Abstract

During the past decade, health-related quality of life (HRQoL) has been recognized in both clinical and community health research as an important health outcome and a needed supplement to conventional health outcomes. The authors provide a profile of HRQoL and examine its determinants among American Indians and Alaska Natives aged 50 or older. Multivariate analyses of cross-sectional survey data from the 1996-1998 Centers for Disease Control Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System were conducted. Thirty-four percent of the sample reported fair or poor self-rated health. The mean number of poor health days in the past month ranged from 4 to 6 on different measures. Age, sex, education, annual household income, employment status, hypertension, and obesity were associated with aspects of HRQoL. Further research aimed at eliminating health disparities among this population should focus on identifying additional indicators of poor HRQoL and on understanding variables that mediate the relationship between disease and HRQoL.