

Dietary risks are leading cause of disease burden in US and contributed to more health loss in 2010 than smoking, high blood pressure, and high blood sugar.

News Release

Mental conditions, substance abuse, and musculoskeletal disorders cause more disability than cancers. Diet, blood pressure, smoking top risk factors for poor health.

July 10, 2013 — According to new research from a global collaborative of scientists led by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington, poor diet and inadequate physical activity are two of the driving forces behind our nation's health.

The top 10 risk factors for health loss in 2010 and the number of deaths attributable to each were:

Dietary risks	678,282
Smoking	465,651
High blood pressure	442,656
High body mass index	363,991
Physical inactivity	234,022
High blood sugar	213,669
High total cholesterol	158,431
Ambient air pollution	103,027
Alcohol use	88,587
Drug use	25,430

"If the US can make progress with dietary risk factors, physical activity, and obesity, it will see massive reductions in death and disability," said [Dr. Ali Mokdad](#), head of the US County Health Performance team for IHME and former director of the Behavior Risk Factors and Surveillance Survey at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Unhealthy diets and a lack of physical activity in the US cause more health loss than alcohol or drug use."

The findings will be presented today by [Dr. Christopher Murray](#), IHME Director and one of the lead authors on the study at an event for mayors and other local officials hosted by First Lady Michelle Obama as part of the Let's Move! Cities, Towns, and Counties anniversary convening.

In a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* today – "[The State of US Health, 1990-2010: Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors](#)" – researchers show the impact of premature deaths in children and young adults, the significant toll of disabling conditions, and the overall burden on health systems from a range of fatal and non-fatal health factors. This is the first comprehensive analysis of disease burden in the United States in more than 15 years. It includes estimates for death and disability from 291 diseases, conditions, and injuries as well as 67 risk factors.

To explore the trends for the United States in depth, go to our Global Burden of Disease visualization page and search for the US in any of our tools: www.ihmeuw.org/GBDCountryViz