

Health Facts for Congregations

- More than 61 percent of Tennesseans are either overweight or obese, ranking Tennessee 48th in the nation for obesity.
- There is strong scientific consensus that obesity significantly increases the risk of serious chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers.
- Overweight among children and teenagers has risen dramatically in recent years, contributing to the development of type II diabetes and risk factors for heart disease.
- Obesity-related deaths do not adequately represent deaths related to poor nutrition and physical inactivity. For example, people with a normal weight can die of heart disease caused, at least in part, by poor diet and/or lack of physical activity.
- For Tennessee women, cardiovascular disease (CVD) ranked first among all disease categories in 2004 hospital discharges.
- Among Tennessee residents that experienced heart attacks in 2004 and were admitted to a hospital, thirty-one percent of women died within a year after the heart attack compared to twenty-three percent of men.
- In 2004, CVD claimed the lives of 9,832 Tennessee women.
- Nearly thirty-five percent of all female resident deaths occur from CVD which includes “diseases of the heart” and stroke.
- Stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability; an estimated 15 to 30 percent of stroke survivors are permanently disabled.
- CVD is a particularly important problem among African-American women. In 2004, their age-adjusted mortality rate was almost a third higher than that for white women. (336.8 deaths per 100,000 for black women vs. 256.0 for white women).
- Cancer (all forms combined) accounted for 5,873 deaths in Tennessee women.
- Eating better diets and being more active are important in helping reduce chronic diseases and the high medical costs of treating them.

SOURCES

Tennessee Department of Health, Office of Vital Statistics.
United Health Foundation. America's Health Rankings, 2005 Edition.