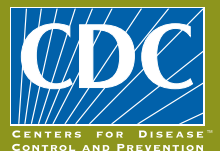


CHRONIC DISEASES
THE POWER TO PREVENT,
THE CALL TO CONTROL

AT A GLANCE
2009

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





What Are Chronic Diseases?

Chronic diseases are noncommunicable illnesses that are prolonged in duration, do not resolve spontaneously, and are rarely cured completely. Examples of chronic diseases include heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and arthritis.

- Chronic diseases cause 7 in 10 deaths each year in the United States.
- About 133 million Americans—nearly 1 in 2 adults—live with at least one chronic illness.
- More than 75% of health care costs are due to chronic conditions.
- Approximately one-fourth of persons living with a chronic illness experience significant limitations in daily activities.
- The percentage of U.S. children and adolescents with a chronic health condition has increased from 1.8% in the 1960s to more than 7% in 2004.

Although chronic diseases are more common among older adults, they affect people of all ages and are now recognized as a leading health concern of the nation. Growing evidence indicates that a comprehensive approach to prevention can save tremendous costs and needless suffering.

Key Chronic Diseases: The Facts

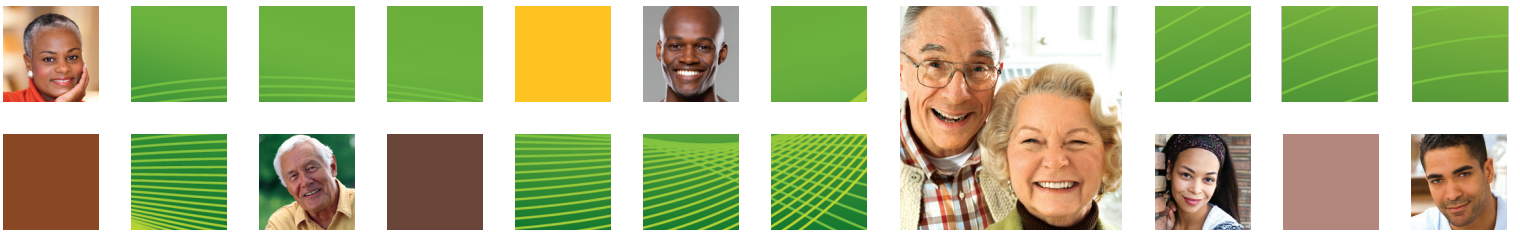
- **Heart disease** and **stroke** are the first and third leading causes of death, accounting for more than 30% of all U.S. deaths each year.
- **Cancer**, the second leading cause of death, claims more than half a million lives each year.
- **Diabetes** is the leading cause of kidney failure, non-traumatic lower extremity amputations, and new cases of blindness each year among U.S. adults aged 20–74 years.
- **Arthritis**, the most common cause of disability, limits activity for 19 million U.S. adults.
- **Obesity** has become a major health concern for people of all ages. 1 in every 3 adults and nearly 1 in every 5 young people aged 6–19 are obese.

Chronic Diseases Are Preventable

Chronic diseases are the most common and costly of all health problems, but they are also the most preventable. Four common, health-damaging, but modifiable behaviors—tobacco use, insufficient physical activity, poor eating habits, and excessive alcohol use—are responsible for much of the illness, disability, and premature death related to chronic diseases.

Risk Behaviors: The Facts

- More than 43 million (about 1 in 5) U.S. adults **smoke**.
- 1 in 5 U.S. high school students are current smokers.
- More than one-third of all U.S. adults fail to meet minimum recommendations for aerobic **physical activity** based on the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*.
- Only 1 in 3 U.S. high school students participates in daily physical education classes.
- More than 60% of U.S. children and adolescents eat more than the recommended daily amounts of **saturated fat**.
- Only 24% of U.S. adults and 20% of U.S. high school students eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- About 1 in 6 Americans aged 18 years and older engage in **binge drinking** (5 or more drinks for men and 4 or more drinks for women during a single occasion) in the past 30 days.
- Nearly 45% of U.S. high school students report having had at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days.



CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) is at the forefront of the nation's efforts to promote health and well-being through the prevention and control of chronic diseases. With Fiscal Year 2008 resources totaling approximately \$931 million, NCCDPHP provides national leadership to achieve three primary goals:

- **Prevent, delay, detect, and control** chronic diseases.
- **Contribute to chronic disease research** and apply that research to put practical and effective intervention strategies into practice.
- **Achieve equity in health** by eliminating racial and ethnic disparities and achieving optimal health for all Americans.

NCCDPHP's 10-Division structure reflects its work across the life span, settings, risk factors, and diseases.

Coordination across the divisions is critical for many reasons. For example, the same risk factors—such as smoking or poor nutrition—cause multiple chronic diseases. The same

populations that are at risk for one chronic disease are often at risk for other diseases. Finally, the same intervention strategies can combat multiple chronic diseases and risk factors.

NCCDPHP's Public Health Interventions

NCCDPHP provides expertise and leadership critical to establishing interventions to prevent chronic diseases and promote the health of individuals and communities. As part of the nation's primary federal public health agency, NCCDPHP supports the nation's public health infrastructure working with health care providers, public health professionals, educators, and policy makers.

NCCDPHP leads partnerships and collaborates fully with state and local health and education agencies, community groups, voluntary associations, private organizations, and other federal agencies. To achieve optimal health for all, NCCDPHP's work on the social determinants of health extends beyond the scope of traditional public health practice to include collaboration in education, housing, transportation, justice, labor, and other sectors.

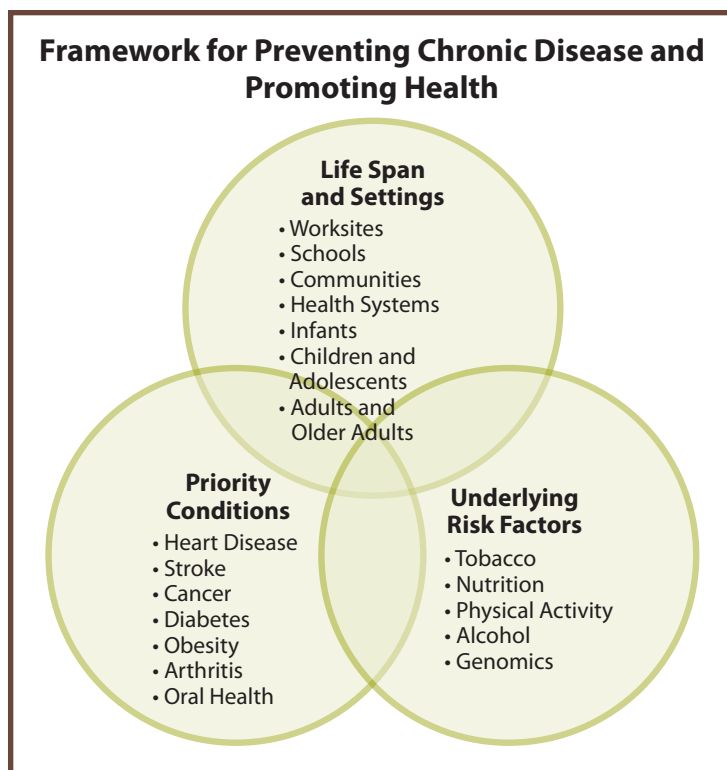
NCCDPHP supports the following activities to prevent and control chronic diseases:

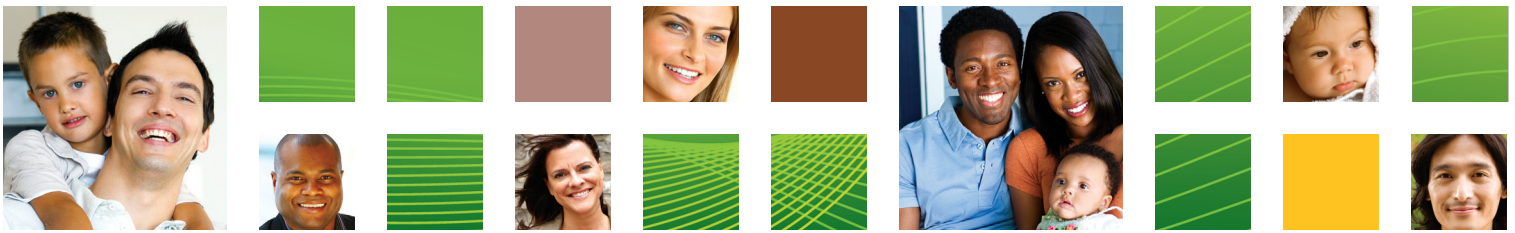
Surveillance and Applied Research

Public health surveillance is the ongoing systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data about health. National, state, tribal, and local public health professionals use these data to

- Measure and monitor trends in the burden of chronic diseases and associated risk factors particularly in high-risk populations.
- Guide the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health programs and policies.
- Prioritize the allocation of limited health resources.
- Provide a basis for public health research.

NCCDPHP conducts several public health surveillance systems including, but not limited to, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Youth Tobacco Survey, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, and the National Program of Cancer Registries.





CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (continued)

NCCDPHP also conducts applied research to examine the effectiveness of interventions such as community-based policies in preventing and delaying disease in real world settings. Related research examines the best ways to quickly move effective interventions into practice to reach populations at greatest risk.

For example, NCCDPHP's Prevention Research Centers (PRC) are a network of more than 30 academic centers that conduct research to address health problems identified by communities. PRCs use methods that engage communities in identifying critical problems and solutions.

Promotion of Policy, Environmental, and Systems Changes at the State and Community Levels

Policies that support indoor air regulations, menu labeling, advertising restrictions, pricing strategies, and changes to the built environment create environments that promote and protect health. Preventing disease requires improving the health status of people at every stage of life. Such a task is not possible one person at a time; rather, it can be achieved only by improving the surrounding social and physical environments.

During the past 4 decades, for example, the Office on Smoking and Health has reviewed the available research and provided nearly 30 high-impact, scientific reports on the health and economic burden of tobacco use. Several of these reports have contributed to the implementation of tobacco control policies, including the 2006 Surgeon General's Report on *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*. This report helped inform decisions by policy makers and businesses to establish smoke-free policies that have contributed to reducing smoking rates and levels of secondhand smoke exposures among nonsmokers.

Health Communications

NCCDPHP develops and uses a variety of health communication strategies that deliver culturally appropriate and effective health promotion messages. These interventions include paid advertising, media advocacy, public relations, health promotion

activities, and campaigns that target specific audiences through innovative channels.

For example, the *Screen for Life: National Colorectal Cancer Action Campaign* educates and informs men and women aged 50 years and older about the importance of having regular colorectal cancer screening tests.

Health Care System Linkages

Achieving the best preventive health care is vital to successful health outcomes. NCCDPHP supports the work of the health care system through provision of services such as mammography and tobacco cessation counseling for underserved populations, work on issues of health care access, planned care, self-management, patient navigation, and quality prevention services. NCCDPHP also supports community-based public health efforts that can provide more intensive and sustained interventions than are possible in most health care settings.

For example, the Translating Research into Action for Diabetes (TRIAD) study works to improve the quality of care and life for people with diabetes. It also provides practical information on how to better implement effective treatments for patients with diabetes in U.S. managed care settings.

Future Directions

Since its inception 20 years ago, NCCDPHP and its partners have achieved many successes in preventing chronic disease and its complications. Yet more needs to be done. Effective interventions that save money and lives are underutilized and often fail to reach those most in need. CDC looks forward to expanding its chronic disease and health promotion work to ensure the greatest health for all Americans.

For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
4770 Buford Highway NE, Mail Stop K-40, Atlanta, GA 30341-5395
Telephone: 770-488-5131 • E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov • Web: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp>