PLACES
LOCAL DATA FOR BETTER HEALTH

Learn more about PLACES and how it can be used to improve the public's health in your community.

How does PLACES fill a current need?

Effective public health planning to improve the health of Americans requires high-quality health estimates for small geographic areas. Local data allow state and local health officials, policy makers, nonprofits, and others to better understand the health status of residents and focus their efforts to improve health. Beginning in 2016, the 500 Cities Project provided groundbreaking health data for census tracts in the largest 500 cities in the United States. PLACES expands this powerful tool by providing first-of-its-kind **P**opulation **L**evel **A**nalysis and **C**ommunity **Es**timates to cover the entire United States, including data for smaller cities and rural areas.

What is the purpose of PLACES?

PLACES provides data for all counties, incorporated and census-designated places, census tracts, and ZIP code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs) across the United States. Model-based small area estimation methods are used to estimate 29 (27 for the 2020 release) health measures, including health risk behaviors (e.g., current smoking), health outcomes (e.g., coronary heart disease, diabetes), health status (e.g., mental health) and prevention practices (e.g., health insurance coverage, cholesterol screening). These estimates are available through a public, interactive PLACES website that allows users to view, explore, and download county-, place-, tract-, and ZCTA-level data for all populated areas in the United States.

What is the unique value of PLACES?

- Releases nationwide data at a granular level to cover smaller cities and rural areas, data that were previously unavailable.
- Enables the retrieval, visualization, exploration, and download of uniformly defined county-, place-, tract-, and ZCTA-level data across the United States for conditions, behaviors, and risk factors that have a substantial impact on population health.
- Reflects innovations in generating valid model-based small-area estimates for population health action.

How can these data advance health and promote equity?

- Inform the development and implementation of effective and targeted prevention activities, programs, and policies.
- Identify emerging health problems and priority health risk behaviors for action.
- Understand the burden and geographic distribution of health-related issues and prioritize investment to areas with the biggest gaps or inequities.
- Establish key health objectives that the community can focus on to improve health.

Number of US Populated Areas

Data available for 29 measures: 3 health status, 4 health risk behaviors, 9 prevention practices, and 13 health outcomes.

3,142
Counties

28,484
Places (incorporated and census-designated)

72,337
Census Tracts

32,409
ZIP Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs)

(Note: Includes all areas as defined by the US Census and with a 2010 population ≥ 50.)