

Chronic Disease

Chronic diseases and disabling conditions such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and arthritis are among the most prevalent, costly, and preventable of all health problems. Chronic diseases develop over an extended period of time, often after prolonged exposure to one or more risk factors that are related to lifestyles and behaviors. Adopting healthy behaviors such as eating nutritious foods, being physically active, and avoiding tobacco use can prevent or control the devastating effects of these diseases. In 2003, five of the top ten causes of death in Florida were chronic diseases. In addition, the leading cause of disability among adults in the U.S. is arthritis, limiting the activities of nearly seven million persons.

The department provides a comprehensive statewide approach to address the number one cause of death in Florida, cardiovascular disease. In 2004, 60,623 Florida deaths were due to cardiovascular disease. The department develops legislative issues and provides materials and technical assistance to county health departments. The department also provides professional education to the physicians of Florida and conducts public awareness campaigns as well as focus groups to determine the most effective methods of educating the public on the issues related to preventing death and disease due to heart disease and strokes. Statewide public/private partnerships have been formed around the issues of cardiovascular health, physical activity and nutrition, and obesity prevention in an effort to maximize resources and to communicate consistent and persistent messages on the prevention of cardiovascular disease.

Among adults in Florida, in 2005, over 60% are overweight, including 22.8% who are obese. Since 1986, the prevalence of overweight has increased nearly 70% while the prevalence of obesity has doubled. In 2005, data among Florida high school youth show that 14.4% of high school students are at-risk for overweight while 10.9% are already overweight. Further, approximately 60% of overweight adolescents have at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease while 25% have two or more risk factors. Chronic conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, osteoarthritis, gallbladder disease, and some cancers are a result of declines in physical activity and poor nutrition. The goal of the Obesity Prevention Program is to reduce the prevalence of overweight and obesity among Florida's children and adults. The program initiatives are to promote physical activity, healthy nutrition, breastfeeding, and decreased television viewing time.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Florida. In 2003, 39,238 people died from cancer. Nearly one out of every four deaths (23.3%) in Florida was due to cancer. The Comprehensive Cancer Control (CCC) Program was created to develop a comprehensive cancer strategic action plan for the state. The plan will address many types of cancer including breast, cervical, colorectal, lung, ovarian, prostate, and skin. The overarching goal for the CCC Program is to implement a comprehensive cancer control program to reduce cancer mortality and morbidity in Florida through prevention, early detection, and access to state-of-the-art treatment and survivorship. This is achieved through collaborative efforts with statewide partners.

Breast cancer has the highest cancer incidence for women in Florida. The incidence of breast cancer is higher among white women than non-white women. Breast cancer is the most common cause of cancer death among African American women and the second most common cause of cancer death among white women. Florida ranks third in the nation for total number of new cases and death from breast cancer. Only 50% of breast cancers were found at the early stage in non-white women in 2003, while 61% of white women in that year had their breast cancer diagnosed at an early stage. Almost one million women over the age of 40 living in Florida have not had a mammogram in

two years. Unadjusted crude rates for breast cancer in Florida are among the highest in the country, in part due to the larger number of older women in this state. The age-adjusted breast cancer death rate for nonwhite females is higher than the rate for white females even though their incidence rates are lower.

Cervical cancer deaths are preventable through early detection and treatment. Cervical cancer is the 9th leading cause for cancer incidence for women in Florida. Incidence and mortality rates for Florida due to invasive cervical cancer are both higher among non-white women. Florida's invasive cervical cancer incidence and mortality rates for non-white women are, also, higher than the US rates. The higher rates of mortality in nonwhite females may be due to more cancers among nonwhite females being diagnosed at later stages and differences in access to care and/or insurance coverage.

In May 2001, the Governor signed the Treatment Act here in Florida. The Treatment Act stipulates that Medicaid funds for treatment are available only to women screened through the CDC funded Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. There are 16 CHDs that have lead responsibility for the program and they each have partnered with other counties throughout the state to ensure statewide access.

It is estimated that over 1.2 million adults in Florida have diagnosed diabetes and between 300,000 and 400,000 have diabetes but are undiagnosed. Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death in Florida. Diabetes as an underlying or contributing cause of death is mostly underreported. In 2004, more than 4,700 deaths were due to diabetes as an underlying cause, and approximately 8,000 additional deaths had diabetes listed as a contributing cause. In 2003-2004, the prevalence was highest among non-Hispanic Blacks. All persons with diabetes are at increased risk for heart disease, stroke, end-stage renal disease, blindness, and amputations. The department's statewide efforts include partnerships for affecting change in the ways diabetes issues are addressed locally; analyzing data and assessing diabetes trends; improving health policies; reducing disparities in health outcomes; advocating for the use of community health workers; facilitating continuing education for health care providers and other professionals; and developing culturally appropriate materials.

Arthritis has a sizeable economic impact costing an estimated \$7.6 billion in 1997 in Florida. In 2003, it was estimated that 3,623,000 adult Floridians had doctor-diagnosed arthritis (27.8%). Two modifiable risk factors, overweight/obesity and physical activity, are associated with an increased prevalence of doctor-diagnosed arthritis. Overall, in Florida, people with doctor-diagnosed arthritis report an average of 12 unhealthy days (of the past 30 days) compared with 5.8 unhealthy days among those without doctor-diagnosed arthritis. Activity limitation occurs frequently among people with arthritis and reduces quality of life, limits independence, and compromises health. The department implements evidence-based self-management interventions, provides materials and assistance to county health departments, conducts health communications campaigns, collects prevalence data on arthritis, coordinates a statewide partnership and provides information and education to the general public. The programs goals are to improve mobility through physical activity, and increase self-help behaviors.

The Epilepsy Services Program has a broad statutory mandate to provide client services for the care and treatment of persons with epilepsy, maintain an educational program regarding epilepsy, and promote the prevention of epilepsy. The goal of the Epilepsy Program is to improve the quality of life and productivity of Floridians with epilepsy by providing services to maximize seizure control and education to prevent injuries that may

lead to epilepsy. These services are implemented statewide by contracting with a lead agency that subcontracts with epilepsy service providers throughout the state.

The Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP) strives to address the many health behaviors that contribute to chronic disease that are established in childhood. In an effort to prevent future disease, (CSHP) addresses issues related to childhood health in schools. The CSHP model has identified eight areas, that when looked at in a coordinated manner, are highly effective in addressing the health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. The eight components are health education, physical activity, healthy school nutrition, school health services, guidance, psychological and social services, staff wellness, healthy school environment, and family and community involvement.

Youth Empowered Ambassadors for Health (YEAH!) is a campaign designed to promote education and awareness about the benefits of increased physical activity, healthy nutrition and reduced screen time among youth. Additionally, YEAH seeks to empower youth to become advocates for these healthy lifestyle issues in their families and among friends, within their youth-based organizations and in community settings.

Intervention Strategies and Initiatives

- Continue the Chronic Disease Health Promotion and Education Program to focus on policy and environmental changes in the areas of heart disease and stroke, diabetes, physical activity, nutrition and overweight, and tobacco;
- Implement system-wide changes and public and professional education to increase secondary prevention of heart disease and stroke;
- Implement CDC approved evidence based self-management and programs such as the Chronic Disease Self Management Program and EnhanceFitness.
- Improve access to physical activity and healthful nutrition to disparate populations;
- Continue the Step Up Florida campaign to promote awareness and increase opportunities for physical activity throughout Florida;
- Continue the Youth Empowered Ambassadors for Health (YEAH!) campaign to promote education about physical activity, healthy nutrition and screen time and empower youth to become ambassadors for these health-related issues in their organizations and communities.
- Increase the proportion of persons with arthritis who have had effective, evidence-based arthritis education as an integral part of the management of their condition (baseline – 13% in 2002/03; BRFSS);
- Implement a Comprehensive Cancer Control Program that addresses prevention and education regarding the associated risk factors with colorectal, ovarian, lung, prostate and skin cancer;
- Maintain the number of women screened for breast and cervical Cancer through the Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Program to approximately 10,000;

- Ensure that final diagnoses are obtained within 60 days for at least 95% of women with abnormal results screened for breast and cervical cancer through the Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Program;
- Ensure treatment is started within 60 days for at least 95% of women diagnosed with precancerous or cancerous conditions for breast and cervical cancer through the Florida Breast and Cervical Cancer Program;