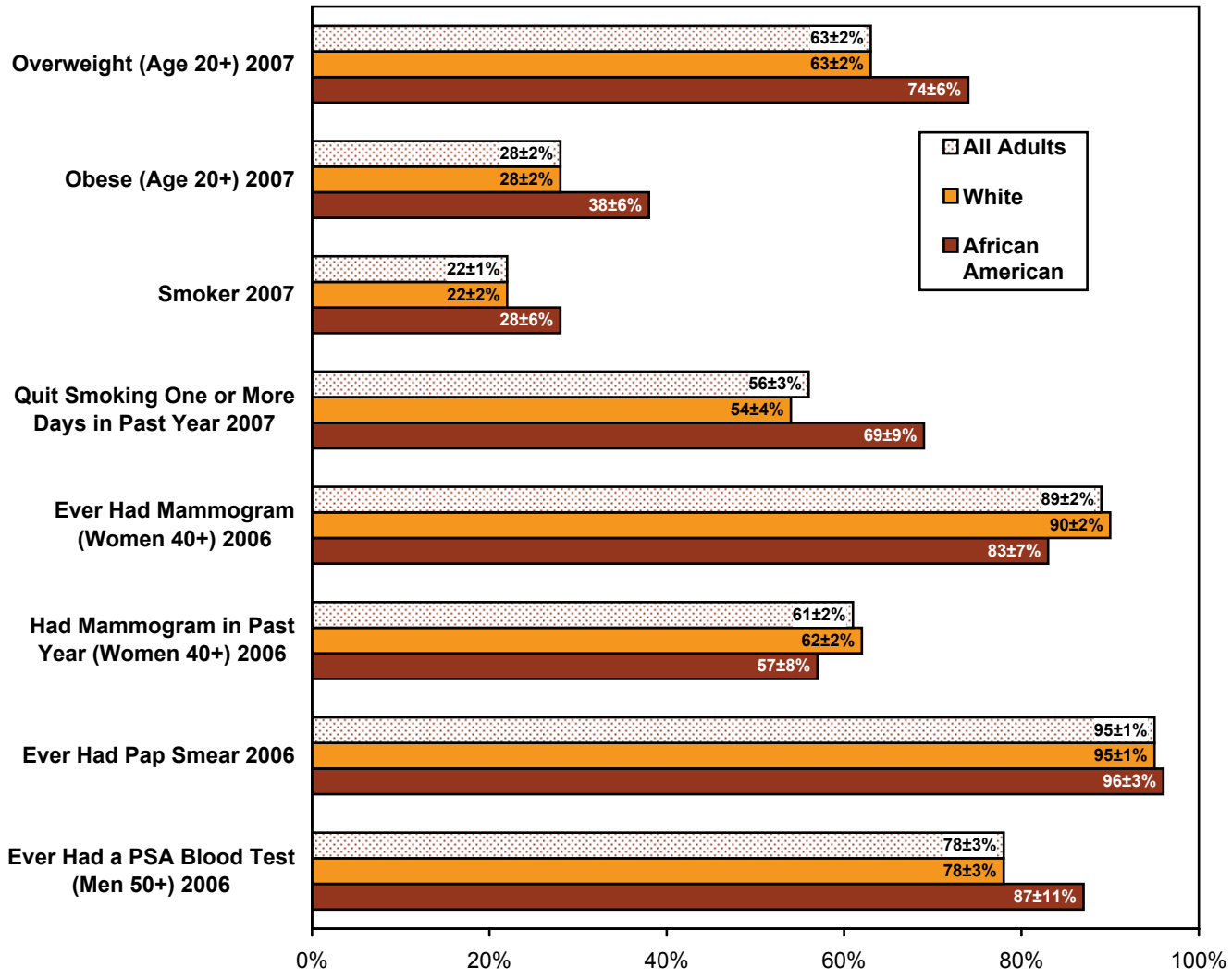
Behavioral Risk Factors

The Pennsylvania Department of Health conducts an annual telephone sample survey of adult residents as part of its Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Results from the 2006 and 2007 surveys for selected risk factors that impact on cancer incidence are shown below for all adults, Whites (non-Hispanic), and African Americans (non-Hispanic).

In 2007, 63 percent of all adults (age 20+) surveyed were considered to be overweight and 28 percent were obese. Twenty-two percent of the respondents smoked cigarettes regularly in 2007. Fifty-six percent of all smokers surveyed quit smoking for at least one day in the past year. In 2006, the percentage of women who had ever had a mammogram (age 40+) was relatively high at 89 percent. However, a significantly lower percentage (61) was reported for women age 40 and older who had had a mammogram in the past year. The 2006 survey also indicated that 95 percent of adult women ever had a pap smear and 78 percent of adult men (age 50+) ever had a PSA blood test.

The chart below highlights some differences between the races. Significantly more African Americans were overweight (74 vs. 63 percent) and obese (38 vs. 28 percent). African Americans were also significantly more likely to quit smoking for at least one day in the past year compared to Whites in 2007. A higher percentage of African Americans smoked compared to Whites, although the difference was not statistically significant.

Selected Behavioral Risk Factors by Race, Pennsylvania Adults, 2006 and 2007



NOTES: The estimated percent prevalences were calculated using weighted data (i.e., the age, sex and race distribution of the estimated 2006/7 Pennsylvania population) and were age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard million population in order to match the Healthy People 2010 data. Data include 95% confidence intervals (±). Hispanics are excluded from the White and African American categories.