, by HSDA

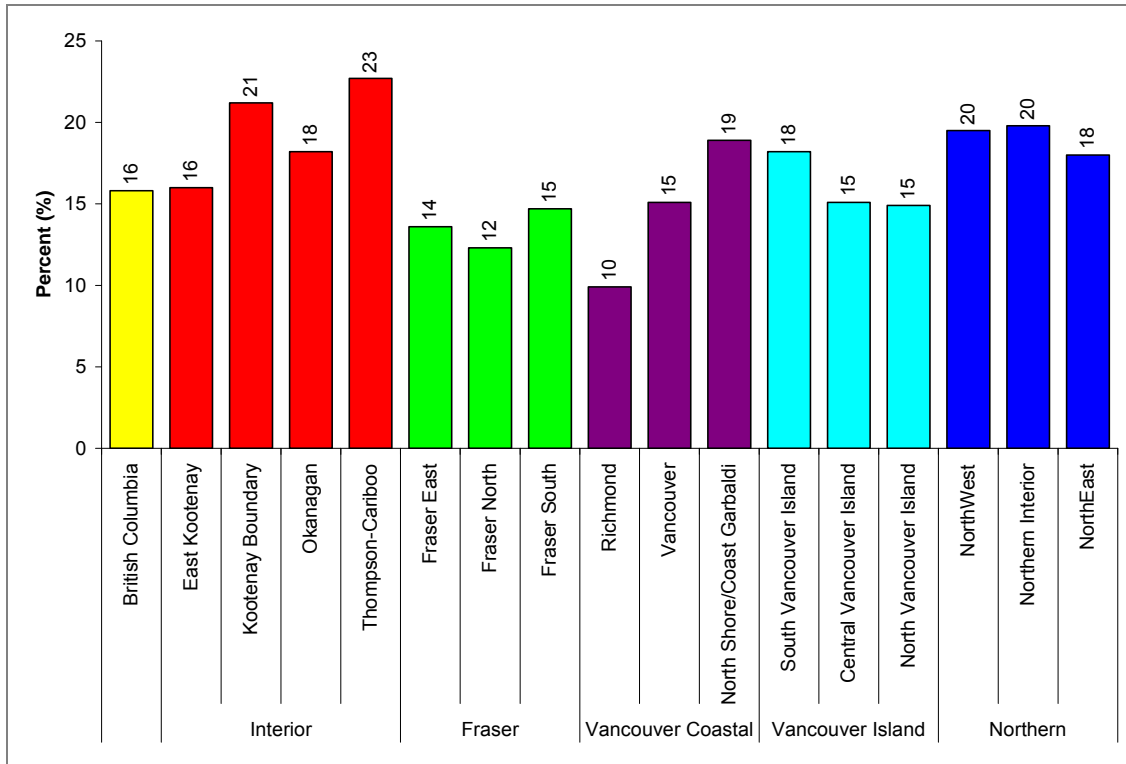
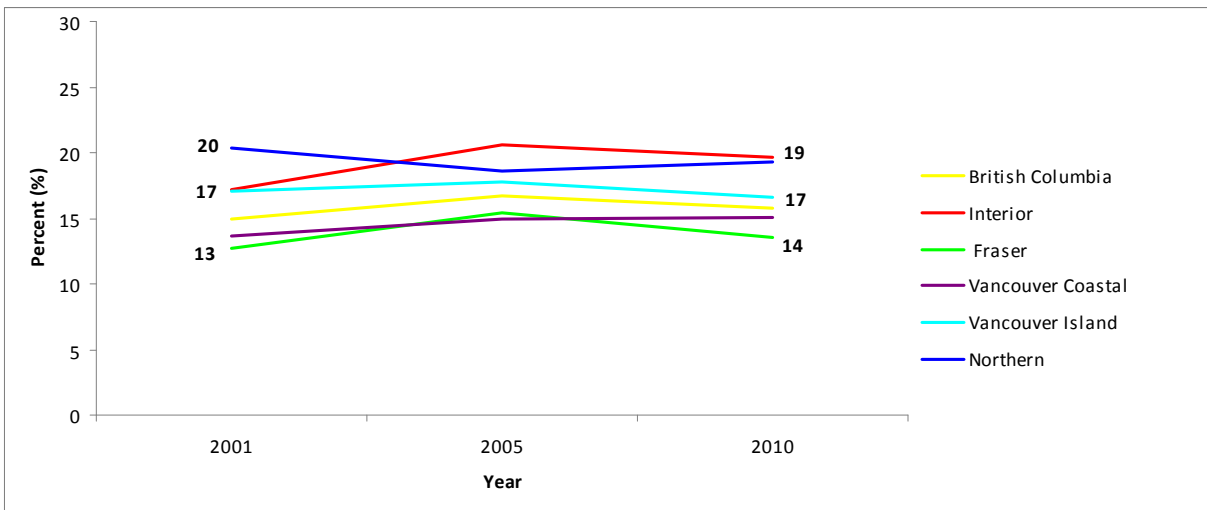


Figure 4-4: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 12) who Reported Having 5 or More Drinks on One Occasion, at Least Once a Month in the Past Year, Over Time by HA





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4.3. Obesity Rates

Figure 4-5: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 18) in 2009/2010 who were Overweight or Obese, by HSDA

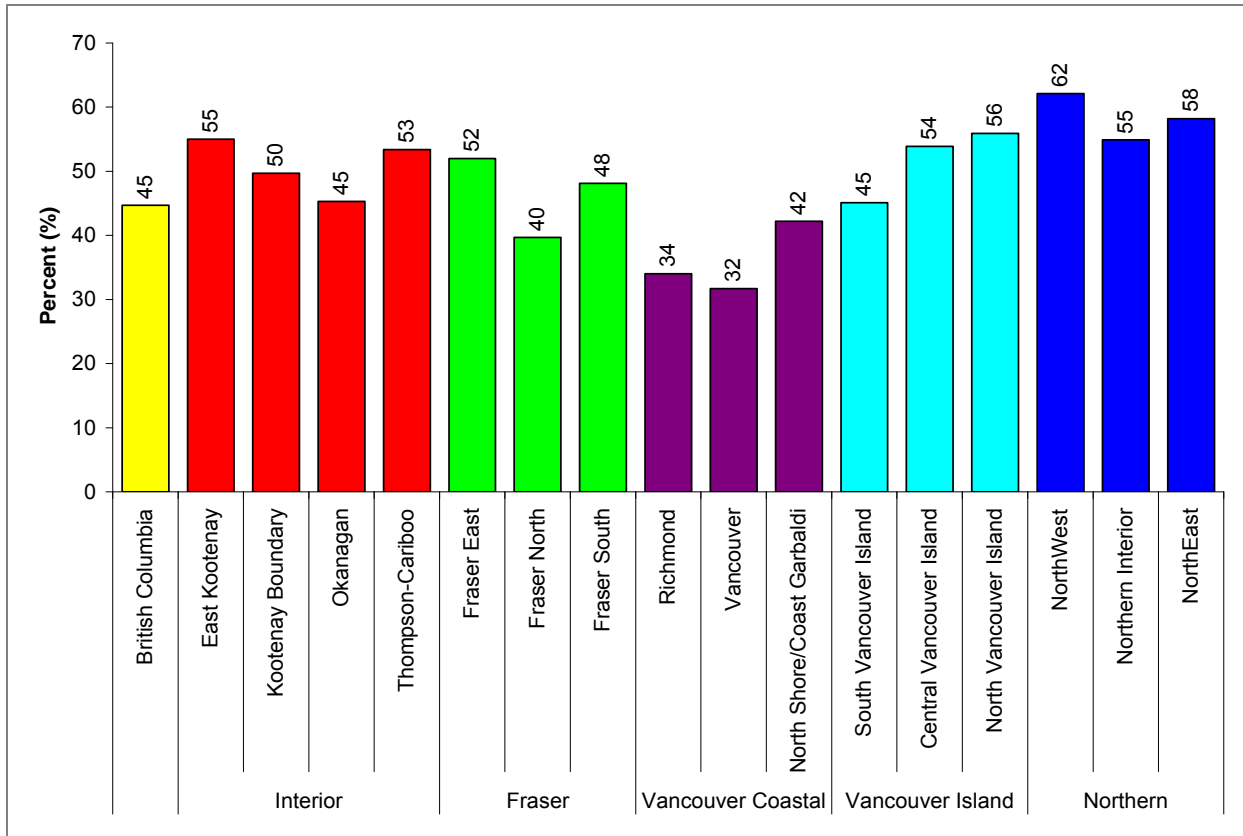
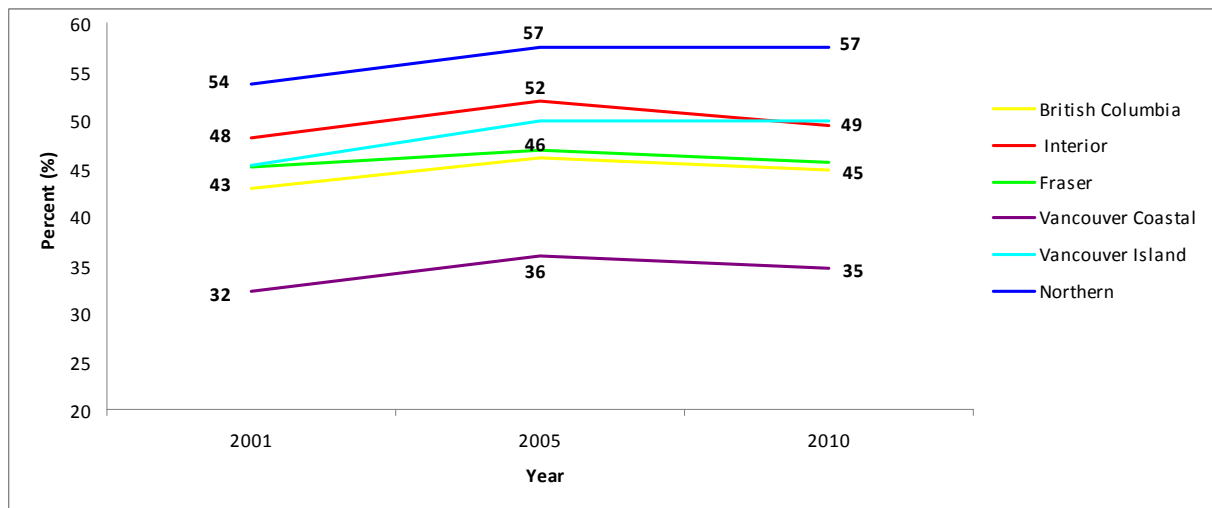


Figure 4-6: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 18) who were Overweight or Obese, Over Time by HA





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4.4. Physical Activity

Figure 4-7: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 12) in 2009/2010 who were Classified as Inactive in Leisure Time Physical Activity, by HSDA

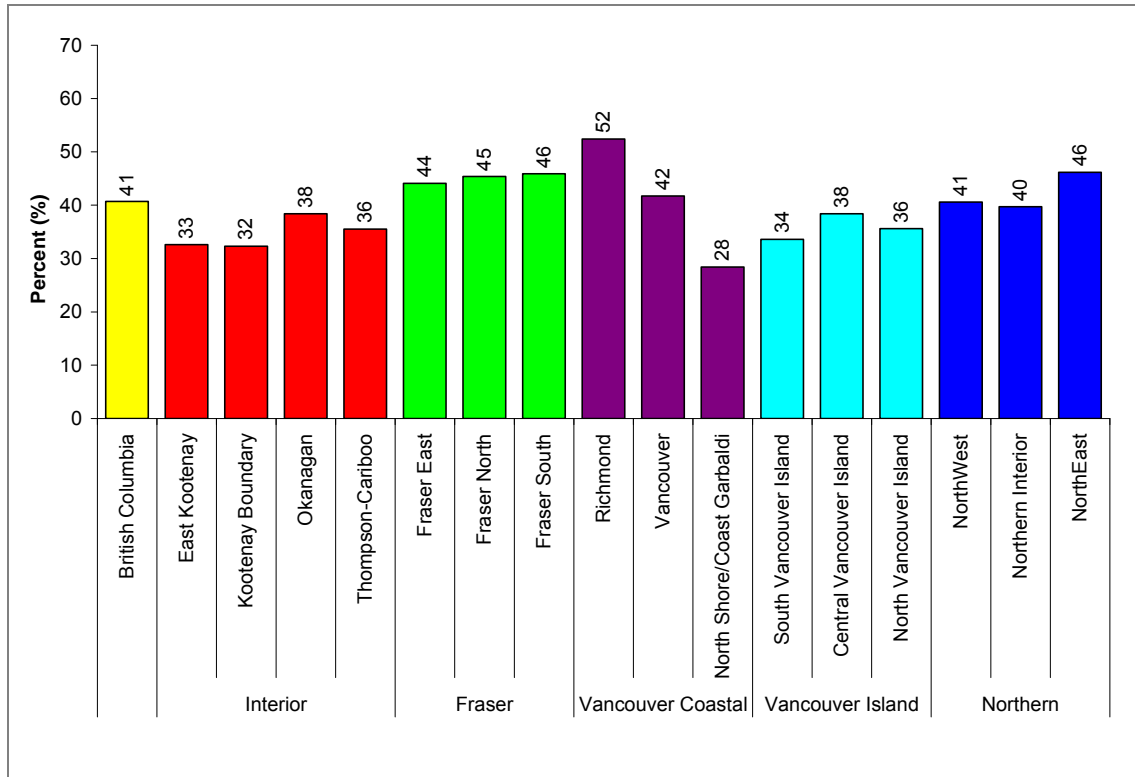


Figure 4-8: Percentage of Population (age ≥ 12) who were Classified as Inactive in Leisure Time Physical Activity, Over Time by HA

