

SUMMARY OF THE HEALTH STATUS OF TENNESSEANS

- The only mortality objective among those analyzed for which Tennessee is doing well is female breast cancer mortality. In 1995, this rate was only 8% off the U.S. target.
- Lung cancer, suicide, heart disease, and infant death rates are all within a reasonable range to be able to approach the national targets between 1995 and 2000.
- In 1995, stroke, homicide and motor vehicle crash mortality rates were well-above the year 2000 targets. Necessary reduction in Tennessee's rates will require an extraordinary commitment of public and private resources and implementation of effective prevention, intervention and treatment strategies, as well as an informed technology and knowledge base.
- Tennessee blacks are very close to meeting the national target for gonorrhea. In 1995, black Tennesseans were 4% above the U.S. target.
- Tuberculosis, chlamydia and primary and secondary syphilis rates are well above the national targets.
- Tennessee is very close to achieving the national objectives for cancer screening, including clinical breast exams and mammograms, pap smears, and proctoscopic exams.
- Older adults have surpassed the cholesterol screening standard, but younger adults are still below the target.
- Immunizations are below target levels especially pneumonia immunizations

among the elderly.

- Four areas among adults that need a great deal of work toward improving health and safety involve
 - increased use of seatbelts;
 - increased physical activity;
 - reduced cigarette smoking; and
 - reduced obesity.
- One of the major health risks that has surfaced for Tennesseans is the relatively high prevalence of cigarette smoking and other tobacco use among both adults and youth, especially in rural areas. High rates of addiction to tobacco, high perceived ease of access to tobacco by youth and low perceived risk of harmfulness of tobacco are all consistent with the high consumption noted among Tennesseans.
- Major health problems in Tennessee include:
 - Infectious diseases - AIDS, TB, hepatitis B, STDs;
 - Injuries, which are the leading killer of youth;
 - Diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease and other chronic illnesses; and
 - Risky health practices related to overweight, poor nutrition, lack of exercise, poor safety, and AOD use and abuse.
- High risk groups are males for most illnesses and injuries, blacks for homicide and most other health problems, youth for AOD use, rural residents for motor vehicle crashes and DUI, the elderly for transportation problems, prescription drug use/abuse, and home health care, and the poor for postponed and foregone health care and increased risk of illness and death.