

For immediate release  
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**HISPANIC HEALTH LEADERS JOIN THE DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH TO  
RELEASE THE 2010 STATUS OF HEALTH IN DEKALB REPORT**

Key leaders of the Hispanic community from the fields of health, sports, media and social services joined the DeKalb County Board of Health at a special release of the 2010 Status of Health in DeKalb Report. The report has been translated into Spanish and it provides data on the leading causes of death, injury and hospitalizations for the people who live in the county, including the Hispanic community.

Between 2002 and 2007, the top three leading causes of death for people in DeKalb County were cardiovascular diseases (30%), cancers (22%) and injuries (9%).

S. Elizabeth Ford, M.D., M.B.A., district health director of the DeKalb County Board of Health, says the report confirms what health officials have known for some time: lifestyle choices and risk behaviors that people begin early in life can have a significant impact on health and lead to premature death.

There were some health improvements in the county during the last few years. Between 2002 and 2007, there was a 27 percent decrease in the rate of cardiovascular diseases. There was also a 39 percent decrease in nervous system disease rates, which includes Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. Health experts cited early screenings and increased knowledge about health, as well as more people adopting healthier behaviors, as some reasons for the decrease in diseases.

Despite some positive trends, health officials shared with the Hispanic leaders that there still remains lots of work to improve the health status in DeKalb County especially for the Hispanic community.

**DeKalb County Board of Health**

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## **STATUS OF HEALTH IN DEKALB REPORT/PAGE TWO**

**According to the report, Hispanics living in DeKalb County face the following health challenges:**

- Between 2002 and 2007, the three leading causes of death among Hispanics was cardiovascular diseases, cancers and unintentional injuries, mostly from automobile crashes involving pedestrians or not properly wearing seat belts.
- Hispanics were significantly less likely to have health insurance than whites, even when controlling for household income.
- Hispanics were less likely than whites to have seen a dentist in the past year.
- Hispanics were more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes than whites and were significantly more likely to be overweight or obese than whites, even when controlling for income differences.

**Some positive health trends were also shared:**

- The teen pregnancy rate between 2002 and 2007 declined 15 percent among Hispanic females.
- Hispanic females continue to have a decrease in infant mortality rates. The infant mortality rates between 2002 and 2007 declined 18 percent.
- Hispanic women continue to have the highest pregnancy rates since 2002, followed by blacks, whites and then Asian females.

The Board of Health shared strategies with the Hispanic community leaders about ways to improve health status. They discussed mobilizing partnerships among faith-based, social service, businesses and civic groups to help educate the community about health problems and to create more opportunities to provide access to affordable health care services for those without insurance.

The 2010 Status of Health in DeKalb Report was produced by the Board of Health's Division of Health Assessment and Promotion and sponsored by Kaiser Permanente, DeKalb Medical and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. To view a copy of the 2010 Status of Health in DeKalb report online, visit [www.dekalbhealth.net](http://www.dekalbhealth.net). You can also call (404) 508-7847 for more.