

## **2005 Report on Health Status by State: Rate of Health Status Improvement Slows**

How healthy is your state? Check your state's health ranking on a variety of health status indicators in the 2005 edition of America's Health: State Health Ranking. The report, 16<sup>th</sup> in the series that began in 1990, documents the changes in the health status of each state over the years. Components of health status are a combination of "risk factors" and "outcomes" such as smoking, lack of health insurance, obesity, infant mortality and premature death. The report includes snapshots of each state's health status, identifying their successes and challenges.

This year's report shows that the overall health of the US population improved 0.9 percent from 2004 to 2005 (an 18.4 percent overall improvement in America's health since 1990). The report also shows a slowing in the rate of improvement since the year 2000. Since 2000, there has been an 80 percent decrease in the annual rate of improvement (down from 1.5 percent annually during the 1990's to 0.3 percent each year since the year 2000). According to the report, 28 countries including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan have higher healthy life expectancies than those in the United States. Obesity and infant mortality rates were identified as factors in the US low health ranking in comparison to other nations.

Successes stem from improvements in the reduction of the prevalence of smoking, infectious diseases and the violent crime rate and increases in per capita public health spending per person for public health activities, and immunization coverage. However, there are other measures that reveal problems such as increases in the prevalence of obesity and in the percentage of children in poverty.

This year Minnesota tops the list of healthiest states. Mississippi is rank 50<sup>th</sup> on the list. Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, New Jersey, and Oregon are identified as states with the greatest overall health score improvement for 2004 - 05. New Hampshire tops the list for the greatest overall health decline followed by Arizona, Oklahoma, Arizona, Oklahoma, Alaska (last year Alaska was listed among the states with the greatest overall health score improvement), Arkansas, Tennessee, and Texas.

Please visit the United Health Foundation's Web site at: <http://www.unitedhealthfoundation.org/shr.html> for a state-by state snapshot or to view the entire report.

If you have any questions on these or other topics, please contact Shuan Tomlinson at 800-338-2746 ext. 4547 or by email at [stomlinson@acponline.org](mailto:stomlinson@acponline.org).

To access recent and past state health policy reports go to the State Health Policy section on the Chapter Leadership Network (CLN) website or click on: [http://www.acponline.org/cln/health\\_policy.htm](http://www.acponline.org/cln/health_policy.htm).

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