



The Colorado

# Health Report Card



The Colorado Health Foundation™

# Together, we can make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation.

## How healthy are we?

That's the question the 2007 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 2007 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.

## New for 2007

The 2007 Report Card includes detailed information about some of 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 40 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. The indicators are organized by life stages to illustrate the health threats of greatest concern for each age group. The 2007 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 five or more indicators used by most states and tracked by health organizations across the country. For most indicators 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.

## Health coverage important

Three of the life stages include an indicator showing the percent of Coloradans who do not have private or public health insurance. (It is not included in *Healthy Aging* because almost all adults over 65 are covered by Medicare.) We have included these indicators because along with healthy behaviors, access to health care is a critical determinant of an individual's overall health.

## Expanded information available

Along with the 2007 Colorado Health Report Card, the Foundation has created several new resources to further explain the data and share promising initiatives for improving the related health behaviors and outcomes. We have published *Understanding the Numbers: Indicator Details and Promising Initiatives* as a supplement to the Report Card. This document provides definitions, explanations, context and background about the indicators along with several graphs to provide a situational analysis of each indicator in Colorado. This information also is available on the Foundation's Web site, [www.ColoradoHealth.org](http://www.ColoradoHealth.org).

## The results are still underwhelming

Older adults in Colorado are doing relatively well, but we still rank only average or below average on most indicators related to children. There is more work to be done to ensure that we do as well by our children as our older adults. The good news is that health and health care has become a priority in our state. Policymakers and health leaders are working on plans to increase the number of people covered by insurance. Having more of our children covered is now a possibility thanks to a diverse coalition of groups who are advocating expansion of the successful State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). We know there is still much to be done to make Colorado 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.

## Health insurance coverage

Life stage	Indicator	CO rank
Healthy Children	14.1 percent of children are not covered by private or public health insurance	44 <sup>th</sup>
Healthy Adolescents	14.1 percent of adolescents are not covered by private or public health insurance	41 <sup>st</sup>
Healthy Adults	19.6 percent of working-age adults are not covered by private or public health insurance	32 <sup>nd</sup>

Average rank 39.3

Life Stage	Grade & Avg. Rank
Healthy Beginnings	C- 27.3
Healthy Children	C- 27.7
Healthy Adolescents	B- 17.1
Healthy Adults	B 13.8
Healthy Aging	A- 9.7

**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
21.2 percent of women receive initial prenatal care later than the 1st trimester	39 <sup>th</sup>
89.4 percent of women abstain from cigarette smoking during the last three months of pregnancy	13 <sup>th</sup>
9.0 percent of babies are born with a low birth weight (less than 5 pounds, 9 ounces)	39 <sup>th</sup>
Infant mortality rate (6.2 infant deaths per 1,000 live births)	17 <sup>th</sup>
80.3 percent of preschool-age children received all recommended doses of five key vaccines	28 <sup>th</sup>

Average Rank 27.3

Average Grade



CO

07

# Healthy Children

Too many Colorado children live in poverty, and too few have health insurance. Roughly 120,000 (14 percent) of the state's children under age 12 had no form of insurance in 2006. Forty-three 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
14.1 percent of children are not covered by private or public health insurance	44 <sup>th</sup>
14.4 percent of children live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level	16 <sup>th</sup>
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 <sup>th</sup>
70.5 percent of children received all the routine dental preventive care needed in the past 12 months	38 <sup>th</sup>
57.1 percent of school-age children participated in vigorous physical activity for four or more days per week	37 <sup>th</sup>
9.9 percent of children are overweight	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Average Rank 27.7

Average Grade



# 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 same lack of health insurance—14 percent have none—found among younger children. Addressing these issues will enable Colorado's adolescents to enter adulthood with good health and good health habits.

Health Indicator	Rank among states
14.1 percent of adolescents are not covered by private or public health insurance	41 <sup>st</sup>
10.3 percent of adolescents live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level	14 <sup>th</sup>
19.2 percent of adolescents ate five or more servings per day of fruits and/or vegetables during the past seven days	16 <sup>th</sup>
70.1 percent of adolescents participated in vigorous physical activity on three or more of the past seven days	5 <sup>th</sup>
9.8 percent of adolescents are overweight	8 <sup>th</sup>
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 <sup>st</sup>
18.7 percent of adolescents smoked cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days	18 <sup>th</sup>
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 <sup>th</sup>
6.7 percent of adolescents attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months	7 <sup>th</sup>
29.5 percent of adolescents were sexually active in the past three months	6 <sup>th</sup>
Among students who had sexual intercourse during the past three months, 69.3 percent reported using a condom during last sexual intercourse	5 <sup>th</sup>
Teen fertility rate (43.9 births to teen mothers per 1,000 teenage women)	36 <sup>th</sup>

Average Rank 17.1

Average Grade **B-**

# Healthy Adults

Colorado's working-age adults are healthier than their counterparts in most other states, according to measures in this Report Card. We have the second-lowest incidence of diabetes and hypertension, and we have low rates of smoking and reported poor mental health days. Colorado's adults are more likely to exercise, and we have the lowest rate of adult obesity in the country. But we do poorly in terms of insurance coverage: one in five working-age adults lacked health insurance in 2006, and one in four has no regular health care provider. The grade of B masks 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
19.6 percent of working-age adults are not covered by private or public health insurance	32 <sup>nd</sup>
75.5 percent of adults have one (or more) person(s) they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider	32 <sup>nd</sup>
23.0 percent of adults consumed five or more fruits and/or vegetables per day within the past week	18 <sup>th</sup>
83.9 percent of adults participated in any physical activity within the past month	5 <sup>th</sup>
18.4 percent of adults are obese	1 <sup>st</sup>
19.5 percent of adults currently smoke cigarettes	8 <sup>th</sup>
18.6 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	30 <sup>th</sup>
11.8 percent of adults report that their mental health was not good eight or more days in the past month	8 <sup>th</sup>
3.8 percent of adults reported they were diagnosed with diabetes	2 <sup>nd</sup>
15.5 percent of adults reported they were diagnosed with high blood pressure	2 <sup>nd</sup>

Average Rank **13.8**

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 six of the seven *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 A- for *Healthy Aging*. But there is room for improvement. While Colorado ranks first in the percent of older adults who get pneumonia and flu vaccinations, only 62 percent have actually protected themselves against these diseases. Additionally, one in five 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
93.4 percent of older adults have one (or more) person(s) they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider	33 <sup>rd</sup>
62.2 percent of older adults have had a flu shot during the past 12 months and have had a pneumonia vaccination	1 <sup>st</sup>
74.6 percent of older adults participated in any physical activity in the past 30 days	5 <sup>th</sup>
18.2 percent of older adults report that their <b>physical</b> health was not good eight or more days in the past month	7 <sup>th</sup>
5.9 percent of older adults report that their <b>mental</b> health was not good eight or more days in the past month	5 <sup>th</sup>
19.9 percent of older adults reported eight or more days of limited activity in the past month due to poor physical or mental health	7 <sup>th</sup>
Preventable hospitalizations among Medicare beneficiaries (5,729 admissions per 100,000 beneficiaries)	10 <sup>th</sup>

Average Rank **9.7**

Average Grade **A-**



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**Special thanks to the following staff from  
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