

ANNUAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DECEMBER 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

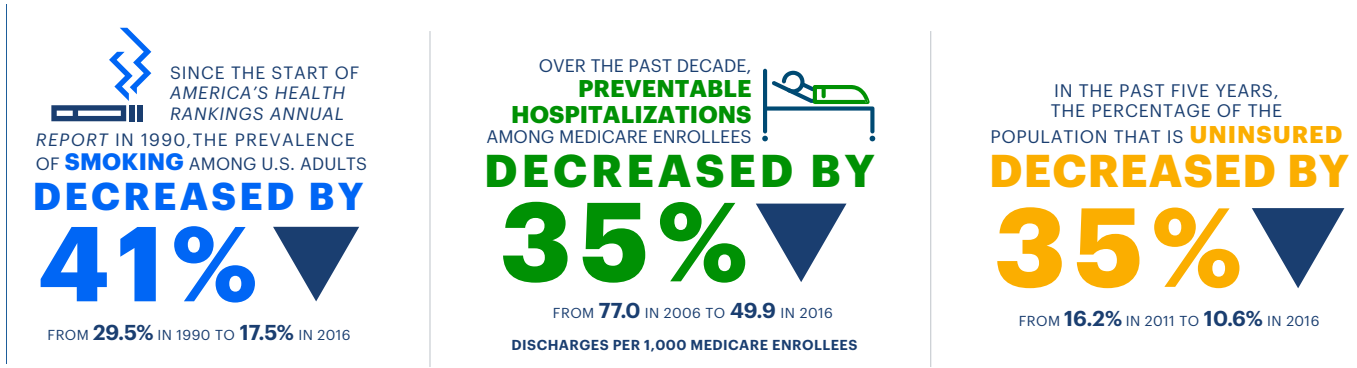
For 27 years, *America's Health Rankings® Annual Report* has served as the nation's source for trends in nationwide public health and state-by-state rankings. The report analyzes a comprehensive set of behaviors, community and environment, policy, clinical care, and outcomes data to provide a holistic view of the health of the nation. It also offers a benchmark to compare each state's progress and declines over the past 27 years against national performance, offering insights into the success of public health efforts. All information is available in a single, easy-to-use web platform that allows users to explore health measures and state data for custom comparisons.

In the 2016 edition, the report looks at historical trends and finds that the health of the nation is at a critical crossroad between making encouraging progress against long-standing public health challenges, while treading into dangerous territory on other key health indicators. For instance, the nation has experienced successes in reducing the prevalence of smoking, the number of preventable hospitalizations, and the percentage of the population without health insurance. However, the nation faces health concerns with drug and cardiovascular deaths and a continued high prevalence of obesity.

With these observations, the United Health Foundation continues its commitment to providing valuable information to policymakers, public health officials, and communities with the goal of stimulating a dialogue on strategies to improve the health of our communities. The longevity of the report and wealth of credible data from trusted sources provide a unique opportunity for America's Health Rankings to track both short-term successes and challenges, and identify emerging areas of interest that indicate improvement or decline since 1990.

NATION CONTINUES TO EXPERIENCE DECLINES IN PREVALENCE OF SMOKING, RATE OF PREVENTABLE HOSPITALIZATIONS, AND PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION WHO ARE UNINSURED

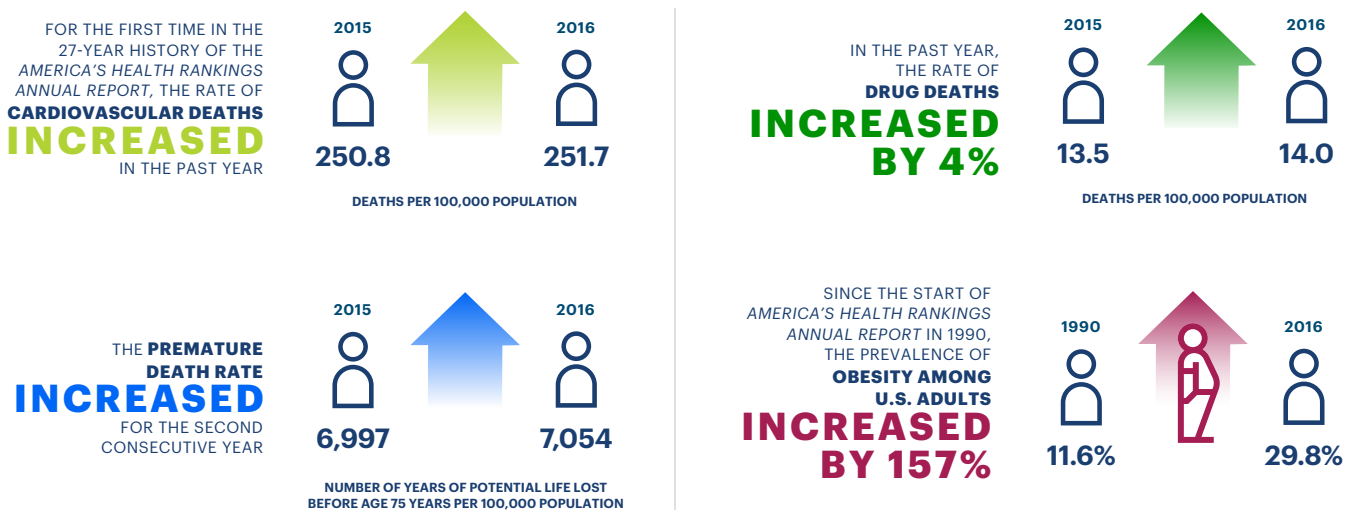
Highlighting key national successes, the report finds that *the United States has made notable long-term improvements across key indicators of health, including smoking, preventable hospitalizations, and health insurance coverage.*



- Since 1990, the prevalence of smoking in the United States has decreased 41%, including a 17% decline over the past four years.
- During the last decade, the rate of preventable hospitalizations among Medicare enrollees has declined 35% and declined 13% in the past year alone.
- The percentage of the population that is uninsured declined 35% over the past five years and is now at the lowest point in the *Annual Report's* 27-year history.

RISING RATES OF CARDIOVASCULAR AND DRUG DEATHS AND HIGH PREVALENCE OF OBESITY PRESENT NATIONAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

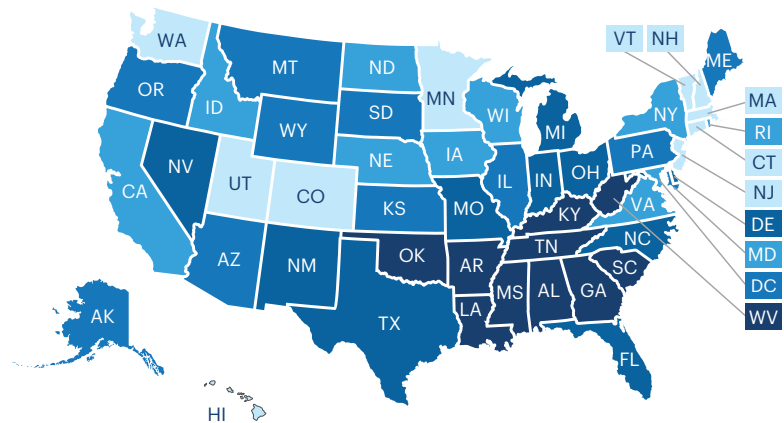
As the nation celebrates encouraging progress on key indicators of health, the report also highlights serious challenges for the country that are eroding hard-won health gains. *This year, the rates of cardiovascular and drug deaths increased nationally and the prevalence of obesity remained high.*



- This year marks the end of a 26-year decline in the rate of cardiovascular deaths. In the past year, the national cardiovascular death rate increased from 250.8 to 251.7 deaths per 100,000.
- The report also finds that in the past five years, the rate of drug deaths has increased 9%, rising 4% in the past year alone.
- Premature death, the years of potential life lost before age 75, increased for the second consecutive year.
- Since the start of *America's Health Rankings Annual Report* in 1990, the prevalence of obesity among adults has increased 157%.

2016 RANKING OF THE HEALTHIEST OVERALL STATES

The report ranks each state across 34 measures of behaviors, community and environment, policy, clinical care, and outcomes. This year, northeastern states generally rank among the healthiest overall states, while southeastern states generally rank among those states with the greatest challenges.



RANK: 1 to 10 11 to 20 21 to 30 31 to 40 41 to 50

Hawaii ranks as the healthiest state for the fifth straight year. The state has held the top spot eight times in the 27-year history of the *Annual Report*. Massachusetts (second), Connecticut (third), Minnesota (fourth), and Vermont (fifth) round out the top five states for overall health.



HAWAII

Mississippi ranks as the state with the greatest opportunity for improvement, dropping from 49th to 50th this year.

Louisiana improved to 49th, while Arkansas (48th), Alabama (47th), and Oklahoma (46th) round out the states with greatest opportunities for improvement.



MISSISSIPPI

INFORMING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF OUR NATION

With this report, United Health Foundation contributes 27 years worth of data to ongoing conversations among policymakers, public health officials, and community leaders about how they can collaborate to promote and achieve better health for all. Our nation has experienced impressive public health achievements since the launch of the first *America's Health Rankings Annual Report* in 1990, but this year's findings highlight that the country still faces critical challenges that may undermine progress in other key areas of health. Those working to improve the health of our nation are encouraged to use the report as a call to action for positive change in their communities.



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