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Notice to Readers NCHS National Center for Health Statistics Joins CDC

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) has become a part of CDC. As of the first week of June, NCHS was transferred administratively from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health to CDC. NCHS will continue its national role in data collection, analysis, and research in statistical and survey methodology.

NCHS was formed in 1960 when the Public Health Service merged its National Office of Vital Statistics with the National Health Survey. The National Office of Vital Statistics, which collected data on births, deaths, marriages, and divorces, had been transferred from the U.S. Bureau of the Census to the Public Health Service in 1946. The National Health Survey had been established in 1956 as a source of information on illness and disability in the United States.

To meet its legislative mandate to provide data to a variety of users, NCHS maintains over a dozen survey and data systems. NCHS relies on four primary mechanisms: accessing state vital-registration systems, personal interview surveys, health-examination surveys, and surveys of health-care providers. NCHS' two largest surveys of the general population are the National Health Interview Survey and the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Other data collection efforts, such as the National Survey of Family Growth, the National Maternal and Infant Health Survey, and special supplements to general population surveys are conducted to address specific health topics for population subgroups. NCHS also serves as the World Health Organization's Collaborating Center for Classification of Diseases for North America, conducts research activities with other countries, and serves as a focal point for international conferences and other cooperative endeavors.

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1600 Clifton Rd, MailStop E-90, Atlanta, GA 30333,
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