



The Colorado

Health Report Card



The Colorado Health Foundation™

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Together, we will make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation.

How healthy are we?

That's the question the Colorado Health Report Card is designed to answer. Most Coloradans believe we are one of the healthiest states, based on studies that point to our low obesity rates and active lifestyle. The fact is that Colorado rates only average or below average on a number of critical health indicators used to measure overall health. The Colorado Health Report Card shows how we are doing on a wide range of health measures and what we need to do to become the healthiest state in the nation.

2008 Update

The 2008 Report Card includes detailed information about the factors that pose the most risk. Together with the Colorado Health Institute (a nonprofit organization that is a comprehensive source of health information and analysis), we selected 39 indicators that provide a more complete picture of the health of our state.

We believe everyone deserves a healthy start in life and the opportunity to maintain good health through all stages of life. To help show the biggest health threats for each age group, the indicators are organized by life stages. The 2008 Report Card grades each of these five life stages to show how Coloradans fare at every age. The stages are: *Healthy Beginnings*, *Healthy Children*, *Healthy Adolescents*, *Healthy Adults* and *Healthy Aging*.

Within each life stage are four or more indicators used by most states and tracked by health organizations across the country. For each indicator we examined the most recent Colorado data, how we rank among the 50 states, and how close Colorado comes to goals set by the federal government in its *Healthy People 2010 initiative*. The grades for each life stage are an average of the rankings for indicators in that stage.

Expanded information available

Along with the 2008 Colorado Health Report Card, the Foundation published *Understanding the Numbers: Indicator Details and Promising Initiatives*, an online supplement that further explains the data and shares promising initiatives targeting related health conditions and outcomes. This dedicated Web site provides definitions, explanations, context and background about the indicators along with several graphs to provide a situational analysis of each indicator in Colorado. To view this information or download *Understanding the Numbers* as a complete document, please visit www.ColoradoHealthReportCard.org.

New Report on obesity now available

Colorado may be one of the leanest states but nearly one in five Coloradans is obese and the trend is on the rise, especially for children. Because obesity has such an impact on overall health, three stages of life include indicators related to obesity (see below). The Foundation has released a special report *Income, Education and Obesity: A Closer Look at Inequities in Colorado's Obesity Problem*, to highlight the troubling disparities in obesity rates among less educated and poorer Coloradans and what can be done about them. To read the report, visit www.ColoradoHealthReportCard.org.

2008 results show little change

Older adults in Colorado are doing relatively well but heading in the wrong direction with a grade drop in 2008 from A- to B+. We still rank only average or below average on most indicators related to children. There is much work to be done to ensure that our children enjoy the same quality of life as older adults. Overall, the Report Card shows that Colorado has a long way to go to become the healthiest state in the nation. We invite you to join us as we work to improve these grades and the health of all Coloradans.

Obesity

Life stage	Indicator	CO rank
Healthy Children	9.9 percent of children are obese	3 rd
Healthy Adolescents	9.8 percent of adolescents are obese	8 th
Healthy Adults	19.8 percent of adults are obese	1 st

Average rank 4

Report Card Results

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Life Stage	Grade & Avg. Rank
Healthy Beginnings	C- 30.0
Healthy Children	C- 28
Healthy Adolescents	B 16.2
Healthy Adults	B- 16.5
Healthy Aging	B+ 13.0

RANK

1 = Best

50 = Worst

GRADING SCALE

A (1 – 10) Excellent

B (11 – 20) Good

C (21 – 30) Average

D (31 – 40) Poor

F (41 – 50) Unacceptable

Healthy Beginnings

Every child deserves a healthy start. Delayed prenatal care and smoking while pregnant are among the factors that contribute to low birth weight and to babies who die in the first year of life. As children grow, the best way to protect them against disease is to see to it they receive all the recommended childhood vaccinations. Colorado does poorly, compared to other states, in all these areas, thus earning a grade of C-. Policymakers, health care providers and families can all do better in ensuring that all of our children have a healthy beginning.

Health Indicator	Rank among states
19.5 percent of women receive initial prenatal care later than the 1st trimester	41 st
89.4 percent of women abstain from cigarette smoking during the last three months of pregnancy	13 th
9.2 percent of babies are born with a low birth weight (less than 5 pounds, 9 ounces)	41 st
Infant mortality rate (6.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births)	18 th
79.2 percent of preschool-age children received all recommended doses of five key vaccines	36 th

Average Rank **30.0**

Average Grade



Healthy Children

Too many Colorado children live in poverty, and too few have health insurance. Roughly 121,000 (14 percent) of the state's children under age 12 had no form of insurance between 2005-2007. Forty-four states—including some much poorer than Colorado—did better at this. Children without insurance are more likely to have no primary health care provider, and thus are less likely to get needed medical and dental care. Too few Colorado children get enough exercise, and 10 percent are overweight. While Colorado children are among the leanest in the nation, the state does poorly on most other indicators, resulting in a grade of C-. Insuring our children, seeing that they have a medical and dental home, and making sure they get enough exercise will better prepare them for the challenges of adolescence and adulthood.

Health Indicator	Rank among states
14.2 percent of children are not covered by private or public health insurance	45 th
14.8 percent of children live in families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level	17 th
45.8 percent of children have a primary care provider AND consistently received all needed care, including one or more preventive care visits during the past 12 months	28 th
70.5 percent of children received all the routine dental preventive care needed in the past 12 months	38 th
57.1 percent of school-age children participated in vigorous physical activity for four or more days per week	37 th
9.9 percent of children are obese	3 rd
Average Rank	28
Average Grade	C-



Healthy Adolescents

The transitional years of adolescence pose special challenges for establishing good health habits. Compared to other states, Colorado's adolescents score relatively well on nutrition, exercise and weight, mental health and avoiding risky sexual behaviors. Too many, however, binge drink and smoke, and the number of births to teenage mothers, while lower than in the past, is still higher than in most states. Underlying all this is the lack of health insurance that is still too high—12 percent have none—similar to younger children. Addressing these issues will enable Colorado's adolescents to enter adulthood with good health and good health habits.

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Health Indicator	Rank among states
12.1 percent of adolescents are not covered by private or public health insurance	33 rd
10.4 percent of adolescents live in families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level	14 th
19.2 percent of adolescents ate five or more servings per day of fruits and/or vegetables during the past seven days	16 th
70.1 percent of adolescents participated in vigorous physical activity on three or more of the past seven days	5 th
9.8 percent of adolescents are obese	8 th
30.6 percent of adolescents had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row on one or more of the past 30 days	41 st
18.7 percent of adolescents smoked cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days	18 th
25.0 percent of adolescents felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two consecutive weeks during the past 12 months that they stopped doing some usual activities	9 th
6.7 percent of adolescents attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months	7 th
29.5 percent of adolescents were sexually active in the past three months	6 th
Among students who had sexual intercourse during the past three months, 69.3 percent reported using a condom during last sexual intercourse	5 th
Teen fertility rate (42.6 births to teen mothers per 1,000 teenage women)	32 nd
Average Rank	16.2
Average Grade	B

Healthy Adults

Colorado's working-age adults are healthier than their counterparts in most other states on many health indicators, according to measures in this Report Card. We lead the nation in having the lowest prevalence of diabetes and obesity, and we have the third-lowest prevalence of hypertension. This may be partly due to Colorado's adults reporting higher levels of physical activity compared to many other states. But we do poorly in terms of insurance coverage: one in five working-age adults lacked health insurance between 2005-2007, and one in four has no regular health care provider. The grade of B- reveals some troubling trends and disparities. Our obesity rate has doubled in less than 20 years; low-income Coloradans, and racial and ethnic minorities, lag behind on most indicators. Most ominously, Colorado's failure to do better by our children threatens our future grades for healthy adults and our ability to maintain our reputation as a healthy and prosperous state.

Health Indicator	Rank among states
20.1 percent of working-age adults are not covered by private or public health insurance	33 rd
75.8 percent of adults have one (or more) person(s) they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider	33 rd
25.1 percent of adults consumed five or more fruits and/or vegetables per day within the past week	17 th
84.0 percent of adults participated in any physical activity within the past month	4 th
19.8 percent of adults are obese	1 st
20.2 percent of adults currently smoke cigarettes	14 th
19.6 percent of adults binge drink (males having five or more drinks on one occasion, females having four or more drinks on one occasion) in the past month	33 rd
14.2 percent of adults report that their mental health was not good eight or more days in the past month	26 th
3.8 percent of adults reported they were diagnosed with diabetes	1 st
16.2 percent of adults reported they were diagnosed with high blood pressure	3 rd

Average Rank **16.5**

Average Grade **B-**



Healthy Aging

Colorado's older adults do relatively well by the measures used in this Report Card and compared to their peers in other states. We score in the top 10 on two of the six *Healthy Aging* indicators. Following national trends, Colorado's older adults are living longer and healthier lives. They are more likely to engage in physical activity and report good physical and mental health. Based on this consistent high performance, Colorado gets an **B+** for *Healthy Aging*, indicating there is still room for improvement. While Colorado ranks sixth in the percent of older adults who get pneumonia and flu vaccinations, only 61 percent have actually protected themselves against these diseases. Additionally, one in four older adults report that poor physical or mental health kept them from doing their usual activities on eight or more days in the last month. While over 90 percent of Colorado's older adults have one or more persons they think of as their personal doctor, most states do better. Better access to primary care could reduce the number of hospitalizations for conditions like diabetes, hypertension and pneumonia.

Health Indicator	Rank among states
94.5 percent of older adults have one (or more) person(s) they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider	28 th
61.0 percent of older adults have had a flu shot during the past 12 months and have had a pneumonia vaccination	6 th
74.6 percent of older adults participated in any physical activity in the past 30 days	4 th
18.9 percent of older adults report that their physical health was not good eight or more days in the past month	12 th
7.3 percent of older adults report that their mental health was not good eight or more days in the past month	12 th
21.9 percent of older adults reported eight or more days of limited activity in the past month due to poor physical or mental health	16 th

Average Rank **13.0**

Average Grade

B+

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