



The 2007 Cambridge Public Health Assessment

# How healthy are we?



## Who are we?

- 30.4 is the median age of Cambridge residents
- 50% of us lived in Cambridge five years ago
- 26% of us are foreign-born
- 31% speak a language other than English at home
- 68% of us are White, 12% of us are Black  
12% of us are Asian, 5% of us are Two or More Races, 3% of us are Other
- 65% of Cambridge residents aged 25+ have a college or graduate degree
- 25% of Cambridge residents aged 25+ have a high school diploma or some college
- 10% of Cambridge residents aged 25+ didn't graduate from high school
- 13% of individuals and 9% of families live at or below the federal poverty line
- Our median household income is **\$48,000**

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[www.cambridgepublichealth.org](http://www.cambridgepublichealth.org)

## How are we doing?

# How is our health?

		Mass.	Cambridge	
<b>Is our environment healthy?</b>	• Rate of asthma-related emergency department visits per 100,000 residents <sup>1</sup>	1,036	622	<p>Asthma-related ED visits among Cambridge residents are down <b>22%</b>.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The Charles River is cleaner! <b>Grade B+</b>, up from a C-.<sup>14</sup></p>
	• % of days in 2005 that air quality was rated "good" by EPA <sup>2</sup>	80%	89% (Middlesex County)	
<b>Is violence a problem in our community?</b>	• High school students who witnessed violence in their families in the past year <sup>3</sup>		8%	<p><b>1/3</b> of all assaults reported in Cambridge are domestic incidents.<sup>4</sup></p>
	• High school students who witnessed violence in their neighborhood in the past year <sup>3</sup>		24%	
	• High school students who reported being in a physical fight in the past year <sup>3</sup>		23%	
	• Decline in aggravated assaults from 2002 to 2005 <sup>4, 5</sup>	↓2%	↓13%	
<b>Are we maintaining a healthy weight?</b>	• Public school students age 5 to 14 who are "overweight" or "at risk of being overweight or obese" <sup>6</sup>		36%	<p><b>70%</b> of students exercise vigorously at least <b>3</b> times/week, up from <b>55%</b> in 2004!<sup>3</sup></p>
	• Adults who are overweight or obese <sup>7, 8</sup>	55%	38%	
	• High school students who reported exercising vigorously three times a week <sup>3, 9</sup>	63%	70%	
<b>What are our leading causes of accidents?</b>	• Rate of motor vehicle-related injury hospitalizations among children age 14 or younger per 100,000 children <sup>1</sup>	19	20	<p><b>200</b> Cambridge seniors are hospitalized each year for <b>fall-related</b> injuries.<sup>1</sup></p>
	• Rate of fall-related hospitalizations among people age 65 or older per 100,000 residents <sup>1</sup>	2,060	2,167	
<b>Are our children adequately immunized?</b>	• Children entering kindergarten fully vaccinated <sup>10</sup>	94%	99%	<p><b>2,800</b> people were vaccinated for <b>flu</b> by the Cambridge Public Health Department in 2005.<sup>10</sup></p>
<b>How much do we drink or use drugs?</b>	• Adults who reported binge drinking in the past 30 days <sup>7, 8</sup>	17%	25%	<p><b>Opioid-related</b> hospitalizations among Cambridge residents <b>increased 24%</b> between 2004 and 2005.<sup>1</sup></p>
	• Teenagers who reported binge drinking in the past 30 days <sup>3, 9</sup>	26%	25%	
	• Adults who reported using marijuana in the past 30 days <sup>7</sup>		13%	
	• Teenagers who reported using marijuana in the past 30 days <sup>3, 9</sup>	26%	26%	
	• Rate of opioid-related hospitalizations per 100,000 residents <sup>1</sup>	267	341	
<b>How is the emotional health of our teens?</b>	• Students who reported attempting suicide in the past year <sup>3, 9</sup>	5%	1%	
	• Teenagers who reported feeling sad or hopeless for more than two weeks in the past 30 days <sup>3, 9</sup>	27%	25%	
<b>Do we have good access to health care?</b>	• High school students who reported seeing a doctor or nurse for a physical exam within the past year <sup>3</sup>		82%	<p><b>33%</b> of school children screened for dental disease have <b>cavities</b>.<sup>10</sup></p>
	• Residents who are uninsured <sup>7, 8</sup>	9%	8%	
<b>Are we protected from infectious disease?</b>	• Rate of tuberculosis cases per 100,000 residents <sup>11</sup>	5	8	<p><b>367</b> Cambridge residents are living with <b>HIV/AIDS</b>.<sup>13</sup></p>
	• Rate of syphilis cases per 100,000 residents <sup>12</sup>	10	22	
	• Rate of gonorrhea cases per 100,000 residents <sup>12</sup>	45	51	
	• Residents diagnosed with AIDS within 2 months of learning HIV status <sup>13</sup>			
	Women	17%	22%	
	Men	16%	13%	

## What is Cambridge Health Alliance doing to improve community health?

- Cambridge Health Alliance works with the City of Cambridge to help people lead healthier lives. As the Cambridge public hospital system, it provides medical services, community education and public health protection, and strives to become an integral part of the community.
- Medical services continue to expand and the recent addition of state-of-the-art technologies like the new Cambridge Breast Center provide critical care to all Cambridge residents, from university professors to underserved populations. Multilingual interpreters speak nearly 50 languages and their services are available free to patients.
- Public health programs address pressing issues such as asthma, diabetes, domestic violence, drug abuse, HIV, obesity, and dental health. While these

programs help individuals access primary care and appropriate treatment, they also promote health and prevent disease by helping individuals make healthy lifestyle choices.

- The emergency preparedness team helps Cambridge prepare for major emergencies while programs in environmental health and public health nursing protect residents from disease outbreaks and other hazards due to contaminated food and water, chemical releases, insect-borne diseases, and unmet medical needs.

**Cambridge Health Alliance is committed to Cambridge and to improving the lives of all its citizens.**

### SOURCES

1. MDPH, Injury Surveillance Program, 2005
2. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2005
3. Cambridge Teen Health Survey, 2006
4. Cambridge Police Dept., 2005
5. Mass. State Police, 2004
6. Institute for Community Health
7. Cambridge Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, 2002
8. Mass. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2005
9. Mass. Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2005
10. Cambridge Public Health Dept.
11. MDPH, TB Prevention & Control, 2004
12. MDPH, Div. of Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention, 2003
13. MDPH, Div. of HIV/AIDS Surveillance, 2006
14. Charles River Watershed Association, 2005

### PHOTO CREDIT

Robert Healy by nortonphotography.com

Dear Cambridge resident,

Each year, **Cambridge Health Alliance** produces a report on the health of Cambridge. The goal of the report is to inform our citizens, individually and as a community, about the health status of our city.

*The 2007 Cambridge Public Health Assessment* provides current information about key health indicators, such as overweight and obesity, substance abuse, immunization status, and injury and violence. The data will serve as a baseline upon which to track our progress in improving the health of Cambridge residents and help us answer key questions – which health improvement programs are working? How can we address disparities in health status? How can we apply what we know about motivating people and institutions to make healthier choices?

This information is used by the Cambridge Public Health Department, the Institute for Community Health, and Cambridge Health Alliance's Community Affairs Department to plan and improve the many crucial health programs that serve you and your neighbors. We hope that you will find this report accessible and provocative, and that it piques your curiosity about the health of Cambridge residents. We invite you and your family to join us in making Cambridge an even healthier and more vibrant city.



To your health,

Robert W. Healy  
City Manager



To your health,

Dennis D. Keefe  
Commissioner of Public Health  
& Chief Executive Officer  
of Cambridge Health Alliance

**CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**



Cambridge Health Alliance

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