

Appalachian Young Adult Food Security and Tobacco Use

Rachel A Wattick¹; Makenzie L Barr¹; Rebecca L Hagedorn¹; Karla Shelnut, PhD, RD²; Anne Mathews, PhD, RDN²; Sarah E Colby, PhD, RDN³; Melissa D. Olfert, DrPH, RDN¹
¹West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV; ²University of Florida, Gainesville, FL; ³University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN



Rachel A Wattick
Human Nutrition and Foods
West Virginia University
rawattick@mix.wvu.edu

INTRODUCTION

Food insecurity, or the state of not having access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food, occurs in higher rates in rural regions¹. Food insecurity can cause higher stress which could lead to increased abuse of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs. Recent studies have found that over half of college students face food insecurity, and youth in rural areas, particularly Appalachia, are more likely to use tobacco products^{2,3}. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between food insecurity and tobacco abuse of Appalachian vs non-Appalachian college freshmen due to the combined risks of Appalachian college students.

OBJECTIVE

To examine the relationship between tobacco use and food security of young adults in the Appalachian region.

METHODS

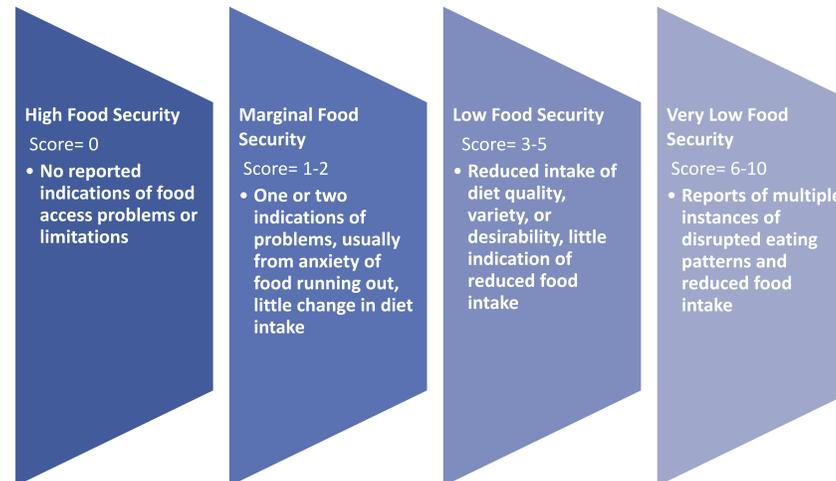
Data was analyzed from the Fruved study, a social marketing campaign increasing healthier lifestyles among college students from eight universities across the United States who were assessed at baseline (Fall 2015) (N=347).

Food security was scored using the USDA Adult Food Security Survey. Participants were asked about the frequency of their use of tobacco products (cigarettes, hookah/waterpipe, electronic cigarettes, cigars/cigarillos, pipe, chew, snuff, and snus) within their lifetime, the past year, and the past 30 days. Food security status, tobacco use, and geographical regions were compared.

SUBSTANCES EXAMINED

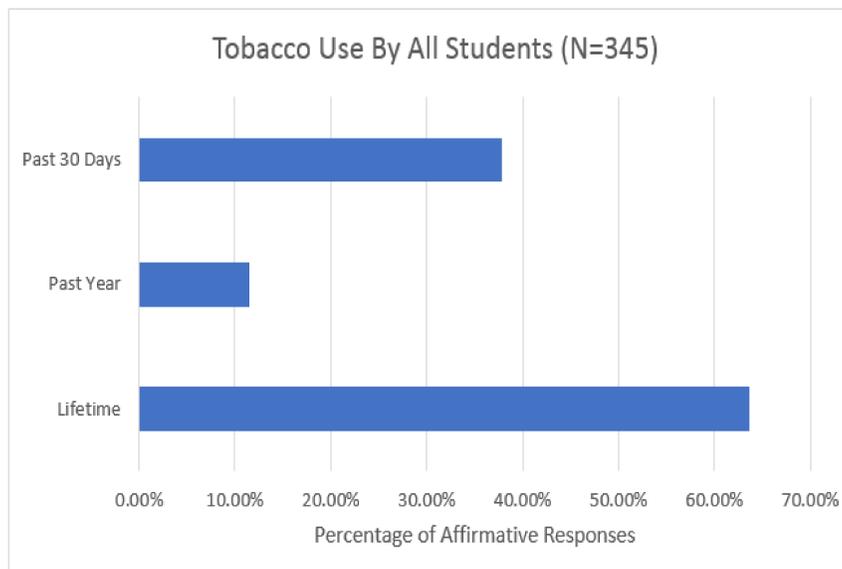
| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| None | Cigarettes | Hookah/Water Pipe |
| Cigars/Cigarillos | Electronic Cigarettes | Chew |
| Snuff | Snus | Other |

FOOD SECURITY CATEGORIES



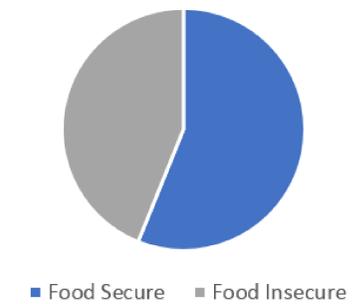
RESULTS

43.9% (N=301) of non-Appalachian students and 50% (N=44) of Appalachian students were categorized as food insecure (p=0.44). 63.6% of respondents (N=345) reported using tobacco in their lifetime, 11.5% in the past year, and 37.9% in the past thirty days. No significant difference was found in relationship between all food security and tobacco use (tobacco in lifetime p=0.47; tobacco in last year p=0.42; tobacco in last 30 days p=0.92). Furthermore, no significant difference was found in Appalachian vs Non-Appalachian groups for tobacco use in any category (p=0.52, p=0.67, p=0.65, respectively).

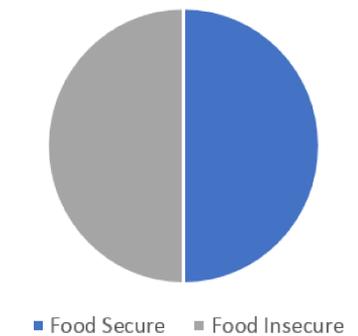


RESULTS

Food Security of Non-Appalachian Students (N=301)



Food Security of Appalachian Students (N=44)



CONCLUSION

Geographical location can be a determinant of behavior. In this study no difference in comparison of frequency of tobacco use among Appalachia students and other regions were found. However, this study was limited by a small sample of Appalachian young adults. Future research is warranted to investigate food security and tobacco use as well as other commonly abused substances with a larger sample of Appalachian young adults.

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