

CDC: higher risk of death from leading causes in rural America

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(HealthDay)—Americans who live in rural areas have a higher risk of

death from five leading causes than people who live in urban locations, according to research published in the Jan. 13 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

In 2014, there were many potentially preventable deaths among rural Americans, including 25,000 from heart disease, 19,000 from cancer, 12,000 from accidental injuries, 11,000 from chronic lower respiratory disease, and 4,000 from stroke, according to the report.

About 46 million Americans—15 percent of the nation's population—live in rural areas. Several factors—including economics, environment, and demographic and social factors—might put rural residents at a higher risk of these preventable causes of death, the researchers said. Compared to city dwellers, rural Americans tend to be older and sicker. In addition, rural residents have higher rates of cigarette smoking, hypertension, and obesity. They also get less leisure-time exercise and are less likely to use seat belts than people who live in urban regions. Rural Americans also have higher rates of poverty, less access to health care, and are less likely to have health insurance.

Deaths from [accidental injuries](#) were about 50 percent higher in [rural areas](#) than in urban areas. These fatalities were, in part, due to a higher risk of death from [motor vehicle crashes](#) and opioid overdoses. Other factors include long distances between [health care](#) facilities and trauma centers, and slower access to specialized care, the report authors found.

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