

# 2018 WINNIPEG STREET HEALTH SURVEY REPORT FACT SHEET: PHYSICAL HEALTH



The 2018 Winnipeg Street Health Survey was a research study focusing on the health status, housing, and social service needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg. From July to October 2018, 406 individuals experiencing homelessness were interviewed about their self-reported health, wellness, housing and service needs.

## Most frequently self-reported medical conditions or diagnoses

From a list of 34 medical conditions, the 10 most frequently self-reported conditions/diagnoses as experienced by participants are presented below.

Medical Condition (self-reported)	Percentage %
Arthritis, Rheumatism, or Other Joint Problems	51.8
Migraine headaches	37.3
Environmental or seasonal allergies	34.2
Problems walking, lost limb, or another physical handicap	33.9
Hearing problems	24.4
High blood pressure or Hypertension	24.0
Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)	21.0
Asthma	20.4
Eye or vision problems (other than needing glasses)	19.6
Skin disease, like Eczema or Psoriasis	19.0



n = 372-402; Missing = 4-34

Participants also self-reported angina (chest pain or discomfort - 15.5%), Hepatitis C (13.6%), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (11.9%) and diabetes (10.4%). The most frequently self-reported medical conditions and diagnoses were those with symptoms that can be felt or easily noticed. More chronic conditions were not self-reported to the same extent. For example, 5.6% and 5.0% of participants reported cirrhosis or other problems with their liver respectively, while 3.9% self-reported heart disease and 3.1% cancer. Participants associated an array of health concerns with the circumstances of their experience of homelessness. For example, one participant noted that diabetes was difficult to manage without control over one’s diet; another attributed fatigue to a lack of transportation options.

“We are what we eat. It's really hard to cook a meal. To a large degree, you are subject to what they feed you.”

“Exhaustion from constantly walking, not having a bus pass.”

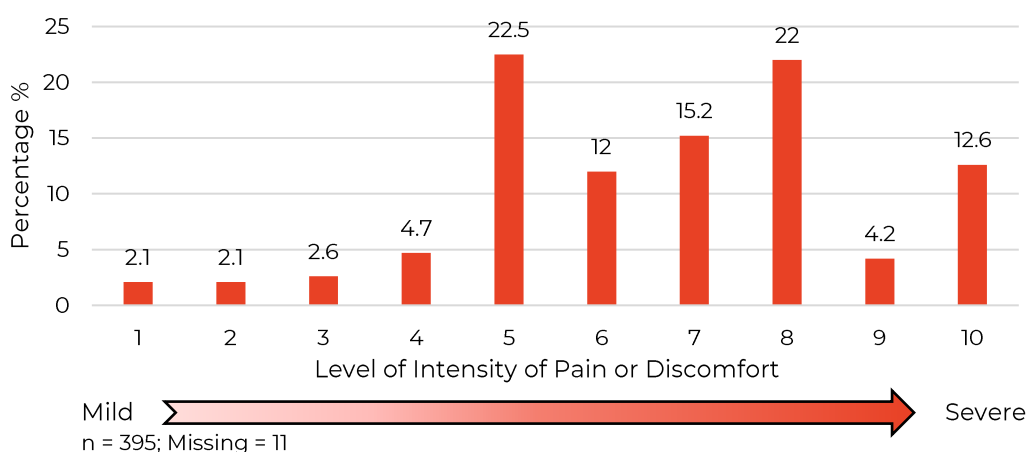


# 2018 WINNIPEG STREET HEALTH SURVEY REPORT FACT SHEET: PHYSICAL HEALTH



## Intensity of pain or discomfort

When asked if usually free of physical pain and discomfort, approximately half of participants said 'yes' (47.3%) and half 'no' (52.7%). Those who indicated they were not usually free of pain were asked to describe the intensity of their pain or discomfort by selecting any point on a scale from one to ten, with one being 'mild', five being 'moderate' and ten being 'severe'. The two most common responses for intensity of pain were five, or moderate (22.5%), and eight, or moderately severe (22%). Most participants who said they usually experience physical pain or discomfort described their pain intensity as between moderate and severe.



## Experiences of injury, harassment and assault in the past year

Almost half of those surveyed (48.2%) reported being physically assaulted in the past year. This experience was more common among women (49.1%) than men (46.7%). Sexual harassment, defined as someone who is bothering you by saying or doing unwanted or unwelcome things of a sexual nature, was reported as having been experienced in the past year by nearly one in four participants (22.2%). A higher percentage of women (43.6%) reported being sexually harassed than men (12.5%). Participants were also asked if they had been sexually assaulted or raped in the past year: 28 (7.5%) indicated that they had. A higher percentage of women (16.7%) than men (3.1%) reported this. 12.2% of participants reported that they had been hit by a car, bicycle, or transit bus in the past 12 months.

Self-reported injury or assault in past year	# of Participants	Percentage %	Male %	Female %
Physically assaulted	185	48.2	46.7	49.1
Hit by car, bicycle, truck or transit bus	47	12.2	13.8	8.7
Sexually harassed	83	22.2	12.5	43.6
Sexually assaulted or raped	28	7.5	3.1	16.7

n = 372-385; Missing = 21-34

