

Prevention for a Healthier America

Investments in Disease Prevention Yield Significant Savings, Stronger Communities

JULY 2008



A report released by Trust for America's Health in July 2008 finds that a small strategic investment in disease prevention could result in significant savings in U.S. health care costs. In its report, entitled *Prevention for a Healthier America: Investments in Disease Prevention Yield Significant Savings, Stronger Communities*, TFAH concluded that an investment of \$10 per person per year in proven community-based programs to increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent smoking and other tobacco use could save the country more than \$16 billion annually within five years. This is a return of \$5.60 for every \$1.

"Health care costs are crippling the U.S. economy. Keeping Americans healthier is one of the most important, but overlooked ways we could reduce these costs," said Jeff Levi, PhD, Executive Director of TFAH. "This study shows that with a strategic investment in effective, evidence-based disease prevention programs, we could see tremendous returns in less than five years -- sparing millions of people from serious diseases and saving billions of dollars."

Out of the \$16 billion, Medicare could save more than \$5 billion, Medicaid could save more than \$1.9 billion, and private payers could save more than \$9 billion.

The economic findings are based on a model developed by researchers at the Urban Institute and a review of evidence-based studies conducted by the New York Academy of Medicine. They found that many effective prevention programs cost less than \$10 per person, and that these programs have delivered results in lowering rates of diseases that are related to physical activity, nutrition, and smoking.

The evidence shows that implementing these programs in communities reduce rates of type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure by 5 percent within 2 years; reduce heart disease, kidney disease, and stroke by 5 percent within 5 years; and reduce some forms of cancer, arthritis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease by 2.5 percent within 10 to 20 years.

Potential Annual Net Savings and Return on Investment (ROI) for States Within 5 Years of an Investment of \$10 Per Person Per Year in Strategic Disease Prevention Programs in Communities.

(State estimates are based on potential reduction in health spending by state. Listed in alphabetical order):

State	Potential Annual Savings	Return on Investment
Alabama	\$250 million	5.6 to 1
Alaska	\$47 million	7.2 to 1
Arizona	\$242 million	4.2 to 1
Arkansas	\$139	5 to 1
California	\$1.7 billion	4.8 to 1
Colorado	\$232 million	5 to 1
Connecticut	\$231 million	6.6 to 1
Delaware	\$57 million	7 to 1
Washington, D.C.	\$57 million	9.9 to 1
Florida	\$1 billion	6.2 to 1
Georgia	\$426 million	4.8 to 1
Hawaii	\$70 million	5.6 to 1
Idaho	\$62 million	4.5 to 1
Illinois	\$708 million	5.6 to 1
Indiana	\$343 million	5.5 to 1
Iowa	\$165 million	5.6 to 1
Kansas	\$155 million	5.7 to 1
Kentucky	\$248 million	6 to 1
Louisiana	\$234 million	5.2 to 1
Maine	\$98 million	7.5 to 1
Maryland	\$332 million	6 to 1
Massachusetts	\$476 million	7.4 to 1
Michigan	\$545 million	5.4 to 1
Minnesota	\$316 million	6.2 to 1
Mississippi	\$150 million	5.2 to 1
Missouri	\$334 million	5.8 to 1
Montana	\$51 million	5.5 to 1
Nebraska	\$102 million	5.8 to 1
Nevada	\$115 million	5 to 1
New Hampshire	\$76 million	5.9 to 1
New Jersey	\$543 million	6.3 to 1
New Mexico	\$88 million	4.7 to 1
New York	\$1.3 billion	7 to 1
North Carolina	\$473 million	5.6 to 1
North Dakota	\$39 million	6.2 to 1
Ohio	\$685 million	6 to 1

Oklahoma	\$183 million	5.2 to 1
Oregon	\$193 million	5.4 to 1
Pennsylvania	\$791 million	6.4 to 1
Rhode Island	\$73 million	6.8 to 1
South Carolina	\$233 million	5.6 to 1
South Dakota	\$42 million	5.5 to 1
Tennessee	\$351 million	6 to 1
Texas	\$1 billion	4.7 to 1
Utah	\$89 million	3.7 to 1
Vermont	\$43 million	7 to 1
Virginia	\$385 million	5.2 to 1
Washington	\$343 million	5.5 to 1
West Virginia	\$124 million	6.9 to 1
Wisconsin	\$337 million	6.2 to 1
Wyoming	\$29 million	5.8 to 1

[Complete Report](#)

[Executive Summary](#)

[Press Release](#): New Report: Investment in Disease Prevention Could Save America More than \$16 Billion in Five Years (Includes National and State-Specific Findings)

[July 17 Press Club Event Presentation](#) by Jeff Levi and Barbara Ormond (2.06MB pdf)

[Congressional Briefings](#)

[California for a Healthier America Report](#) (October 2008)

[Key Research Findings](#)

[Prevention for a Healthier Georgia](#)

[Community-Based Disease Prevention Programs](#)

Additional Resources

[CDC's Guide to Community Preventive Services](#)

[National Association of Counties Healthy Counties Database of Community Programs](#)

[YMCA of America's Pioneering Healthier Communities](#)

[Prescription Drug Abuse: Strategies to Stop the Epidemic](#)

[A Healthier America 2013: Strategies to Move from Sick Care to Health Care in Four Years](#)

[F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future 2012](#)

See the [Healthier America Project initiative page](#) for more reports, news and resources.