



Prevention and Health in North Carolina

Tobacco use, poor nutrition, obesity and lack of exercise are responsible for most preventable deaths in North Carolina. Nearly one in four NC adults (23%) is a smoker, while national adult smoking rates have fallen below 20% for the first time.¹ Two-thirds (65%) of adults in NC are obese or overweight, and almost one in four (24%) adults gets no physical activity at all.²

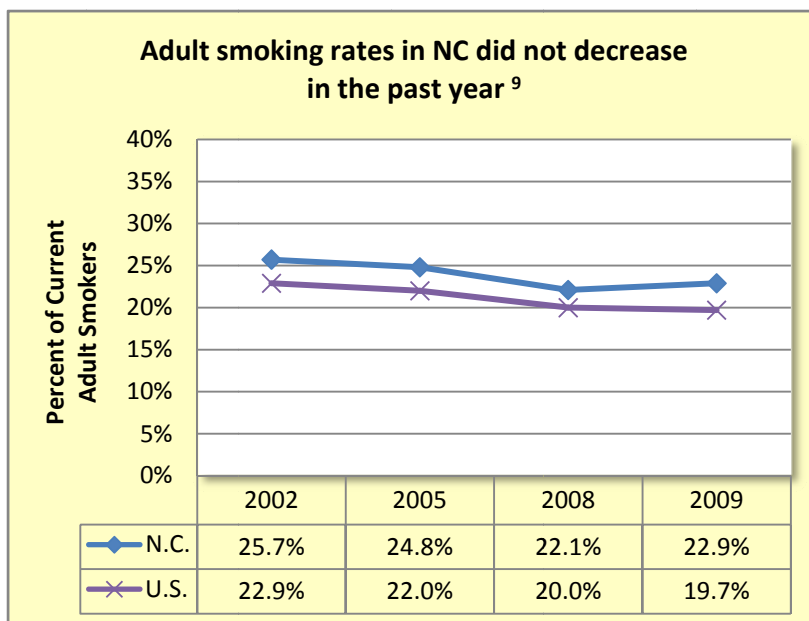
Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in NC and the nation, and greatly increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and many cancers. Obesity is a leading risk factor for heart disease and diabetes. Poorly managed, diabetes can lead to heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and amputations.

In this past year, smoking rates in NC declined among youth. This occurred after all schools passed smoke-free policies and nearly \$17 million was spent on youth tobacco prevention.³ However, youth obesity rates in NC are fifth worst in the nation.⁴ More than one third of students watch 3+ hours of TV on school days.⁵

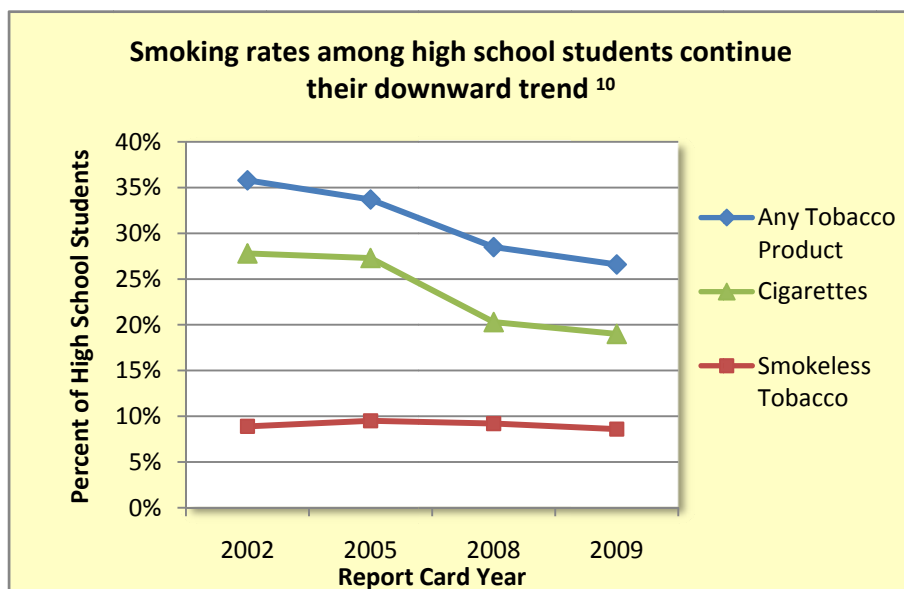
This report summarizes the effects of tobacco use and overweight on preventable illness and early death in NC. Grades for specific categories and recommendations for effective and healthy policies for government, health care providers and employers are at the end of this report.

NC has higher adult smoking rates than the nation

- There are 1.5 million adult smokers in NC (22.9%).⁶
- In the past year, NC's adult smoking rates have gotten significantly worse, moving from 16th to 9th among U.S. states with the highest percentage of adult smokers.⁷
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NC is home to three of the top ten cities with the highest adult smoking rates (Greensboro, Wilmington, and Hickory).⁸



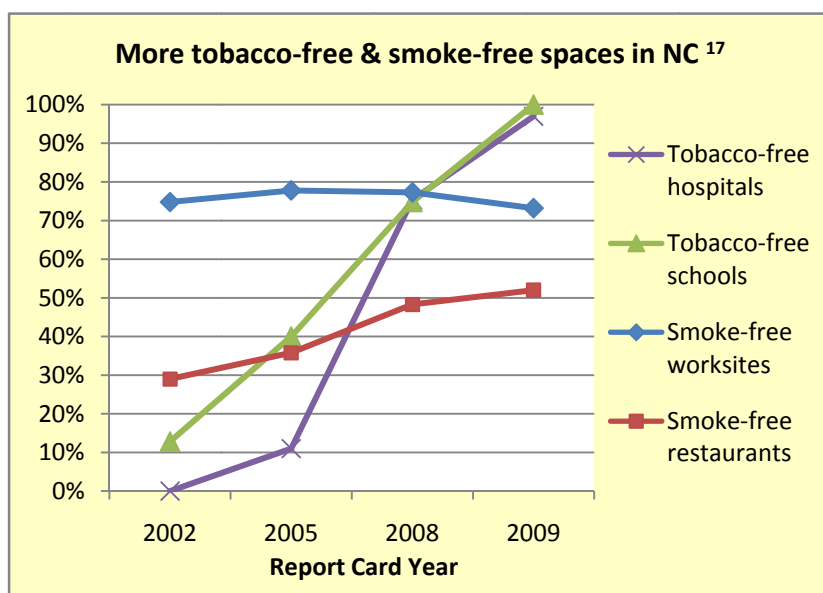
While overall tobacco use by NC high school students has declined, smokeless tobacco use rates stayed the same



- Fewer NC middle (9%) and high school (27%) youth currently use tobacco compared to two years ago (11% and 29%, respectively).¹¹ This trend mirrors national declines over the past decade.
- Rates of high school youth cigarette use in NC are similar to the national average.¹²

Statewide policies and focused resources protect North Carolinians from secondhand smoke*

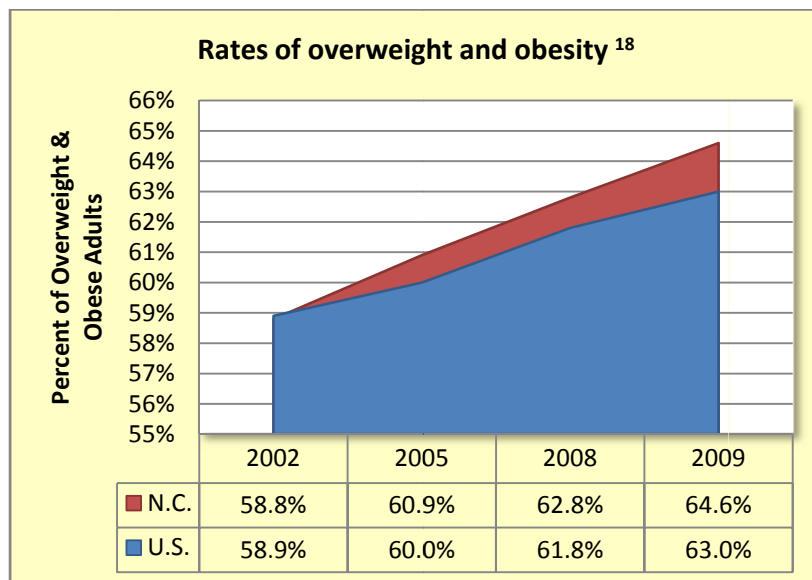
- Almost \$289 million is spent each year in NC to treat health conditions caused by secondhand smoke. This does not include lost productivity, long-term care and disability.¹³
- In the past year, all NC schools and acute-care hospitals passed 100% tobacco-free policies, which protect thousands from harmful secondhand smoke.¹⁴
- NC still has the 5th weakest cigarette tax in the nation (35 cents per pack), while the national average increased from \$1.11 to \$1.21 in the last year.¹⁵
- A \$1.00 increase in NC's cigarette tax would prevent thousands from ever smoking and help thousands more quit tobacco.¹⁶



*Law protecting restaurant & bar workers from secondhand smoke will take effect January 2010 and will be reflected in our next report card.

If you use tobacco and want to quit: call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

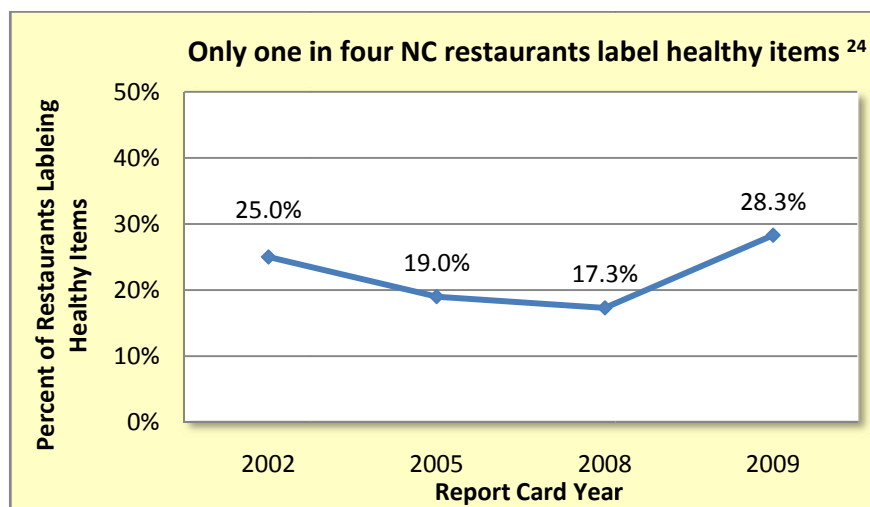
Rates of overweight and obesity in North Carolina are getting worse faster than in the nation overall



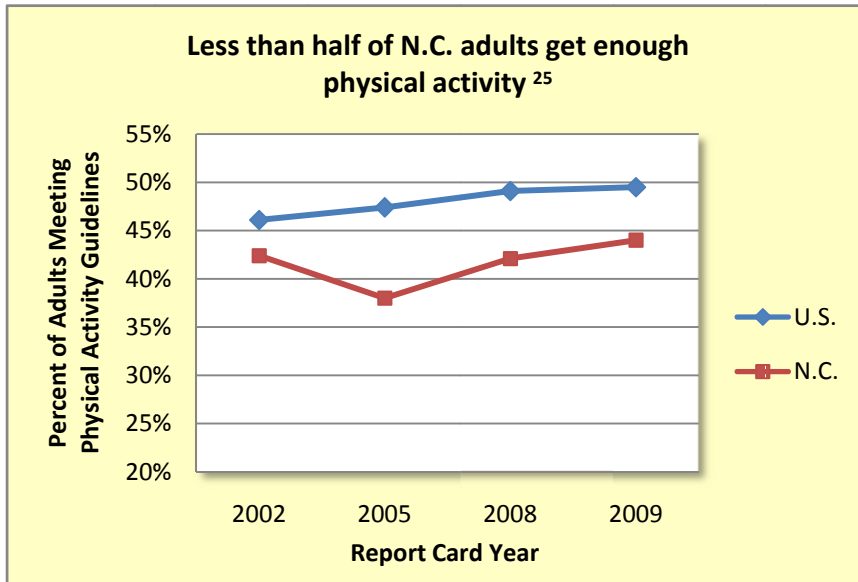
- Overweight and obesity rates among NC adults (65%) are significantly higher than the national average (63%).
- Since our 2002 Report Card, overweight and obesity have increased 10% in NC, versus 7% across the US.¹⁹
- Youth obesity rates in NC are fifth worst in the nation.²⁰
- The percentage of NC adults with diabetes has increased more than 40% in the past decade, from 6.4% in 2000 to 9.1% in 2007.²¹

Not enough restaurants provide nutrition information

- Less than one third (28%) of restaurants in NC label their healthy items. This hasn't increased significantly in almost a decade.²²
- Consumers who can easily see nutrition information at the point of selection often make healthier choices.
- Hospitals are taking a lead in identifying healthy options on cafeteria menus and in vending machines.
- One third of NC hospitals have either started or completed our [healthy food action plan](#).²³



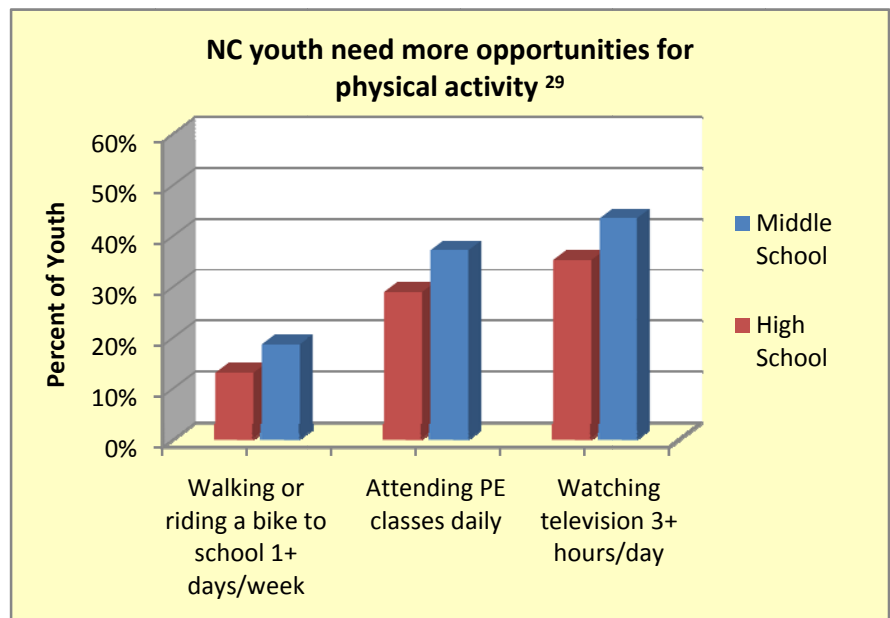
North Carolinians don't get enough physical activity



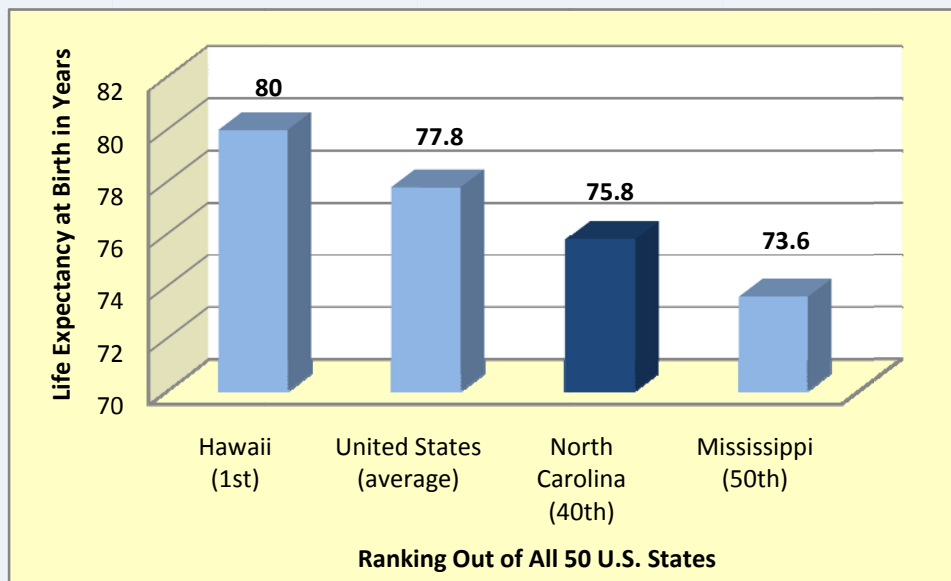
- Less than half (44%) of NC adults get their recommended 30 minutes of physical activity per day, compared to 50% in the U.S.²⁶
- Even moderate physical activity can have significant health benefits, including decreased risk of coronary heart disease.
- Almost 60% of NC adults spend the vast majority of their workday sitting.²⁶
- A majority (60%) of North Carolinians would increase their physical activity if they had better access to sidewalks or trails.²⁶

More high school and middle school students watch 3+ hours of TV/day than attend daily physical education in school²⁷

- Only 44% of high school and 55% of middle school youth meet recommended guidelines for daily physical activity.²⁷
- Regular physical activity not only helps prevent the onset of obesity and other chronic diseases, but can enhance children's ability to pay attention and learn in the classroom.²⁸



North Carolinians die two years earlier than the national average



Source - Business Week: http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/content/sep2006/db20060913_099763.htm

Recommendations:

Employers:

Create a tobacco free workplace policy, and make it easier for your employees to be healthy. Take our comprehensive healthy workplace assessment, improve employee productivity, and reduce health costs (www.ncprevention.com).

Policymakers:

Support tobacco-free workplace laws, increases in cigarette tax, better enforcement of existing smoking regulations, and hard-hitting public education campaigns. Support laws that increase availability and labeling of healthier foods and drinks in schools, and reduce their cost. Visit www.ncpreventionpartners.org/policy.

Healthcare Providers:

Ask your patients if they use tobacco and, if they do, help them quit. Help your patients think about a more balanced diet and increased physical activity. Start the prevention conversation at www.ncpreventionpartners.org/startingtheconversation.

TOBACCO GRADES

Indicator	2002	2009	2010 Target	2009 Grade
BEHAVIORS				
Current adult smoker ³⁰	26%	23%	12%	C
High school students using tobacco ³¹	36%	27%	21%	C
Middle school students using tobacco ³¹	17%	9%	5%	A
Pregnant women who smoke ³²	14%	12%	10%	A
Adults making a serious attempt to quit ³³	39%	57%	75%	C
ENVIRONMENT & POLICY				
Shown Improvement				
Tobacco-free school systems ³⁴	13%	100%	100%	A
Tobacco-free hospitals (campus wide) ³⁵	0%	91%	100%	A
Medicare smokers hospitalized for heart attack that were offered smoking cessation counseling ³⁶	47%	97%	100%	A
Private health plans offering cessation benefit ³⁷	75%	100%	100%	A
Public health plans offering cessation benefit ³⁷	50%	100%	100%	A
Minors buying tobacco product in retail outlets ³⁸	20%	11%	5%	B
Needs Improvement				
Adults reporting their worksite prohibits smoking in indoor public and work areas ³⁹	75%	73%	100%	C
Smokers counseled by a provider within the past year to stop smoking ³⁹	73%	72%	100%	C
Smoke-free restaurants ⁴⁰	29%	52%	100%	D
Hospitals with smoking cessation program for patients ⁴¹	22%	61%	100%	D
Tobacco-free Health Departments ⁴²	-	66%	100%	D
Flunking				
Tobacco-free Dept. of Social Services ⁴²	-	33%	100%	F
Per pack cigarette tax (vs. \$1.19 US avg) ⁴³	\$.05	\$.35	\$2.00	F

NUTRITION GRADES

Indicator	2002	2009	2010 Target	2009 Grade
BEHAVIORS				
Adults who are overweight or obese ⁴⁴	59%	65%	40%	F
Adults who eat at least five fruits and vegetables each day ⁴⁴	25%	22%	75%	F
High school youth who are overweight or obese ⁴⁵	27%	30%	5%	F
High school youth who eat at least five fruits and vegetables each day ⁴⁵	18%	15%	75%	F
Middle school youth who are overweight or obese ⁴⁵	29%	34%	5%	F
Seniors who are overweight or obese ⁴⁶	56%	63%	40%	F
Seniors who eat at least five fruits and vegetables each day ⁴⁶	32%	25%	75%	D
ENVIRONMENT & POLICY				
Shown Improvement				
Public health plans offering nutrition benefit or program ⁴⁷	50%	100%	100%	A
Needs Improvement				
Hospitals offering patients nutritional programs ⁴⁸	65%	83%	100%	B
Private health plans offering nutrition benefit or program ⁴⁹	75%	67%	100%	C
Restaurants labeling certain items as healthy ⁵⁰	25%	28%	100%	D

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GRADES

Indicator	2002	2009	2010 Target	2009 Grade
BEHAVIORS				
Adults getting recommended amount of physical activity ⁵¹	42% (Moderate) 20% (Vigorous)	44%	50%	B
High school youth getting recommended amount of physical activity ⁵²	24% (Moderate) 64% (Vigorous)	44%	52%	F
Middle school youth getting recommended amount of physical activity ⁵²	48% (Moderate) 75% (Vigorous)	55%	52%	A
Seniors getting recommended amount of physical activity ⁵³	34%	34%	50%	C
High school students walking or bicycling to school at least once a week ⁵⁴	6%	13%	55%	F
Middle school students walking or bicycling to school at least once a week ⁵⁴	12%	19%	55%	F
High school youth watching TV >= 3 hrs. per school day ⁵⁴	-	35%	25%	C
Middle school youth watching TV >= 3 hrs. per school day ⁵⁴	-	44%	25%	F
ENVIRONMENT & POLICY				
Showed Improvement				
Private health plans offering physical activity incentive or program ⁵⁵	50%	83%	100%	B
Needs Improvement				
Hospitals with a patient fitness center or physical activity program ⁵⁶	29%	31%	100%	D
Flunking				
Public health plans offering physical activity incentive or program ⁵⁷	50%	33%	100%	F
High school students attending physical education class daily ⁵⁸	34%	29%	100%	F
Middle school students attending physical education class daily ⁵⁸	-	37%	100%	F

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