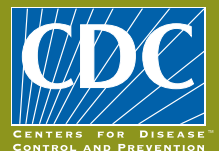


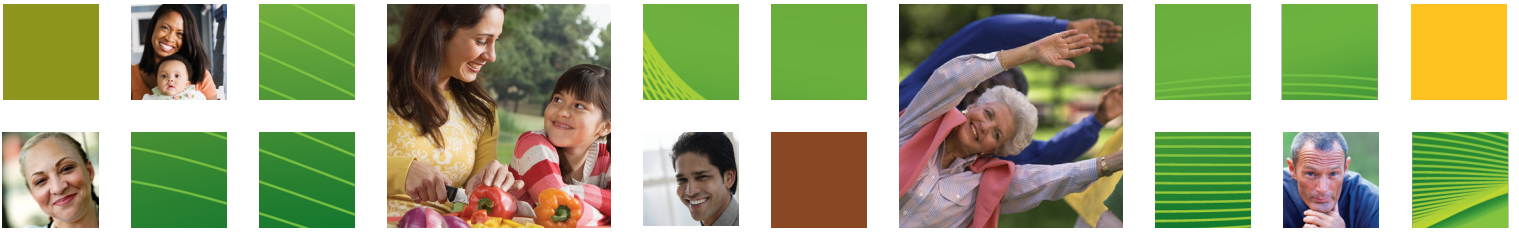


**HEALTHY  
COMMUNITIES**  
PREVENTING CHRONIC  
DISEASE BY ACTIVATING  
GRASSROOTS CHANGE

**AT A GLANCE**  
2010

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION**  
IMPROVING HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL PEOPLE





## A National Chronic Disease Crisis: The Time to Act Is Now

Our nation faces a crisis due to the burden of chronic disease. Today, 7 of the 10 leading causes of death in the United States are chronic diseases, and almost 50% of Americans live with at least one chronic illness. People who suffer from chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, obesity, and arthritis experience limitations to function, health, activity, and work. These limitations affect the quality of their lives, as well as the lives of their families.

Treatment for people with chronic conditions accounts for more than 75% of the \$2 trillion spent annually on medical care in the United States. Effectively addressing the national chronic disease crisis is central to the future of health care in our nation and a priority for policy makers and those who pay for public and private health insurance plans.

Preventable health risk factors such as tobacco and excessive alcohol use, insufficient physical activity, and poor nutrition contribute to the development and severity of many chronic diseases. For example,

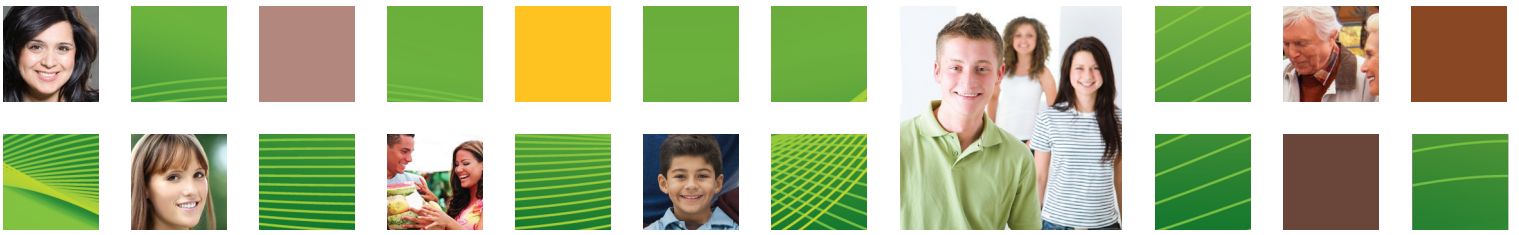
- Tobacco use is the single most avoidable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States. Each year, an estimated 443,000 people die prematurely from smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke. Despite these risks, more than 43 million (approximately 1 in 5) American adults still smoke.
- During 2001–2005, approximately 79,000 annual deaths were caused by excessive alcohol use. Excessive alcohol use is the third leading lifestyle-related cause of death for Americans each year.
- In 2007, almost two-thirds (65%) of high school students and more than one-third (36%) of all adults did not meet recommendations for aerobic physical activity from the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*. These guidelines call for at least 60 minutes each day of physical activity for children and adolescents and 75–150 minutes each week (depending on activity intensity) for adults.
- In 2007, only 32% of high school students ate at least 2 servings of fruit each day, and only 13% ate at least 3 servings of vegetables daily. Only 24% of U.S. adults ate 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

### The Burden of Chronic Disease

- **Heart disease** and **stroke** remain the first and third leading causes of death, accounting for more than 30% of all mortality. One million Americans are disabled from strokes; many can no longer perform daily tasks such as walking or bathing without help.
- Nearly 24 million Americans have **diabetes**. An estimated 57 million U.S. adults have prediabetes, which places them at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, nontraumatic lower-extremity amputations, and blindness among adults aged 20–74 years.
- **Cancer** claims more than half a million lives each year and remains the nation's second leading cause of death. The total number of Americans living with a previous diagnosis of cancer is currently estimated at 11 million.
- One in every 3 adults and nearly 1 in 5 children aged 6–19 are obese. **Obesity** has been linked to increased risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, arthritis-related disability, and some cancers.
- An estimated 46 million U.S. adults reported being told by a doctor that they have some form of **arthritis**, such as osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, gout, lupus, or fibromyalgia. Arthritis results in activity limitations for nearly 19 million Americans.

In addition, health disparities continue to be a serious threat to the health and well-being of some population groups in the United States. For example,

- Death rates for heart disease are 23% higher among African Americans than among whites; death rates for stroke are 31% higher.
- African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Alaska Native adults are twice as likely as white adults to have diabetes.



## Producing Results

Strong action at the community level is critical to reversing chronic disease trends. Communities have responded with a groundswell of energy, ideas, and the will to make needed policy, systems, and environmental changes that target chronic diseases and their major risk factors—tobacco and excessive alcohol use, insufficient physical activity, and poor nutrition. CDC's investments are producing impressive results. For example, communities funded by CDC's Healthy Communities Program facilitated the following policy changes:

- **Pinellas County, Florida**, passed a policy requiring after-school programs to provide children with at least 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week. This change influenced the county school district to adopt the same requirement for all elementary school students. This, in turn, helped provide impetus for the passage of a 2008 statewide law that requires elementary schools to provide 150 minutes of physical

education per week to the schools' approximately 1.2 million students.

- **DeKalb County, Georgia**, passed a 100% tobacco-free policy for all schools in the DeKalb County School System (the third-largest school district in the state) and in the City Schools of Decatur school district. This policy change will have a positive effect on the health of approximately 120,000 students and staff members.
- **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**, which has a population of 1.4 million people, banned the use of trans fats in food service establishments and requires menu labeling (information about calories, fat, sodium, and carbohydrates) in restaurants that have 15 or more outlets.

Building on the lessons learned from these and other funded communities, CDC continues to expand its efforts.

## CDC Expands Efforts

CDC and its partners—local and state health departments and national organizations—are working through **CDC's Healthy Communities Program** to create healthier, thriving communities and help the communities most severely affected by chronic disease. The program mobilizes community resources to bring change to the places and organizations that touch people's lives every day—at community centers, schools, health care settings, and work sites—to stem the growth of chronic disease.

### States and Territories Collaborative

The Healthy Communities Program funds and trains state and territorial health departments through a 5-year cooperative agreement that supports efforts to prevent chronic disease across the United States. The health departments, in turn, provide technical assistance, training, and consultation to communities within their jurisdictions to help them develop and implement policy, systems, and environmental changes.

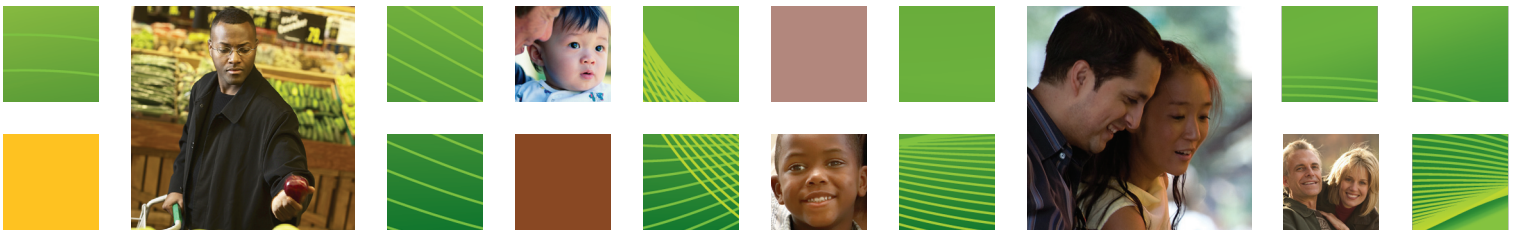
### Local Investments

CDC also funds and supports **Strategic Alliance for Health** communities for 5-year periods. These communities create online action guides that give step-by-step instructions for replicating effective strategies. CDC currently provides guidance, technical assistance, and training to 14 Strategic Alliance

for Health communities selected to represent a mix of urban, rural, and tribal areas. During 2003–2009, CDC also supported 40 **Steps** communities. In addition, CDC will train and support more than 200 **ACHIEVE (Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and EnVironmental changeE)** communities during the next several years. ACHIEVE communities participate in Action Institutes where community leaders receive training to develop a local action plan. Technical assistance is provided by national and state experts for at least 3 years, and communities also receive modest financial support. CDC collaborates with the following five national organizations to provide this support:

- National Association of Chronic Disease Directors.
- National Association of County and City Health Officials.
- National Recreation and Park Association.
- Society for Public Health Education.
- YMCA of the USA.

CDC also supports **YMCA of the USA's Pioneering Healthier Communities**. Since 2005, CDC has provided funding and technical support to the YMCA of the USA and used its vast



## CDC Expands Efforts (continued)

network to bring together key local leaders to improve health and confront the national crises of obesity and chronic disease. Through Pioneering Healthier Communities, the YMCA of the USA has convened, trained, and supported teams of key leaders in 102 communities. By 2013, approximately 150 communities will be making changes at the local level to support healthy lifestyles and reduce risk factors for chronic disease.

### Action Institutes

CDC provides Action Institutes, which convene community action teams and train community leaders to make policy, systems, and environmental changes that can help prevent and control chronic diseases and their risk factors. Community action teams receive training from national experts and develop a plan of action during the 3-day institutes. They hear from peer communities about how to undertake an effective community-change process, and they gain access to a range of tools and resources for putting programs into action.

### National Networks for Community Change

CDC is forming innovative new partnerships that reach across communities and engage local planners, decision makers, and community organizations whose primary mission is not necessarily health, but whose efforts can have a profound effect on health and chronic disease.

### Tools for Community Action

CDC provides national leadership in health promotion at the community level by making a variety of tools for local action available to individuals and organizations. These tools (<http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunities/program/tools>) include the following:

- **Community Health Resources Web Site.** This CDC Web site gives communities a searchable portal through which they can access a wide range of tools and data for local health promotion.
- **Action Guides.** These publications provide step-by-step

“how to” guidance for implementing effective local policy, systems, and environmental change strategies selected from *The Guide to Community Preventive Services*. Additional guides are under development.

- **CHANGE (Community Health Assessment aNd Group Evaluation).** This tool provides community leaders with a snapshot of local policy, systems, and environmental change strategies currently in place in their community. CHANGE also helps community leaders identify areas where such health strategies are lacking and then define and prioritize areas for improvement.
- **Promoting Health Equity: A Resource to Help Communities Address Social Determinants of Health.** This workbook shows communities how to address social determinants of health as part of their health and social service efforts by providing real examples from communities that are using this approach.
- **Media Access Guide: A Resource for Community Health Promotion.** This guide is designed to help communities develop effective working relationships with the media and gain news coverage for health-related issues.

### Future Directions

Turning the tide on chronic disease requires changes in our communities that support health where we live, learn, work, and play. By spring 2010, more than 240 communities will have received funding and technical support through CDC’s Healthy Communities Program, an investment that has resulted in measurable changes at the local level. About 170 more communities will receive funding during the next 3 years. CDC’s Healthy Communities Program will continue to disseminate effective strategies and provide communities with funding, tools, and training for creating policy, systems, and environmental changes. Working with key partners, CDC will activate these changes in a widening network of communities that are ready to take action.

For more information about CDC’s Healthy Communities Program,  
please contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion  
4770 Buford Highway NE, Mail Stop K-93, Atlanta, GA 30341-3717

Telephone: 770-488-6452 • E-mail: [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov) • Web: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyCommunitiesProgram>