

Since 1871, the Surgeon General of the United States has been the nation's leading spokesperson on matters of public health, serving as a principal advisor to the President and Congress and communicating directly to the American people about the best available science. As the 16th Surgeon General in our nation's history, Dr. David Satcher also oversees the 6,000-plus person Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service, a uniformed cadre of health professionals on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in the event of a public health emergency. He is only the second person in history to simultaneously hold the position of Assistant Secretary for Health.

For more information please visit the Office of the Surgeon General webpage at:

[www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov)



### National Health Information Center 800-336-4797 [nhic-nt.health.org](http://nhic-nt.health.org)

The National Health Information Center (NHIC) is a health information referral service that puts health professionals and consumers who have health questions in touch with organizations that are best able to provide answers.

### healthfinder [www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

**healthfinder**<sup>®</sup> is a free gateway to reliable consumer health and human services information developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. **healthfinder**<sup>®</sup> can lead you to select online publications, clearing-houses, databases, websites, and support and self-help groups, as well as the government agencies and not-for-profit organizations that produce reliable information for the public.



### Healthy People 2010 [www.health.gov/healthypeople](http://www.health.gov/healthypeople)

**Healthy People 2010** is the nation's health plan for the first decade of the 21st century and provides the nation with a wide range of public health opportunities.



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# The Surgeon General's Priorities



*"I would most like to be remembered as the Surgeon General who listened to the American people and responded with effective programs."*

*David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D.*



## A Balanced Community Health System

**O**ur nation must move toward a balanced community health system that balances health promotion, disease prevention, early detection, and universal access to quality care. That system must be grounded at the community level, calling on the serious involvement of civic and other local groups, the criminal justice system, community schools, and faith-based organizations. It must support a partnership between public health and medicine. And, finally, it must be supported by a balanced research agenda.

We must address the persistent problems of access, cost, and quality that plague this nation and that have become major barriers to health. When people are left out of the system—for whatever reason—we miss crucial opportunities to put prevention into practice.

### Our system must:

- Provide equitable access to quality health care services
- Ensure that every child has an opportunity for a healthy start in life
- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Offer new approaches to mental health

## A Global Approach to Public Health

**O**ur public health perspective calls for new and innovative global partnerships. Because we live in a global village, we must work together with other nations as global partners to improve world health overall. Thanks to phenomenal advances in transportation, international trade, and technology, we are living in an age where two million people, innumerable products, and countless ideas cross international borders every day.

### Several areas of global health concern:

- Polio eradication
- Emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases
- Bioterrorism
- Food and blood safety
- Violence and injury prevention
- Tobacco control



## Elimination of Racial & Ethnic Disparities in Health

**T**his priority to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health by 2010 is an outgrowth of the President's Race Initiative and parallels one of the two goals of "Healthy People," the Department's initiative that sets the nation's health agenda every 10 years. What we have done through this initiative is to make the first-ever commitment in the history of our government to eliminate, not just reduce, the health disparities between majority and minority populations. We operate on the principle that to the extent we care for the health needs of the most vulnerable among us, we do the most to protect the health of the nation.

### Our six areas of initial focus:

- Infant mortality
- Child and adult immunizations
- HIV/AIDS
- Cardiovascular disease
- Breast and cervical cancer screening and management
- Diabetes complications