In the 2013 County Health Rankings, Montgomery County ranked among the highest on overall health—[2 out of 24]—compared to all counties in the state.

The Rankings help us to understand what factors have influenced good health in our community and how we can continue to make Montgomery County a healthy place to live, learn, work, and play.

The County Health Rankings show how Montgomery County ranks on factors that influence its overall health ranking.

- For example, Montgomery County has strengths in many area(s);
  - Montgomery County ranks at the top in mortality and healthy behaviors;
  - Montgomery County was top-ranked in smoking prevalence, diet and exercise behaviors, motor-vehicle crash deaths and in the top three out of 24 counties in many other areas including alcohol use rates, sexual activity behaviors, access to health care, educational attainment, employment status, annual income earned, and community safety.
  - Montgomery County was second in morbidity (illness), healthcare, and socio-economic factors that support a healthy environment.

- Our high ranking reflects the priority this County has placed on protective factors that affect residents’ health, and it also shows how important it will be for us to sustain those results if we want to stay healthy.

- Healthy Montgomery is the county-wide community health improvement effort to address identified priority areas by partners across our Montgomery County (including local government, hospitals, healthcare providers, public schools, non-profit organizations, academia, and advocacy groups for our vulnerable populations that are burdened with disproportionate poor health outcomes).

- Healthy Montgomery focused its past year on developing strategies to have meaningful impact on obesity prevention and behavioral health issues (mental health, substance abuse, and tobacco use).

Montgomery County continues to make strides at the forefront of implementing the local policies, laws and regulations that strive to provide a healthy environment to enable all our residents to attain good health. Our healthy outcomes are a result of the past and current community investments in many areas, such as:

- Establishing smoke-free environments where we live, eat, and play;
- Requiring nutritional information be published on restaurant menus;
- Banning trans fats in foods we purchase;
- Creation and maintenance of Montgomery Cares safety-net clinics, Care for Kids and Maternity Partnerships programs that provide access to care for the uninsured
- Maintenance of a model school system for our children

Healthy Montgomery looks forward to sharing what has worked well in our community with other counties in our State and has an extensive library of information, resources, data and best practices related to its past and current activities posted online at www.healthymontgomery.org.
Its important to note, even though Montgomery County ranked among the best in Maryland for many factors such as the lowest rate of premature death, lowest adult obesity, and lowest prevalence of inactive adults, these rates are far from ideal and do not meet the goals we have set for our County in addressing the demonstrated health inequalities among our vulnerable and various population sub-groups within the County.

Healthy Montgomery’s three goals are to:

- Improve access to health and social services;
- Achieve health equity for all residents; and
- Enhance the physical and social environment to support optimal health and well-being.

While Montgomery County has top-ranked results from the County Health Rankings, there are areas in the report that highlight where we need to improve, including:

- We need to reduce the percent of our population that is uninsured to improve the percent of adults with diabetes with timely HbA1C screening to monitor control over blood-sugar levels, and to increase the percent of female Medicare enrollees that receive mammography screening
- We need to increase the percent of adults that feel they have adequate social supports;
- We need to reduce the percent of County restaurants that are designated as fast food restaurants

The Rankings also show us which of our neighboring counties we might learn from to improve specific health factors in our community. Consulting with leaders in counties that ranked higher in certain areas will help us learn about what best practices are already working in our state. Establishing and participating in a learning collaborative with our other local health improvement coalitions through the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s State Health Improvement Process can expand our strategies and create a forum to share our successes and improve the impact we have on striving toward optimal health and well-being for all of our community.

Health is everyone’s responsibility. Working together, we can make Montgomery County a healthier place to live, learn, work, and play. The first step in the Roadmaps to Health Take Action cycle is to work together to improve health. We invite you to begin to work together with us by visiting Healthy Montgomery at www.HealthyMontgomery.org and learn how to get involved (E-mail address: Healthy.Montgomery@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov).

To see the full County Health Rankings results, visit: www.countyhealthrankings.org

To download the complete 2013 County Health Rankings report for Maryland, visit: http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/#/maryland/2013/rankings/outcomes/overall/by-rank

To learn more about the Maryland State Health Improvement Process, visit: http://dhmh.maryland.gov/ship