



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Volume 2, Issue 3

July 2024

Traditional Health Care Practices

The use of traditional medicine has a long history. According to the [World Health Organization](#), traditional medicine is the sum of the knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences from Indigenous cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health and the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness. Traditional medicine is being explored as individuals are seeking more personal, holistic and compassionate care to improve their well-being. For many, this is the preferred choice of health care services, especially for those who live in rural areas. Herbal medicine can be an effective treatment for health conditions. Approximately 42% of the United States population utilizes some form of traditional and complementary medicine. Natural medicine has proven its effectiveness over time. Most pharmaceutical products used today can be traced to the natural products used in traditional medicine.

The Indian Health Service recognizes the value and efficacy of traditional beliefs, ceremonies, and practices of health of the body, mind and spirit. It encourages respect and acceptance to allow traditional healing practices to become part of the treatment plan for an individual.



Healthy People 2030



The Healthy People initiative began in 1979 when Surgeon General Julius Richmond presented a report about health promotion and disease prevention. One of the key lessons we have learned is communities can make a difference and improve health. It is a daily decision each of us can make. Data and feedback are necessary. We have to know where we are going in order to get there.

Healthy People 2030 is a framework to help improve health for all people, in every state. There are five areas of focus: health disparity, health equity, health literacy, well-being and social determinants of health. Health disparity looks at differences across populations. Health equity ensures all people can achieve the highest level of health. Health literacy is the newest addition to the framework, helping individuals understand health information that is accessible to them. Well-being is another new focus that measures life satisfaction. Staying healthy as we age is important to a longer life span. Social determinants of health is another area in which environment, the places we live, work, attend church and play, affect our health.

Each year, this office reviews the health of our state and considers the impact it has on each of us. This is also linked with the goals of Healthy People 2030 ([History of Healthy People](#)).

**Have questions or
suggestions for the
Office of Health
Policy?**

Please send an email to
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Effects of Vaping and Secondhand Vaping

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a vape as a battery-operated electronic cigarette device that heats a liquid solution to produce a vapor for inhalation. The vapor is a toxic aerosol containing carcinogenic chemicals. Vaping became a gateway for many teens and young adults to nicotine addiction. There are many different health effects from smoking e-cigarettes that are similar to smoking cigarettes, such as immune system disruption, increased risk of asthma and increased anxiety. The aerosol in e-cigarettes can also contain other chemicals, like formaldehyde, and metal particles such as nickel, lead, chromium, tin and aluminum.



Severe lung illness related to the use of e-cigarettes and vaping products was first identified in 2019. Since 2020, there have been approximately 3,000 hospitalizations and 70 deaths related to vaping. The epidemic of e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury (EVALI) is a serious illness that usually requires hospitalization.

Secondhand vaping is breathing in the air that is exhaled by a person near you using an e-cigarette. The vapor exhaled not only contains nicotine, but also heavy metals, aldehyde and glycerin. There has not been a great amount of research performed on the long-term effects of secondhand vaping.

Optimizing Brain Health

Brain health is the state in which the brain is functioning across cognitive, sensory, social-emotional, behavioral and motor function. Optimizing brain health improves mental and physical health. It also creates positive social and economic impacts.

Optimizing brain health is essential to ensure that individuals can achieve their full potential for their overall health and well-being during their lifetime. Brain health is the result of continuous, complex interactions between an individual's genetics, circumstances and environment. There are determinants present that ultimately can influence the way our brains develop and respond to various things such as stress and adversity.



A few tips to help keep your brain healthy include exercising, protecting your head, social interaction, getting adequate sleep, incorporating more greens into your diet, challenging your brain and limiting alcohol intake. Performing these tasks could ultimately lead to a healthier brain and healthier life.

For more information on the determinants of brain health, visit the Center for Brain Health at <https://CenterForBrainHealth.org>.

Mindfulness with AYA



AYA Walk is excited to introduce a new mindfulness feature that integrates physical activity, mental and spiritual renewal and Chickasaw culture. This feature includes movement, meditation and music. Experience serene yoga flows that blend Indigenous traditions with modern mindfulness. Developed under the guidance of Dr. Jeffery Proulx from Brown University, immerse yourself in First American melodies while fostering calm and well-being. Engage in mindful meditation steeped in Chickasaw heritage, guided by the soothing voice of Chickasaw elder Luther John. Refresh your spirit with uplifting Choctaw hymns by the Mitchell Memorial United Methodist Women's Chorus and Boiling Springs United Methodist Church. AYA offers a holistic health approach, connecting physical activity, mental resilience and cultural identity. Move, breathe and thrive with AYA! For more information, visit Info.AYAWalk.com/Mindfulness.

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