

Results of the 2008 Healthiest State Award

It has taken nine long years, but Minnesota is back as the Healthiest State in America. The North Star State last topped our Healthiest State rankings in 1999. It ousts long-time winner Vermont, which held the title for six of the last seven years. Following Minnesota were New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, and Massachusetts.

At the opposite end of the rankings list, Mississippi fell to last place. Joining Mississippi on the less healthy end of the rankings scale were Louisiana, New Mexico, Nevada, and Florida.

Methodology

The Healthiest State designation is awarded based on 21 factors chosen from the 2008 edition of *Health Care State Rankings*. These factors reflect access to health care providers, an emphasis on preventative care, affordability of health care, and a generally healthy population (see page 3).

The 21 factors selected for this year's award remained unchanged from those used last year. The factors were divided into two groups: those that are "negative" for which a high ranking would be considered bad for a state, and those that are "positive" for which a high ranking would be considered good for a state. Rates for each of the 21 factors were processed through a formula that measures how a state compares to the national average for a given category. The positive and negative nature of each factor was taken into account as part of the formula. Once these computations were made, the factors then were weighted equally. These weighted scores then were added together to get a state's final score ("SUM" on the table on page 5). This way, states are assessed based on how they stack up against the national average. The end result is that the farther below the national average a state's health ranking is, the lower (and less healthy) it ranks. The farther above the national average, the higher (and healthier) a state ranks. This same methodology is used for our Smartest State and Safest/Most Dangerous State and City Awards.

The table on page 5 shows how each state fared in the 2008 Healthiest State Award as well as its placement in 2007. Without a doubt, this award will promote a vigorous discussion among citizens and state leaders. While our selection of factors clearly affects the final rankings, we believe that they provide a solid measurement of how states are faring in regard to health care.

Congratulations to the very healthy citizens and leaders of Minnesota!

- THE EDITORS

The 2008 Healthiest State Award:

Minnesota Takes Over the Lead

ALPHA ORDER

RANK	STATE	SUM	07 RANK	CHANGE
42	Alabama	-11.11	40	-2
38	Alaska	-5.81	36	-2
40	Arizona	-10.24	42	2
37	Arkansas	-5.39	37	0
17	California	6.85	19	2
29	Colorado	0.44	28	-1
11	Connecticut	12.05	13	2
41	Delaware	-10.71	39	-2
46	Florida	-12.15	46	0
45	Georgia	-11.56	44	-1
8	Hawaii	14.80	9	1
23	Idaho	3.95	24	1
33	Illinois	-1.16	32	-1
27	Indiana	1.95	33	6
6	Iowa	15.36	7	1
15	Kansas	8.47	10	-5
32	Kentucky	-0.59	29	-3
49	Louisiana	-25.72	50	1
4	Maine	15.81	4	0
35	Maryland	-1.76	35	0
5	Massachusetts	15.68	3	-2
22	Michigan	4.62	21	-1
1	Minnesota	19.84	2	1
50	Mississippi	-26.26	48	-2
34	Missouri	-1.31	34	0
25	Montana	2.55	26	1
7	Nebraska	14.91	6	-1
47	Nevada	-19.28	47	0
2	New Hampshire	17.46	5	3
16	New Jersey	7.73	16	0
48	New Mexico	-21.60	49	1
30	New York	-0.16	27	-3
31	North Carolina	-0.20	31	0
9	North Dakota	12.94	12	3
21	Ohio	4.73	20	-1
43	Oklahoma	-11.54	41	-2
19	Oregon	6.44	17	-2
18	Pennsylvania	6.47	23	5
10	Rhode Island	12.58	11	1
44	South Carolina	-11.55	45	1
24	South Dakota	3.72	22	-2
36	Tennessee	-4.23	38	2
39	Texas	-9.18	43	4
12	Utah	11.85	8	-4
3	Vermont	15.86	1	-2
20	Virginia	5.18	18	-2
13	Washington	10.79	14	1
26	West Virginia	2.17	25	-1
14	Wisconsin	8.98	15	1
28	Wyoming	1.16	30	2

RANK ORDER

RANK	STATE	SUM	07 RANK	CHANGE
1	Minnesota	19.84	2	1
2	New Hampshire	17.46	5	3
3	Vermont	15.86	1	-2
4	Maine	15.81	4	0
5	Massachusetts	15.68	3	-2
6	Iowa	15.36	7	1
7	Nebraska	14.91	6	-1
8	Hawaii	14.80	9	1
9	North Dakota	12.94	12	3
10	Rhode Island	12.58	11	1
11	Connecticut	12.05	13	2
12	Utah	11.85	8	-4
13	Washington	10.79	14	1
14	Wisconsin	8.98	15	1
15	Kansas	8.47	10	-5
16	New Jersey	7.73	16	0
17	California	6.85	19	2
18	Pennsylvania	6.47	23	5
19	Oregon	6.44	17	-2
20	Virginia	5.18	18	-2
21	Ohio	4.73	20	-1
22	Michigan	4.62	21	-1
23	Idaho	3.95	24	1
24	South Dakota	3.72	22	-2
25	Montana	2.55	26	1
26	West Virginia	2.17	25	-1
27	Indiana	1.95	33	6
28	Wyoming	1.16	30	2
29	Colorado	0.44	28	-1
30	New York	-0.16	27	-3
31	North Carolina	-0.20	31	0
32	Kentucky	-0.59	29	-3
33	Illinois	-1.16	32	-1
34	Missouri	-1.31	34	0
35	Maryland	-1.76	35	0
36	Tennessee	-4.23	38	2
37	Arkansas	-5.39	37	0
38	Alaska	-5.81	36	-2
39	Texas	-9.18	43	4
40	Arizona	-10.24	42	2
41	Delaware	-10.71	39	-2
42	Alabama	-11.11	40	-2
43	Oklahoma	-11.54	41	-2
44	South Carolina	-11.55	45	1
45	Georgia	-11.56	44	-1
46	Florida	-12.15	46	0
47	Nevada	-19.28	47	0
48	New Mexico	-21.60	49	1
49	Louisiana	-25.72	50	1
50	Mississippi	-26.26	48	-2