> **!** **COVID-19: CDC Museum Closed to the Public**
>
> Due to ongoing concerns about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), the David J. Sencer CDC Museum is closed to the public and will remain closed as we continue to assess and monitor developments. All CDC Museum tours are canceled until further notice.
>
> This decision is being made out of an abundance of caution and based upon the guidance of the CDC regarding social distancing and the elimination of large gatherings.
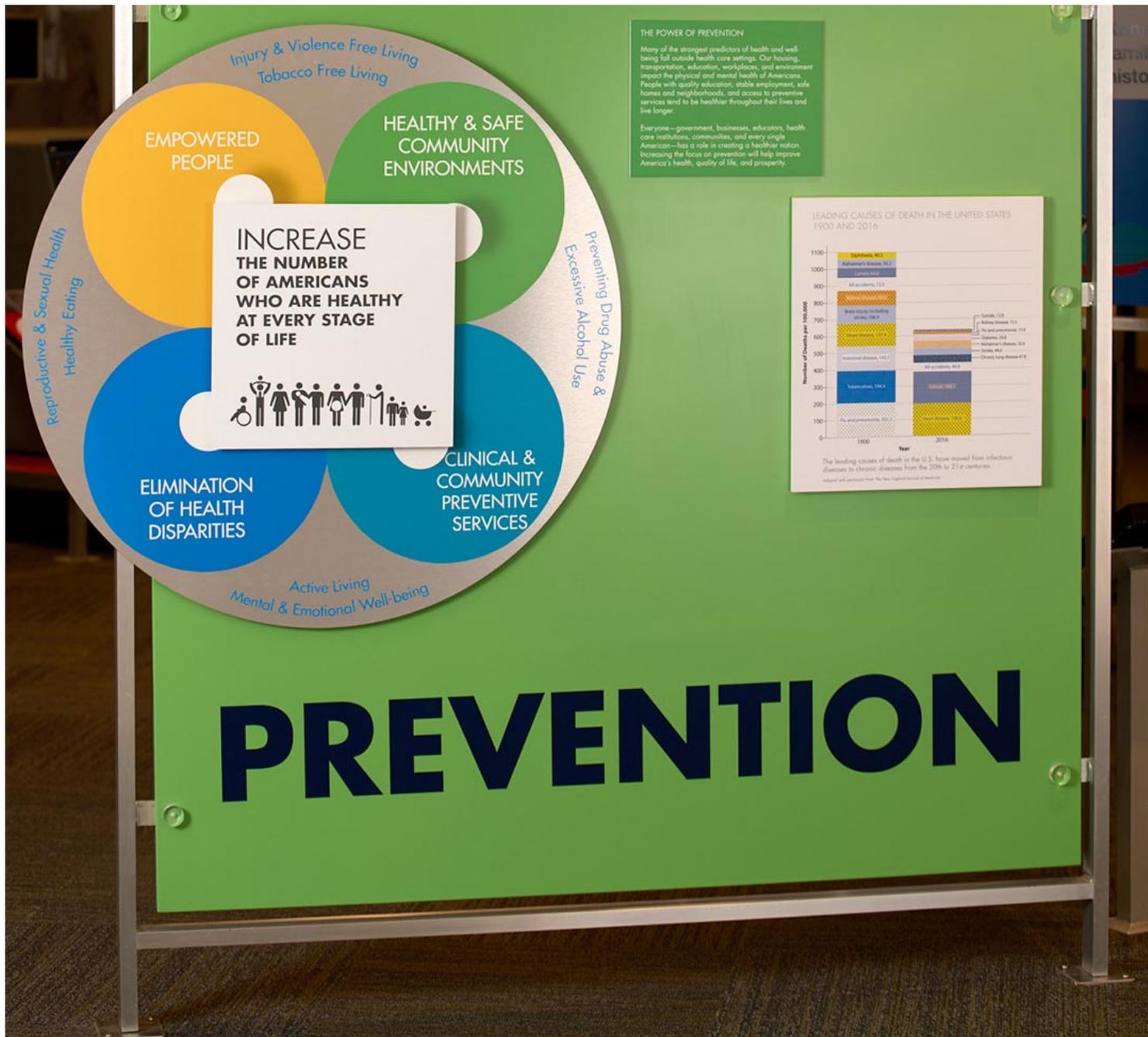>
> Please continue to check our website and social media accounts for additional updates.

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

Chronic Diseases: A 21st Century Public Health Challenge
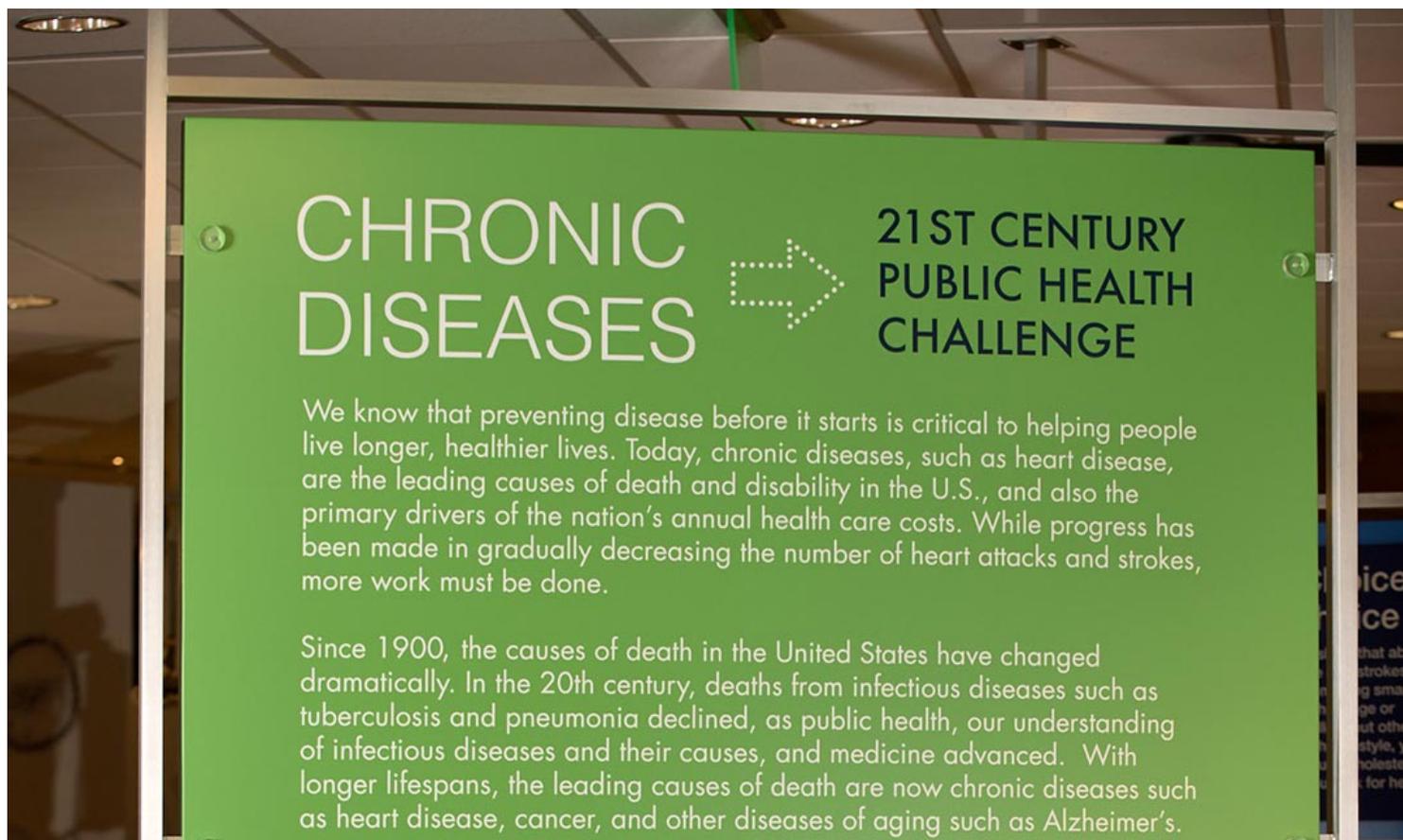
A 21ˢᵗ Century Public Health Challenge

Today, chronic diseases such as heart disease and obesity are the leading cause of death and disability in the U.S., and the primary drivers of the nation's annual health care costs. While progress has been made in gradually decreasing the number of heart attacks and strokes, more work must be done.

Since 1900, the causes of death in the United States have changed dramatically. In the 20ᵗʰ century, deaths from infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and pneumonia declined, as public health, our understanding of infectious diseases and their causes, and medicine advanced. With longer lifespans, the leading causes of death are now chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and other diseases of aging such as Alzheimer's.
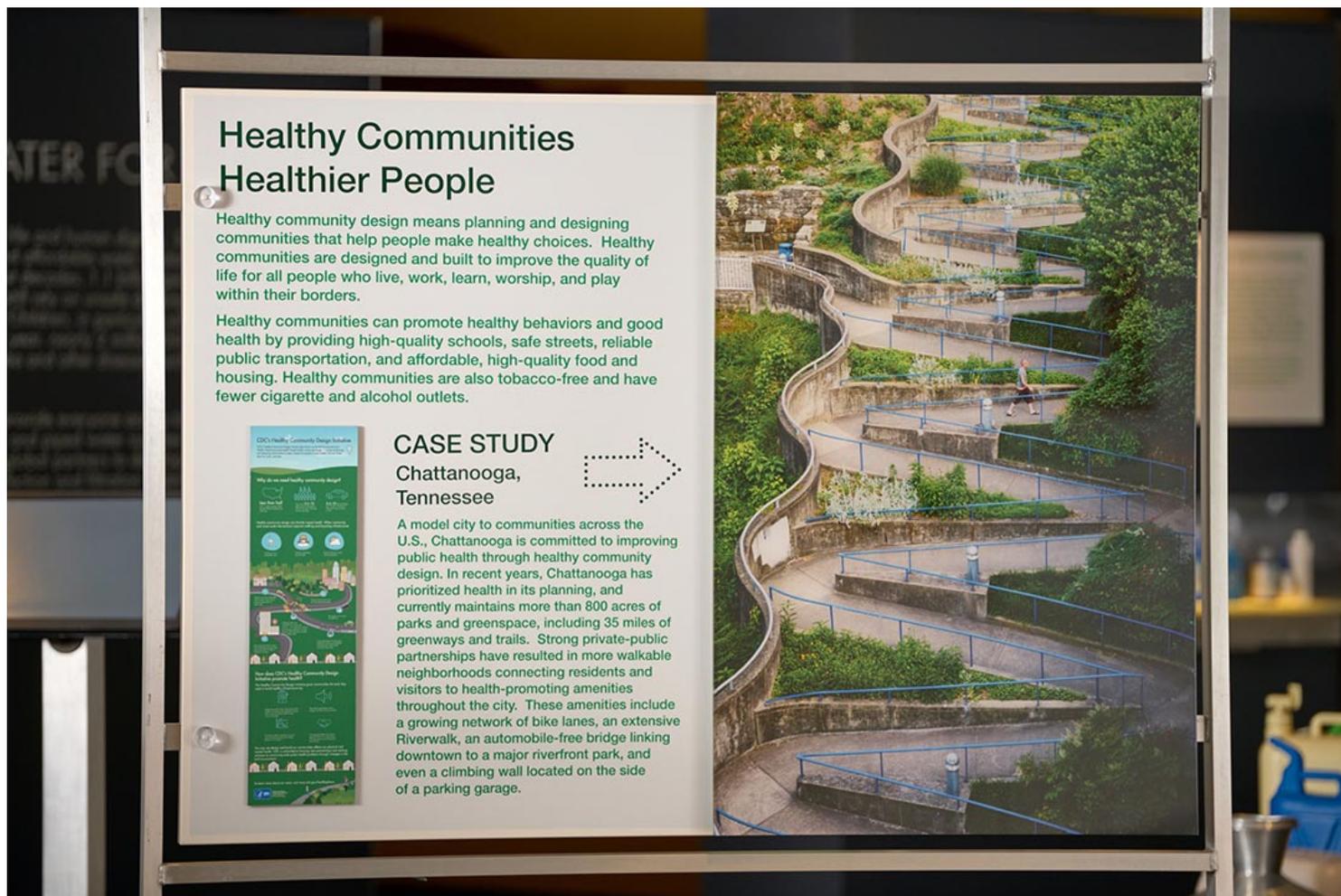
The Good News: Healthy Choices Equal Healthy Outcomes

Estimates show that about 80% of premature heart disease and strokes are preventable. Prevention means making smart choices. Some risk factors, such as age or family history, cannot be controlled, but other factors can. By living a healthy lifestyle, you can help keep your blood pressure, cholesterol, and sugar normal, and lower your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Healthy community design means planning and designing communities that help people make healthy choices. These communities are designed and built to improve the quality of life for all people who live, work, learn, worship, and play there. They can promote healthy behaviors and good health by providing high quality schools, safe streets, reliable public transportation, and affordable, high quality food and housing. Healthy communities are also tobacco-free and have fewer cigarette and alcohol outlets.

A model city to communities across the U.S., Chattanooga is committed to improving public health in its planning, and currently maintains more than 800 acres of parks and greenspace, including 35 miles of greenways and trails. Strong private-public partnerships have resulted in more walkable neighborhoods connecting residents and visitors to health-promoting amenities throughout the city. These amenities include a growing network of bike lanes, an extensive Riverwalk, an automobile-free bridge linking downtown to a major riverfront park, and even a climbing wall located on the side of a parking garage.

The nation benefits when everyone can live a long, healthy, and productive life. Health equity is achieved when everyone has the chance to be as healthy as they can be. Health inequities exist when barriers prevent people from reaching this goal. Advancing health equity means everyone has the opportunity to live a long and healthy life, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, income, education, or where they live.

Enrichment Modules

SEE   —

Take a closer look:

- Learn what CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion does in this infographic 🔴 , then explore a wealth of fact sheets and at-a-glances.
- Read about social determinants of health and the framework to achieve health equity.
- Explore CDC's resources for chronic disease prevention, including heart disease and stroke, lung disease, cancer, and diabetes.
- Check out this CDC resource 🔴 for preventing chronic diseases and promoting health in rural communities.
- Learn about risk factors, symptoms, and CDC public health efforts related to heart disease.
- View the latest adult obesity prevalence maps compiled by CDC and state health departments.
- Watch this Ted-Ed video on obesity ⧉ .

HEAR   —

From the source:

- Check out the latest CDC state initiatives and news related to nutrition, physical activity, and obesity.
- Meet Elizabeth Burns ⧉ , health scientist on the Older Adult Falls Team in CDC's Injury Center.
- Hear from Linda Schieb ⧉ , epidemiologist in CDC's Division of Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention.
- Get to know Temeika Fairley ⧉ , health scientist (and former EIS officer) in CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control.
- Read success stories from CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity.
- Keep up with the latest chronic disease updates from CDC on Twitter.

REFLECT   —

Then and now:

- Curious about risk factors, prevalence, and incidence of chronic diseases over time? Check out these CDC interactive data applications.
- Check out art inspired by radiation treatment for head and neck cancer and excess plastic production in these Emerging Infectious Diseases cover stories.

DO   —

Give it a try:

- Looking for nutrition and meal planning resources? Find CDC recommendations.
- Find extensive resources covering how to prevent chronic diseases and manage chronic diseases during a disaster.

Page last reviewed: March 29, 2021
Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention