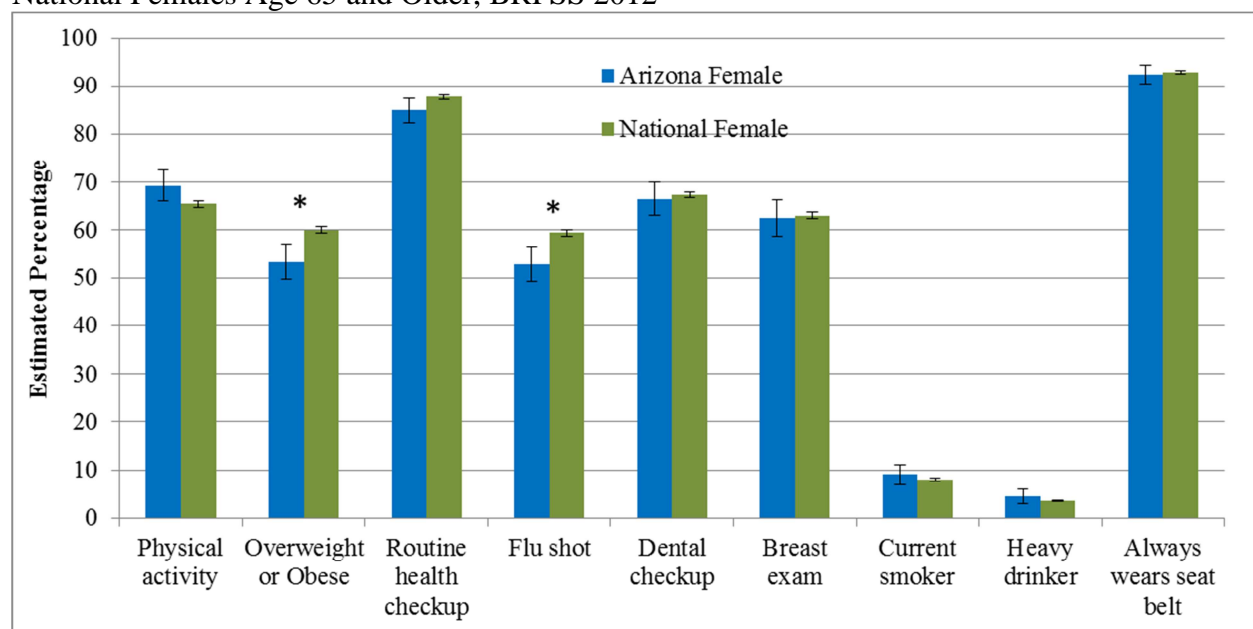When comparing Arizona's older males to Arizona's older females, the only difference that was statistically significant was for the percentage classified as overweight or obese based on BMI. A significantly higher percentage of Arizona's males age 65 and older were either overweight or obese (Est. = 68.8%, 95% C.I. = .65-.73) than Arizona's older females (Est. = 53.4%, 95% C.I. = .50-.57). While statistically significant, BMI is a crude measure of one's body composition that does not account for factors such as muscle mass or bone density that may vary by gender. Though this difference does raise some concern that Arizona's older males may be at risk for weight-related health issues, it also should be interpreted cautiously due to the imprecision of BMI as a measure of healthy weight, which may differ for males and females.

Morbidity among Arizonans Age 65 and Older

Table 4 provides weighted estimated percentages with standard errors for 12 common morbidities faced by older adults reported for Arizona and the U.S. by gender. These estimates are included in Figure 7 for males, Figure 8 for females, and Figure 9 compares Arizona's older males to Arizona's older females.

Beginning with Arizona males age 65 and older in 2012, about 4 percent reported having poor mental health all 30 days prior to being interviewed. In contrast, approximately 28 percent of Arizona males age 65 and older reported experiencing poor physical health all 30 days prior to being interviewed. About 29 percent of Arizona's older males reported activity limitations due to health problems (physical, mental, or emotional), and about 14 percent reported health problems requiring the use of special equipment such as a cane, wheelchair, or special bed. The estimates for Arizona males on these health indicators were similar to national estimates.

Figure 5. Estimates of Population Morbidity with 95% Confidence Intervals, Arizona and National Females Age 65 and Older, BRFSS 2012

Notes: * indicates statistically significant difference at *p* < .05 level.