

City of Milwaukee Health Department  
**Men's Health Program**



**Men's Health:**  
*Milwaukee and the United States*

## Men in Milwaukee and Men Nationally

Men in Wisconsin live an average of almost 5 year less than women in Wisconsin.<sup>1</sup> This is very similar to the situation for men and women in the rest of the United States.

**9 of the top 10 causes of death for men in Milwaukee and men across the US are the same<sup>2-4</sup>:**

### Top Ten Causes of Death for Men in Milwaukee

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Unintentional Injury
4. Stroke
5. Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases
6. Homicide
7. Diabetes
8. Flu and Pneumonia
9. Suicide
10. Kidney Disease

### Top Ten Causes of Death for Men in the US

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Unintentional Injury
4. Stroke
5. Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases
6. Diabetes
7. Flu and Pneumonia
8. Suicide
9. Kidney Disease
10. Alzheimer's Disease

### Where is the difference?

Homicide is the number 6 cause of death in Milwaukee, but does not even rank in the top 10 for the US – or for Wisconsin. While homicide causes 3.7% of the deaths of men in Milwaukee, homicide kills 10% of African American men and 11% of Hispanic men in the city.<sup>2</sup>



## Men and Women in Milwaukee

The causes of death for Milwaukee men and women are similar, although the order changes. Homicide and suicide do not make the list for Milwaukee women.<sup>2</sup>

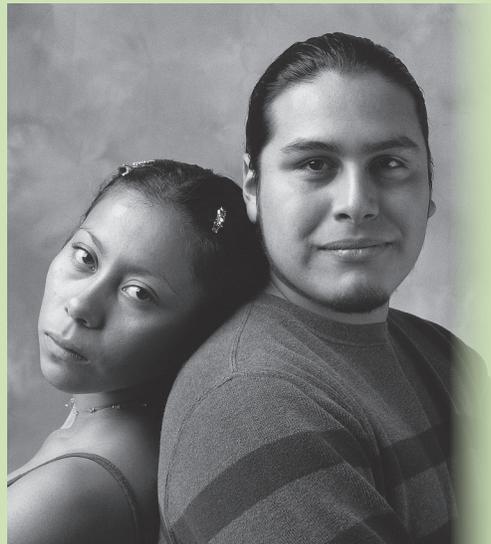
### Top Ten Causes of Death for Men in Milwaukee

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
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5. Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases
6. Homicide
7. Diabetes
8. Flu and Pneumonia
9. Suicide
10. Kidney Disease

### Top Ten Causes of Death for Women in Milwaukee

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Stroke
4. Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases
5. Unintentional Injury
6. Diabetes
7. Flu and Pneumonia
8. Kidney Disease
9. Alzheimer's Disease
10. Septicemia

In Wisconsin, men live an average of almost 5 year less than women.<sup>1</sup> This is very similar to the situation for men and women in the rest of the United States.



## Health Behaviors of Milwaukee Men

Men don't just live and die, they get sick and injured in between.  
In Milwaukee:

- More men than women have heart disease.<sup>5</sup>
- Men are five times more likely to die of homicide than a US resident.<sup>6</sup>
- Between 2003 and 2006, the number of men who considered suicide went from 2% to 7% - a 250% increase.<sup>7</sup>
- Males in Milwaukee have some of the highest rates of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea across the US.<sup>6</sup>
- The Chlamydia rate for African American males in Milwaukee is 17 times higher than that of white males in the city.<sup>6</sup>
- The Gonorrhea rate for African American males in Milwaukee is 36 times higher than that of white males in the city.<sup>6</sup>
- The number of men who smoke has increased in the city, from 30 to 33% from 2003 to 2006.<sup>7</sup> The percentage of male smokers – 33% – is much higher than the last published estimate of the percent of men who smoke across the US - 23%.<sup>8</sup>
- 29% of men reported binge drinking.<sup>7</sup>
- This percent is higher than Wisconsin's overall binge drinking rate as reported in 2008 – 22.8% – the highest of any state in the county.<sup>9</sup>
- Men in Milwaukee are also doing good things for their health, like getting screening tests. There is still room for improvement.
- In 2008, 51.7% of men in Wisconsin had a prostate-specific antigen test (looks for early stage prostate cancer).<sup>9</sup>
- In 2006, 32% of men in Milwaukee had a digital rectal exam.<sup>7</sup>



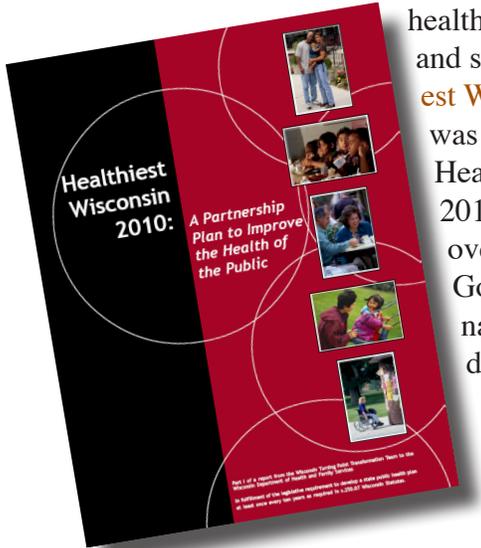
## Why are there differences in Milwaukee?

Men and women, whites and blacks, urban and non-urban. Differences in health between these groups are not unavoidable.

Studies have shown that these differences come from a number of factors which include racism, sexism, and other biases, poverty and unemployment, and different educational opportunities and resources. Significant differences in health status that result from societal and individual factors are called health disparities.

Health disparities result from many different factors, some large and some small. Thus, disparities are not easy to change, but the City of Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin are committed to the elimination of disparities and the creation of

health equity in our city and state. **The Healthiest Wisconsin 2010 plan** was Wisconsin's State Health Plan through 2010, and named three overarching goals. Goal 2 was to eliminate health disparities.



## Why are there differences in Milwaukee? *(continued)*

### Gender

Some of the differences between men and women may be related to different roles that men and women are expected to play.

- Men, especially younger men, tend to have riskier behaviors than women. These risky behaviors include binge drinking, carrying weapons, using illegal drugs, and driving unsafely.
- Men in Milwaukee (and many other places) are more likely to lack health insurance coverage.<sup>5,7</sup>
- Men are less likely to have seen a doctor in the past year for a routine exam.<sup>10</sup>



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## Why are there differences in Milwaukee? (continued)

### Race, ethnicity, and racism

Racism and bias against ethnic groups affects health in very real ways. Historically, race has influenced the quality of care, education, and available housing, where new resources were focused, who is screened for what conditions, and what medical research was done on whom.

Despite efforts to correct these issues, racism continues to influence these and other factors.

- In 2003, the infant mortality rate of African Americans (16 deaths/1000 live births) in Milwaukee was more than double the infant mortality rate for whites (6 deaths/1000 live births) in Milwaukee. The infant mortality rate for Hispanics (9.4 deaths/1000 live births) was in between these rates.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2007, 83% of male victims of homicide in Milwaukee were African American.<sup>11</sup>
- In 2006 the US, homicide is not a top ten cause of death for men overall or for white men. However, it is the 4th leading cause of death for black men.<sup>12</sup> In Milwaukee, homicide is the 3rd leading cause for blacks and Hispanics, but the 6th leading cause overall.<sup>2</sup>
- African American men in Milwaukee have much higher rates of Gonorrhea and Chlamydia than white men.<sup>6</sup>
- In Wisconsin, more African American men have prostate cancer and die from it than any other racial or ethnic group.<sup>13</sup>

6. What is this person's race? Mark  one or more boxes.

- White  
 Black, African Am., or Negro  
 American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.* ↕
- Asian Indian     Japanese     Native Hawaiian  
 Chinese         Korean         Guamanian or Chamorro  
 Filipino         Vietnamese     Samoan  
 Other Asian — *Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.* ↕     Other Pacific Islander — *Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.* ↕
- Some other race — *Print race.* ↕



## Why are there differences in Milwaukee? *(continued)*

### Poverty and unemployment

Poverty can affect health in many ways, including lack of healthcare resources; mold, lead, or other environmental hazards in the home; stress related to financial issues; limited access to stores that sell healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables; and many other factors.

- In the 2007 American Community Survey conducted by the US Census, the city of Milwaukee had the 7th highest rate of persons living in poverty of all major cities in the US. Over 24% of residents were living in poverty.<sup>14</sup>
- 35.1% of African Americans in Milwaukee live in poverty.<sup>15</sup>
- 20.2% of Hispanics live in poverty.<sup>15</sup>
- 7.8% of whites live in poverty.<sup>15</sup>
- Since 2002, the unemployment rate for Milwaukee has been over 6.5%.<sup>16</sup>
- During this time, the overall US unemployment rate never went above 6%.<sup>16</sup>
- Unemployment can impact poverty, stress and depression, and lack of healthcare insurance. Unemployment may also affect health beyond its relationship to poverty.
- Unemployment has also been linked to developing asthma.<sup>18</sup>



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*Unemployment can impact poverty, stress and depression, and lack of healthcare insurance.*

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## Why are there differences in Milwaukee? *(continued)*

### Urban environment

Living in a city has certain costs.

- Heavy traffic increases air pollution.
- Litter and garbage may increase the numbers of mice, roaches, and other pests which can carry contagious diseases.
- More cars mean more vehicle accidents.
- Higher numbers of people in smaller spaces can mean more contagious diseases or greater chances of violence as compared to less crowded suburban towns.

Living in a city also has important benefits. Milwaukee, for example, has many top-rated hospitals and other social and health resources for children, teens, and adults. Many of these provide free or low-cost services. To find Milwaukee health resources if you are uninsured or underinsured, [click here](#).



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*Higher numbers of people in smaller spaces can mean more contagious diseases or greater chances of violence . . .*

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## Web Resources

The following are links used in this report, for reference when reading from a printed copy.

- <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/statehealthplan/hw2010/index.htm>
- [http://www.milwaukee.gov/Health\\_care\\_guide\\_1009.pdf](http://www.milwaukee.gov/Health_care_guide_1009.pdf)

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