



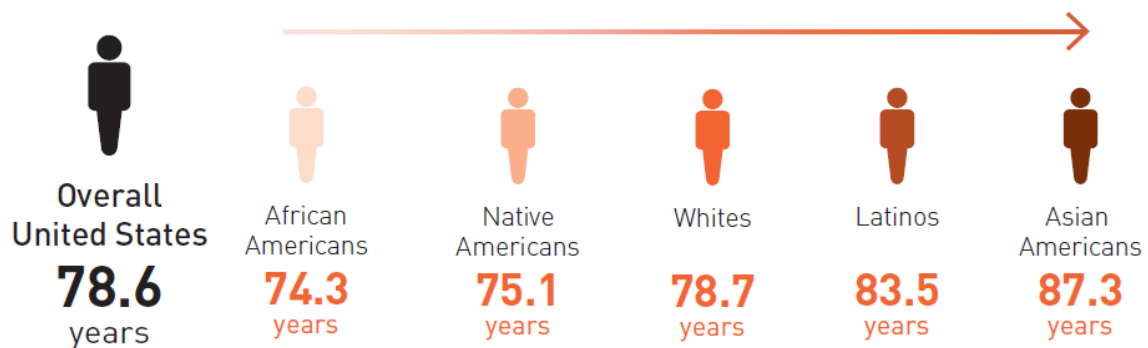
HEALTH IN AMERICA TODAY

Health is one of three areas measured to calculate the American Human Development Index, along with education and standard of living. It accounts for one-third of the Index value.

In the American HD Index, life expectancy at birth stands as a proxy for the capability to live a long and healthy life; life expectancy is the most commonly-used gauge of population health the world over. The American Human Development Project is the only entity calculating life expectancy in America today by state, by congressional district, and by race and ethnicity within each state. The raw mortality and population data come from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

STRIKING FINDINGS IN HEALTH FROM *THE MEASURE OF AMERICA 2010-2011*:

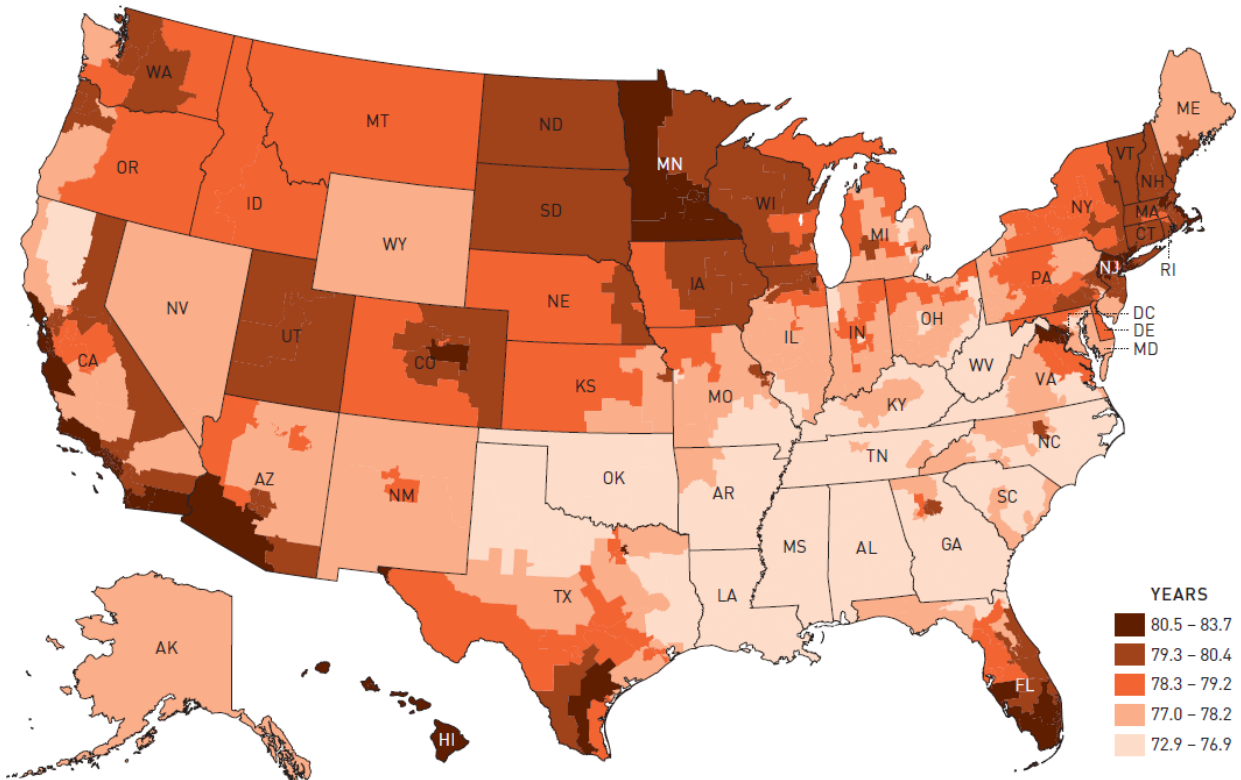
- *The Measure of America 2010-2011* explores the health of various population groups—states, congressional districts, metro areas, racial and ethnic groups, and men and women—revealing huge gaps and worrisome health challenges. But the findings also contain reasons for optimism.
- The **good news** is that life expectancy in the United States has increased by nearly nine years since 1960 to 78.6— with some groups of Americans routinely living into their 80s and 90s.
- The **bad news** is that, despite spending more on health than any other country, the U.S. ranks #30 in life expectancy; people in 29 countries live longer than Americans do, on average, while spending as little as one-eighth as much on their health.



- **Asian Americans** enjoy a life expectancy of 87.3 years, and **African Americans**, 74.3 years, a gap of 13 years. Asian American life expectancy ranges from 92.4 in **Connecticut** to 81.7 in **Hawaii**.
- **Latinos** enjoy the 2nd longest life expectancy of any racial or ethnic groups, 83.5 years— nearly 5 years longer than whites and over 8 years longer than **African Americans** and **Native Americans**. Their life expectancy ranges from 89.8 in **Nevada** to 77.2 in **Hawaii**.

- A white baby born today in **Washington, DC** can expect to live, on average, to 83.1 years, 4 years longer than the national average. An African American baby in the same city has a life expectancy of 71 years, the life span of the average American four decades ago.
- Life expectancy in **Virginia's** 8th Congressional District, in suburban DC, is a decade longer than life expectancy in neighboring **West Virginia's** 3rd District, in the rural, southern part of the state.
- Young **African American** men in **Philadelphia** and **Jefferson Parish, Louisiana** face a higher chance of death than do military personnel in Iraq. In these areas, the death rate for African American men ages 20–24 is about 5 per 1,000. The death rate of military personnel in Iraq is about 4 per one thousand, is 20% lower.
- **Hawaiians** have the longest life expectancy of residents of any state: 81.5 years. People in **Mississippi** have the shortest: 74.8.
- In **South Dakota, Oklahoma, Montana, Minnesota, Alaska, and Michigan, Native Americans** can expect to live only until their late sixties, on average—life spans comparable to those that prevailed in the U.S. in the 1950s.
- Higher spending does not guarantee a longer life. **Utah** ranks 39th in the nation on earnings, yet it ranks in the top 10 in longevity. **Maryland** has the 3rd highest median earnings in the nation, but ranks 33rd in life expectancy.

Life Expectancy by Congressional District



POLICY LEVERS FOR CHANGE

Longer lives for all Americans, especially for those lagging behind, requires:

- **REDUCING DISPARITIES:** Improving the conditions in which people grow up, work, and grow old holds the greatest promise for longer, healthier lives. The social and economic disparities that breed ill health include low levels of income and education, discrimination and residential segregation, social exclusion, dangerous neighborhoods without places to exercise or buy healthy foods, substandard housing, and the chronic stress that insecurity breeds
- **MINIMIZING RISKS:** Exposure to health risks, especially to the “fatal four” of smoking, poor diet, physical inactivity, and excess drinking, is the true leading cause of death in the U.S. Minimizing them through prevention programs and counter-advertising as well as by creating neighborhood, school, and work environments in which healthy choices are not just possible but probable offers great promise.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We need to monitor life expectancy, the diabetes rate, and other vital health indicators with the same intensity we apply to baseball statistics and stock market gyrations.