

**DeKalb County Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey
Frequently Asked Questions**

1. *I received a call (or several calls) from someone saying they are doing a survey with the DeKalb County Board of Health. Is this a real survey?*

Yes, this is a real survey. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey is the world's largest, ongoing telephone health survey, tracking health conditions and behaviors that affect health in the United States yearly since 1984. DeKalb County has been conducting the survey since 2005 with support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The survey collects county-specific information about issues such as asthma, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, health care access, alcohol use, cancer screening, nutrition, physical activity, tobacco use, and more. This information helps the DeKalb County Board of Health to develop and evaluate our programs and activities.

2. *Why did I receive a call in the evening, after normal business hours?*

The interviewers who make the phone calls are told to call at various times of the day to increase the chances that someone will be home to answer the phone. Therefore, many of the phone calls are made in the evening. The interviewers also are told to call a certain number of times, so you may receive several calls until someone at your home either completes the survey or tells the interviewer that your household does not want to participate.

3. *How did you get my phone number?*

The phone numbers are provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, through Random Digit Dial (RDD) sampling. This is a method for selecting people for a large telephone survey by randomly generating residential telephone numbers. The DeKalb County survey uses phone numbers with exchanges (the three numbers after the area code) that are known to be in DeKalb County. However, it is possible that some of the phone numbers will belong to people who do not live in DeKalb County. Therefore one of the first questions is if the phone number belongs to a DeKalb County resident. If not, the interviewer will not continue with the survey.

4. *How can the survey be anonymous when you have my phone number?*

The interviewer does not actually dial phone numbers. Telephone numbers are randomly dialed by a computer. The interviewer has no control over which number is called. The interviewer can see the phone number only at the beginning of the call so that he or she can confirm it. The interviewer never has knowledge of any names or addresses associated with the phone number.

5. *Does the survey collect personally identifiable information?*

No. There is no identifying information gathered during this survey that is kept. Any identifying information, including the telephone number, is separated from the responses after they have been collected. There are some demographic questions in the survey, including age, height, weight, race/ethnicity, annual household income, and zip code, but nothing that will identify who you are.

6. *How do I know that my information is safe and can't be traced back to me personally?*

To make sure your information is safe and to protect your confidentiality, the survey data and all identifying information are handled in ways that prevent unauthorized access. This information is kept in separate files from the responses and is not provided to the DeKalb County Board of Health.

Computers and storage tapes are kept in locked areas. Written materials are kept in locked file cabinets. Information on the computers is protected with user names and passwords.

7. *How many people actually participate in the survey?*

Each year approximately 2,500 DeKalb County residents participate in the survey.

8. *I've never heard of this survey. How does the Board of Health inform the public that the survey is being conducted?*

Before the survey, the Board of Health submits a press release to local newspapers and other media outlets. There is also information posted on our website www.dekalbhealth.net.

9. *What if I want to participate in the survey?*

If you receive a call and you want to participate, let the interviewer know that you are willing to answer the survey questions. We very much appreciate participation in the survey as the information you provide will help the DeKalb County Board of Health become more effective.

10. *What if I do not want to participate in the survey?*

If you do not wish to participate in the survey please tell the interviewer this. If you do not say that you do not want to participate, you will probably continue to receive calls. If you say you do not want to participate but you continue to receive calls, contact Rachel Yelk Woodruff at 404-294-3740 and ask for your number to be removed from the survey.

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You do not need to leave your name, but please leave the number being called so that the study coordinator can remove it from the computer's call list.

For more information contact Rachel Yelk Woodruff, MPH, District Epidemiologist, DeKalb County Board of Health at 404-294-3740 or visit the websites below:

DeKalb County Board of Health <http://www.dekalbhealth.net/index.asp>

Georgia Department of Human Resources <http://health.state.ga.us/epi/brfss/index.asp>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.htm>