Centers for Disease Control Encyclopedia Article

Centers for Disease Control

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Centers for Disease Control

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) address current and emerging health risks to help improve public health in the United States and worldwide. Based in Atlanta, Georgia, CDC is an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services. CDC runs programs to prevent and control communicable diseases, develops and implements programs to deal with environmental health problems, directs quarantine activities, and does research on the factors that influence diseases. The agency's mission is to promote health and quality of life by preventing and controlling disease, injury, and disability. Its core values are accountability, respect, and integrity.

CDC was established in 1948 as the Communicable Disease Center to fight malaria, typhus, and other communicable diseases which were then prevalent in several Southern states. In 1970, it was re-named the Center for Disease Control to reflect its broader preventive mission. In 1992, Congress re-named the agency the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but kept the initials CDC.

CDC provides a variety of health information for consumers and public health practitioners via its web site, publications, and software. Consumer information covers adolescents and teens, environmental health, foodborne illnesses, infants and children, injuries, men's health, occupational health, senior health, traveler's health, and women's health. For medical practitioners, the agency offers CDC Prevention Guidelines to help prevent and control public health threats such as AIDS, cholera, disaster response, dengue fever, suicide, vaccine-preventable diseases, lung cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, birth defects, and malaria. Immunization recommendations, health information for international travelers, scientific data, surveillance health statistics, and laboratory information are also available.

CDC has approximately 7,800 employees, in nine states and the District of Columbia in the United States, and in other countries. It is comprised of 11 centers, 1 institute, and offices: Office of the Director, Epidemiology Program Office; National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; National Center for Environmental Health; National Center for Health Statistics; National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention; National Center for Infectious Diseases; National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; National Immunization Program; National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health; Office of Genetics and Disease Prevention; Office of Global Health; and Public Health Practice Program Office.