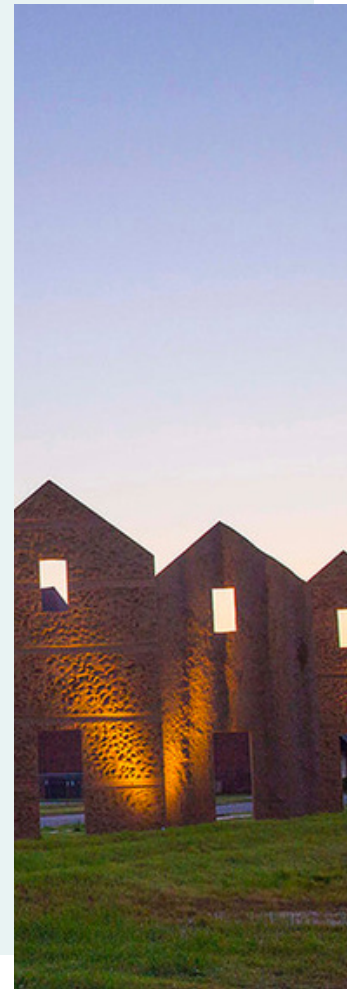


2023

State of the County Health Report (SOTCH)



This report was compiled in collaboration with the Lenoir County Health Department, UNC Lenoir Health Care, and the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community. This report is an overview of the current health status for Lenoir County.



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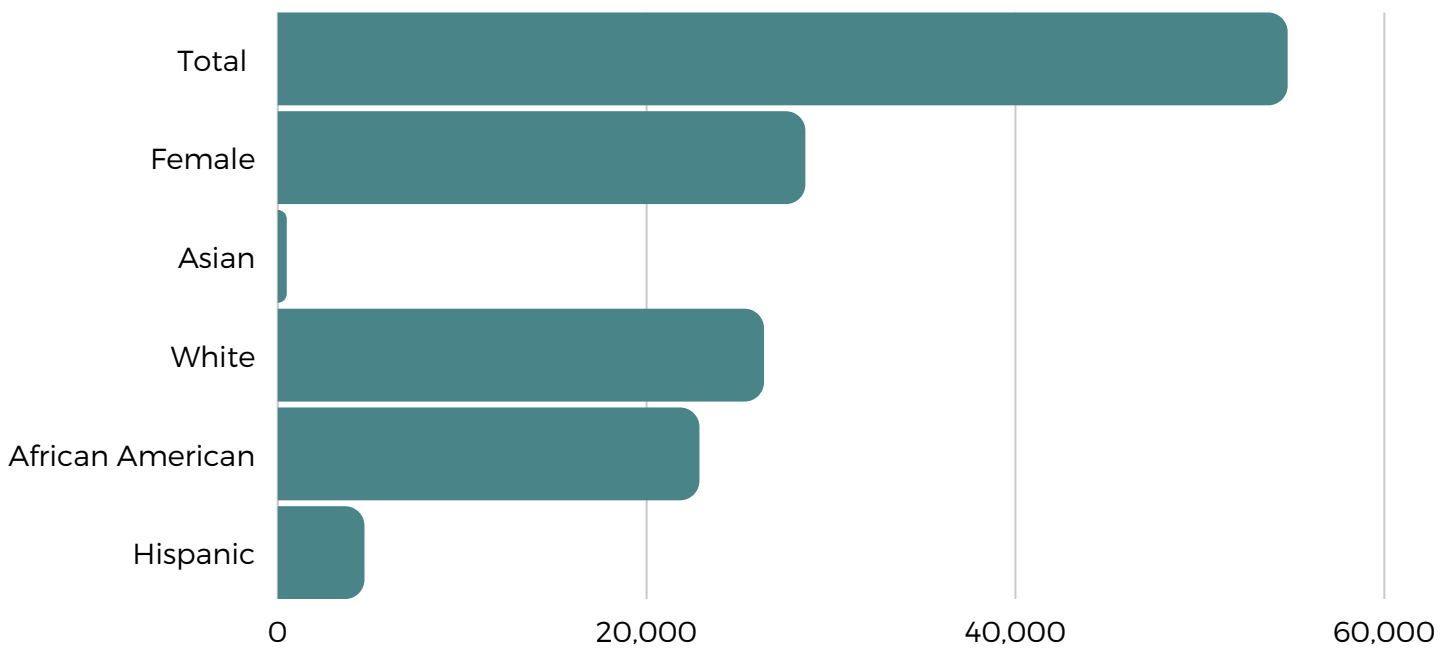
THE NUMBERS

**OUR
STATISTICS**

According to the United States Census Bureau, the most recent estimated population for Lenoir County was 54,706 in 2021. In 2020, the population was 55,122. In essence there has been a 0.8% decrease between the two years. The current female population is 52.2%. Approximately 20.9% of the population is 65+, and 5.8% are under 5.

The County Health Rankings places as the 90th healthiest county in North Carolina. The reasoning behind why the county ranking remains 90th can be attributed to lifestyle, quality of life, and social economic factors such as the recent pandemic.

Total Population by Gender & Race



WHERE WE ARE NOW

**EMERGING
PUBLIC
HEALTH
ISSUES**

COVID-19 Pandemic:

In March 2020, a Public Health Emergency was declared. This was a significant Health Issue for Lenoir County. The total cases of COVID-19 since 2020 is 20,294 with 247 deaths. The pandemic strained healthcare systems, first responder agencies, businesses, and community resources. The Lenoir County Health Department partnered with many supporting agencies and organizations to effectively provide access to vaccines, testing and safety resources, allowing Lenoir County to be resilient.

COVID-19 con't:

As the pandemic evolved, the measures of protection required rapid modification. Those most vulnerable were those in the older population, immunocompromised, and with other health risks, such as diabetes, asthma, and lung disease. The Lenoir County Health Department responded effectively to the need for immediate vaccination clinics because of 2018 grant funds from the Public Health Preparedness & Response Branch. This grant allowed our agency to be fully equipped with mobile vaccination supplies to operate clinics effectively outside our agency while maintaining cold-chain management. Through this resource, we were able to support first responders, manufacturers, healthcare, congregate living facilities, in-home residents, and businesses by vaccinating those populations onsite. The Lenoir County Health Department has given 16,828 COVID-19 vaccines since 2021 and conducted 4,361 tests since 2020. In this response, we became better equipped and resourceful to ensure that the public's health is the central focus.

Integrated Targeted Testing Services (ITTS):

Infectious diseases are a severe concern. The 2019 NC HIV/STD Surveillance Report's data on newly diagnosed HIV three-year average rates in North Carolina identified three counties in region ten in the top 25 counties for new diagnoses: Pitt, Lenoir, and Wayne Counties. The ITTS grant addresses this area of concern by providing access to HIV, Hepatitis C, and Syphilis testing in non-traditional places and times. The Lenoir County Health Department applied for the ITTS grant to service Wayne, Greene, Lenoir, and Jones counties to meet the following testing numbers: 140 HIV, 120 Syphilis, and 48 Hep C.

The program has four goals:

1. Raise awareness of HIV and provide education about the importance of screening for HIV.
2. Decrease HIV and viral hepatitis transmission and acquisition.
3. Provide education and training on HIV risk and substance misuse through motivational interviewing and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) services for HIV prevention.
4. Develop awareness campaigns to educate community residents about HIV prevention services, emphasizing getting tested, reducing risk, and PrEP.

Lenoir County Residents' Health

The data from the County Health Rankings site regards Lenoir County, North Carolina, as still being the 90th healthiest county in the state as of 2022.

Morbidity and Mortality in Lenoir County

Top 10 Leading Causes of Death Source: https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/		
Lenoir County	#	North Carolina
Diseases of the Heart	1	Cancer
Cancer	2	Diseases of the Heart
Cerebrovascular Disease	3	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	4	Cerebrovascular Disease
All Other Unintentional Injuries	5	All Other Unintentional Injuries
Alzheimer's Disease	6	Alzheimer's Disease
Diabetes Mellitus	7	Diabetes Mellitus
Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, and Nephrosis	8	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, and Nephrosis
COVID-19	9	Pneumonia and Influenza
Pneumonia and Influenza	10	Unintentional Motor Vehicle Injuries

From the 2020 Community Health Assessment, the number of deaths for the top 10 leading causes of death in Lenoir County 2016-2020 are listed on the next page. The correlating rate is around 170.2 deaths per 100,000 people. The North Carolina numbers and rates have also been included in the table. For the majority, rates of death in Lenoir County are increased when compared to the rates for North Carolina itself. COVID-19 has had a particularly negative effect on the health of Lenoir County residents.



2016-2020 Causes of Death	Lenoir County	Rate	NC	Rate
Diseases of the Heart	897	221.3	96,474	156.1
Cerebrovascular Disease	293	71.2	26,050	42.7
Cancer	705	170.2	98,674	154.6
Diabetes Mellitus	116	28.8	15,434	24.5
Pneumonia and Influenza	66	16.3	9,582	15.7
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	181	42.9	26,830	42.5
Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	49	12.5	6,936	11.1
Septicemia	65	16.6	7,745	12.5
Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, and Nephrosis	97	22.7	10,174	16.4
Unintentional Motor Vehicle Injuries	52	17	8,039	15.1
All Other Unintentional Injuries	152	47.1	23,427	43.2
Suicide	36	13.2	7,214	13.4
Homicide	36	14.8	3,691	7.3
Alzheimer's Disease	124	29.5	22,177	37.4
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	8	NA	960	1.6
COVID-19	79	19.7	7,909	12.8
Total Deaths	3,837	976.7	483,333	793.7

Priority Health Issues for Lenoir County & Progress Made

Priority Selection Results were identified during the 2021-2022 community Health Needs Assessment process. Citizens surveyed listed these as the top concerns in the community impacting health:

1. Wellness and Lifestyle
2. Prevention and Safety
3. Community-transportation
4. Maternal, Fetal & Infant Health
5. Cancer
6. Economy
7. Heart Disease
8. Mortality Data
9. Mental Health & Mental Disorders
10. Immunizations & Infectious Diseases

The Community Health Assessment Planning/Review Group discussed and agreed to prioritize the following issues over the next community health needs assessment cycle period:

- 1. Immunizations & Infectious Diseases**
- 2. Substance Use & Mental Health**
- 3. Wellness & Lifestyle**



Priority Area #1: Immunizations & Infectious Diseases

Results Statement: All individuals who live in Lenoir County have age-appropriate vaccines and education about communicable diseases.

- **Childhood Immunizations** is a program through the health department that provides all school-aged children within Lenoir County with required vaccinations before and after returning to school. Our program also partners with other agencies such as hospitals, Kinston Community Health Center, primary care providers, and school nurses. By providing this program, we can reach citizens facing barriers to access, such as cost, schedule conflicts, transportation, and other issues.
 - In 2020, 147 students were immunized. In 2021, 124 students were immunized. In 2022, 309 students were immunized, proving that efforts effectively increased availability to our community.
 - The number of students suspended during the 2022-23 school year for non-compliance was 118.
- **Integrated Targeted Testing Services (ITTS)** is a relatively new program that aims to provide HIV counseling, referral, and testing services to high-risk, hard-to-reach priority populations. The program works with the Greene, Jones, Lenoir, and Wayne Counties populations. The program tests for Hepatitis C, Syphilis, and other STIs as well with the patient's approval and discretion. The ITTS program is also responsible for educating and promoting sexual health and condom distribution throughout the area. Testing sites include but are not limited to public parks, detention centers, homeless shelters, drug treatment centers, and nightclubs.
 - The number of Hepatitis C, HIV, and Syphilis tests completed as of 2023 is 67 tests total.
 - The percentage of patients linked to HIV/STD treatment is 14.93%.



Priority Area #2: Substance Use & Mental Health

Results Statement: All people in Lenoir County have increased knowledge and access to behavioral health providers and resources.

- **Mental Health First Aid Training**- According to the most recent data in the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Eastern North Carolina had 2,079 people who said their mental health was not good in the past 30 days. The Mental Health First Aid Training is provided to lay a foundation that supports individuals battling mental health or substance use disorders. It also alleviates responders' fear or hesitation during a crisis. This training will provide staff, adolescents, parents, and all those who request assistance with resources and knowledge to handle a crisis. The program will show its impact on fully trained MHFA students. The effects will also be measured by the number of organizations that continually request training.
- **Family Drug Treatment Court**-The Family Drug Treatment Court works with non-violent, repeat offenders facing jail/prison time. The program helps offenders reach goals such as reducing alcoholism and other drug dependencies, reducing recidivism, reducing drug-related court workload, increasing accountability of offenders, and promoting effective interaction and use of resources among criminal justice personnel. Since 2021 there have been 13 graduates to complete the program, and only one has been a repeat offender.



Priority Area #3: Wellness & Lifestyle

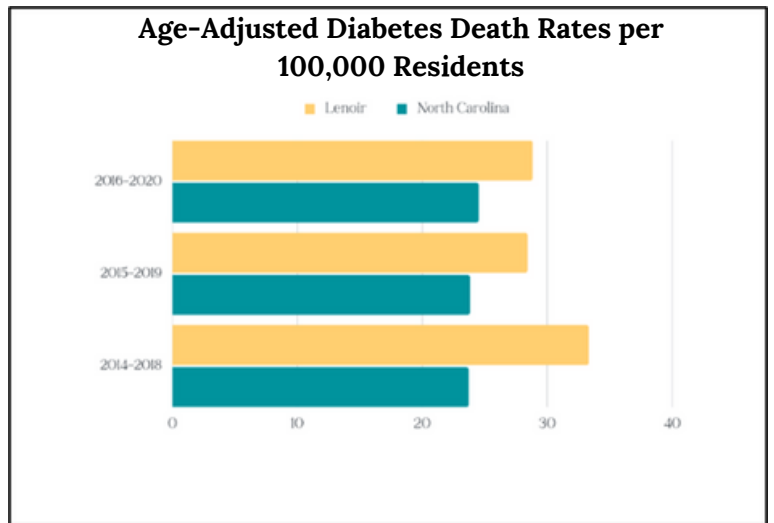
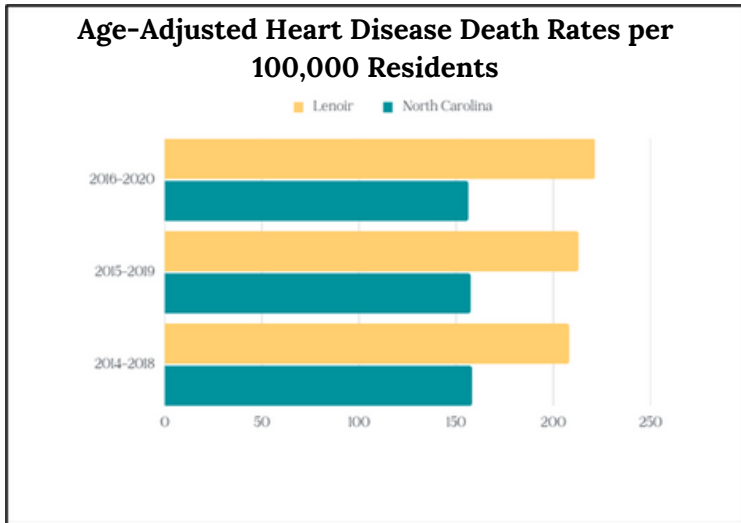
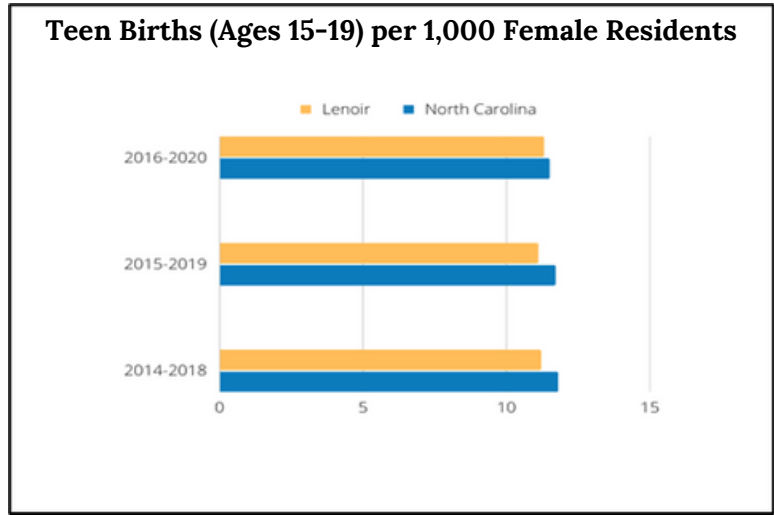
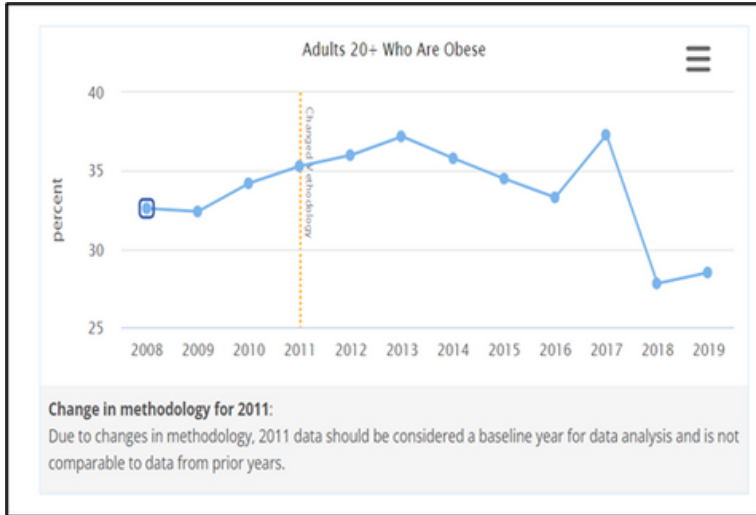
Results Statement: Optimal health and fitness will be for all stages of people who live in Lenoir County.

- **Diabetes Prevention Program-** The Diabetes Prevention Program is a lifestyle change program that enrolls participants who are at risk of Type 2 diabetes and have an A1c of 5.7 to 6.4 range. The Lenoir County Health Department provides educational enrichment classes to participants through the CDC-approved Prevent T2 curriculum. This 12-month program focuses on healthy eating, increased physical activity, stress management, and sustainable practices to achieve lasting healthy changes.
 - The DPP program has enrolled 58 participants since its start in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic created a challenge to continue conducting in-person classes, but the program successfully adapted to a virtual model and completed the active cohorts. We have 18 participants enrolled in the Minority Diabetes Prevention Program, with our target being 20. 84% of participants met the 150 minutes of activity per week goal.

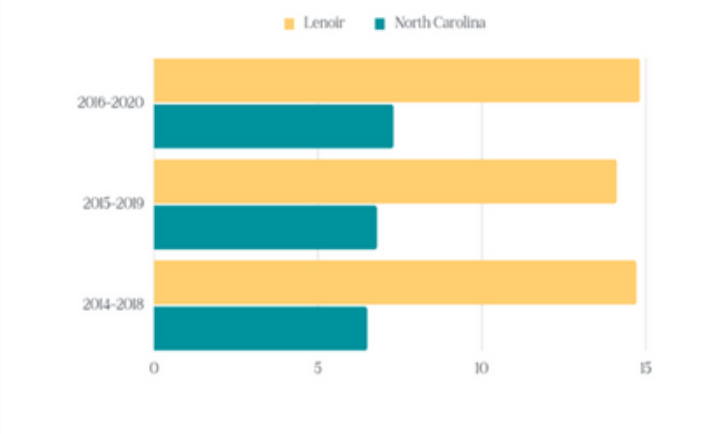
- **Med-South Lifestyle Program-** Med-South Lifestyle Program has 17 participants enrolled in the UNC-Chapel Hill Research program. Each participant is assigned to a Peer Counselor, and enrollment times vary. The table below shows the status of the sessions participants have completed and the number of participants who have completed the program with a lowered blood pressure rate. This program is called Med-South because of the similarity of the eating plan to a Mediterranean diet pattern and was initially developed for use in the southeastern United States. The program is estimated to lower the risk of heart attack, stroke, and diabetes by around 30%.

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Maintenance 1	Maintenance 2	# completed who lowered BP rate
14	14	12	9	5	4	2

Trends in Key Health Indicators in Lenoir County



Age-Adjusted Homicide Rates per 100,000 Residents



All information, excluding the data on obese adults, was obtained from the State Center for Health Statistics website.

Community Involvement

The Lenoir County Health Department suggests several ways to stay connected with your community that are nutritious and beneficial to you and impact others as well! Please get involved with your health and your community!



Visit the Farmer's Market for local, fresh foods.



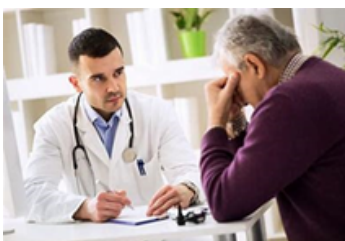
Cook a healthier version of your favorite food.



Drink more water.



Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.



Learn how to prevent a disease that is common in your family, such as diabetes.



Get an annual check up.



Make sure you and your children's/grandchildren's vaccinations are up to date.



Be active at least 150 minutes/week by doing something you enjoy (gardening, walking, take a fitness class).



Engage in your school's efforts to encourage healthy practices for your children.

Community Involvement Continued



Join a group working on health issues (call the Health Department for a list).



Teach your children/grandchildren healthy habits to set them up for a lifetime of health.



Take a health-related class.



Volunteer at the community garden.



Help reduce neighborhood waste.



Learn more about the decisions local officials are making that impact your environment.

Copies of this report are available by

- Calling 252-526-4200
- Picking up a copy at 201 N. McLewean St., Kinston
- Downloading a copy from www.lenoircountync.gov/health-department/