



## NCHS Helps Us Improve Our Health

NCHS's surveys and data collection efforts help us identify health challenges in our communities, develop policies to address them, and evaluate our progress in eliminating them.

- The National Health Interview Survey monitors trends in illness and disability and tracks progress on national health objectives.
- The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) is the national source of data on nutrition, behaviors, environment, and conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and high cholesterol.
- The National Vital Statistics System is a federal-state partnership that allows us to track the registration of vital events—births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and fetal deaths across the country—and monitor maternal and infant health and causes of death.
- The National Health Care Survey measures the use of health care resources, the quality of health care, and disparities in health care services provided in physician offices, hospital emergency, outpatient, and inpatient departments, ambulatory surgery centers, nursing homes, and home and hospice care.

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is the nation's principal health statistics agency. Housed within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NCHS plays a critical role in identifying and addressing health challenges in communities across the nation.

## NCHS Helps Us Understand Our Health

Thanks to NCHS, we know that too many Americans are overweight and obese, cancer deaths have decreased, average life expectancy has increased, and emergency rooms are over-crowded. We know how many people are uninsured, how many children are immunized, how many women receive prenatal care, how many Americans are living with HIV/AIDS, and how many teens gave birth.

**The Friends of NCHS is a coalition of more than 200 organizations dedicated to ensuring the agency's continued vital role tracking our nation's health. For more information, contact Emily Holubowich at 202.484.1100 or [eholubowich@dc-crd.com](mailto:eholubowich@dc-crd.com).**

## NCHS Needs Investment to Enhance Data Quality, Timeliness

Investment in NCHS will allow the agency to further modernize its data collection efforts to produce higher quality, more timely data to improve health and health care. NCHS needs sustained, modest growth in its budget to, for example:

- Support all states in collecting consistent, comprehensive birth and death data and implement electronic records to enhance data timeliness and security;
- Expand sample size in surveys such as the National Health Interview Survey, to allow for better state and community estimates about the uninsured, barriers to care, and risk factors across racial and ethnic populations;
- Better monitor obesity rates, especially among children and minority populations, and the performance of preventive interventions, such as nutrition education and fitness programs for youth.
- Fund new surveys on emerging issues such as health care delivery in assisted living facilities.