



CITY & COUNTY OF DENVER

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Nancy J. Severson, Manager

201 W. Colfax Ave.,
Dept. 109
Denver, CO 80202
PHONE: (720) 865-5365
FAX: (720)865-5531

Contact: Meghan Hughes,
Denver Environmental Health
720-865-5429
or 720-746-8774 (cell)

Dee Martinez
Denver Health
303-436-6606

Health Status Report shows Denver residents getting more physical activity, but obesity rates continue to climb

January 7, 2009 – Denver remains one of the healthiest cities in the country according to the 2008 Health Status Report of Denver, released today.

The collaborative report, produced by Denver Environmental Health and Denver Public Health, uses key indicators established by the national *Healthy People 2010*, created by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010 goals are set to address the most significant preventable threats to health – obesity, lack of physical activity, tobacco use, substance abuse, mental health issues, irresponsible sexual behavior, violence, environmental quality problems, lack of immunizations and lack of access to health care.

“As anyone who works in public health will tell you, prevention, promotion and the elimination of health disparities are key to addressing many of our most challenging health issues,” said Nancy Severson, Manager of Denver Environmental Health. “Thanks to this report, we know where we are doing well, where our efforts are making an impact, and where we need to improve.”

Denver is above or moving towards achieving these national health indicator goals.

“Our goal as public health providers in Denver is to educate our residents, policymakers, and public health partners about health trends, and help identify and address geographic areas where health disparities exist,” said Chris Urbina, M.D., MPH, director, Denver Public Health. “As always, we will work with our leaders and community partners to continue to improve the health of Denver’s citizens.”

Although the report gave Denver an overall grade of “C, making moderate progress,” the city as a whole is trending in the right direction. The report states that further improvement can be achieved through continued partnerships with leaders and community partners and select groups that face health disparities.

Denver met or exceeded the Healthy People 2010 goal in four areas – physical activity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and maternal child health. In addition, breast and lung cancer survival has exceeded the Healthy People 2010 goals.

“As health providers, the areas in which we met the Healthy People 2010 goals are very encouraging,” added Urbina. “It is exciting when we see improvements in the management of diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Denver is a healthy, physically active city, which is directly related to improved overall health.”

As a city, Denver is below the Healthy People 2010 goals in five areas, but is trending in a positive direction – cancer survival, responsible sexual behavior, injury and violence prevention, environmental quality and immunizations.

“One of our primary goals before the next report in 2011 is to develop more partnerships and programs throughout our communities and neighborhoods so that we can show marked improvement in all areas,” said Severson.

“We need to continue to focus and strengthen health promotion and disease prevention throughout the City and County of Denver. If we all work together we can become one of the first cities in the country to exceed all 10 Healthy People 2010 goals,” said Urbina.

For more information about the 2008 Health Status Report, or to view the entire report visit www.denvergov.org/deh, or www.denverhealth.org.

###