



**Catawba County Public Health**  
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### STATE OF THE COUNTY'S HEALTH REPORT RELEASED

HICKORY, NC – Catawba County Public Health released the 2016 State of the County's Health (SOTCH) report, which notes cancer, heart disease, chronic lower respiratory disease, stroke, and unintentional injuries as among the leading causes of death in Catawba County.

The SOTCH tracks data for health issues affecting Catawba County residents and important health indicators related to illness, death, and high-risk behaviors. The report is a supplement to the Catawba County Community Health Assessment, which is a comprehensive overview of the county's health status produced every four years (most recently in 2015).

Key findings in the 2016 SOTCH include the following:

- **Where Catawba County Is Faring Better:** Healthy eating, active living and chronic disease prevention efforts are under way in schools, faith communities and the medical community.
- **Emerging issues:** The impact of opioids and a rise in the suicide rate in recent years
- **Where Catawba County Is Experiencing Health Disparities:** Minorities are especially impacted by cancer, stroke, diabetes and heart disease.

In addition, the SOTCH describes progress made toward improving nutrition, increasing physical activity, and reducing chronic disease, which were named Catawba County health priorities for 2015 through 2018 during the 2015 Community Health Assessment process. Catawba County Health Partners, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization managed by Catawba County Public Health, works to equip community coalitions with sustainable solutions for addressing these priorities.

The 2015 report found that the three behaviors of physical inactivity, poor diet and tobacco use lead to serious diseases in our residents such as cancer, type 2 diabetes, lung disease, heart disease and stroke. These diseases account for more than half of all deaths in Catawba County.

"The health data provided in the SOTCH highlights progress toward improving our county's health priorities," said Doug Urland, health director, Catawba County Public Health. "It gives us a picture of where we are and where we need to be as a county and is an important resource for organizations and residents seeking more information about the health of our county and how we are working together to address critical health issues."

Additional analysis and statistics are available in the full report, which can be accessed online at <http://www.catawbacountyhealthpartners.org/health-data.asp>. The 2015 Community Health Assessment is also available on this site.

Catawba County Public Health, located off Fairgrove Church Road behind Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, N.C., works to protect, promote, and improve the health of all county residents. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit [www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth).

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*"Leading the Way to a Healthier Community"*

