A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans
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About this Study

*A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans* is based on a survey of more than 2,200 healthcare providers representing a variety of specialties and disciplines and 1,015 Americans ages 18 and older. The research was conducted in collaboration with Kelton Research using an email invitation and an online survey format.

In the case of individuals, quotas were set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population ages 18 and over. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.
The health of the U.S. is in a state of emergency. Many Americans, no matter where they live, are failing to nurture their bodies with the proper preventive actions that will protect them from disease and chronic illness, while at the same time saving millions in healthcare spending. And the disheartening fact remains that far too many people aren’t knowledgeable about what their insurance plan covers or what may be available through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Mandates included in the legislation require plans to cover most preventive care services at no cost to those who are insured, meaning that cost should no longer be a factor that discourages many people from seeking preventive care check-ups and screenings. However, 75 percent of U.S. adults agreed that out-of-pocket cost is the primary reason they decide whether or not to seek preventive care.
According to *A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans*, less than half of the adults surveyed (49 percent) said they’ve exercised routinely, and only 52 percent said that they’ve attempted to improve their eating habits or have incorporated more nutritious foods into meals. 95 percent of Americans feel preventive care is important, yet only 24 percent give themselves an A grade for their efforts to ensure a preventive lifestyle. These preventive actions hold extreme importance as, according to a recent CDC report, over one-third of U.S. adults (35.7 percent) are obese. *A Call for Change* also found that few adults in the U.S. are receiving preventive screenings for most conditions that are directly related to obesity. In the past two years, only 26 percent of adults in the U.S. have been screened for diabetes, and only 33 percent have had their cholesterol checked.

According to *A Call for Change*, the importance patients place on talking with their doctors about the benefits of prevention is dismal — only 33 percent of adults in the U.S. have discussed their medical history and risk factors with their doctor. And even though *A Call for Change* found that 93 percent agreed that taking proper preventive care measures saves patients money and think it is less expensive to prevent a serious condition or disease than it is to treat it, the lack of both preventive knowledge and action is leading to a sick nation. Over half (51 percent) of the U.S. is taking a prescribed medication on a daily basis, and 46 percent admitted they are currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer. It’s time to take back control of this nation’s health. Patients must begin working toward a preventive lifestyle now in order to turn the trend around for the future.

75% of U.S. adults agreed that out-of-pocket cost is the primary reason they decide whether or not to seek preventive care.
Wellness for Women: Finding the Beauty in Prevention

Women in the media: perfect, unattainable, not real. The standards of how a woman’s body should appear have been set immeasurably high thanks to media and agenda pushing, which promotes an impossible and exhausting beauty. Only over more recent years has the idea of health and a “healthy body” started to commingle into advertisements and self-empowerment messaging, but it still remains a low priority on the “to-do” list for many American women. Some women focus on surface or outside appearances instead of what’s happening inside their bodies, missing the overall point of wellness from the inside out. In doing so, these women disregard the importance of properly caring for themselves in the present to ensure a healthy future. Steps such as lowering stress levels, eating healthy, skin care, dental care, regular exercise and disease screenings will help women focus not on what their bodies look like, but how strong their bodies are capable of becoming.

According to A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans, exercise is, and should be, a common part of women’s wellness strategies, as 53 percent of the women surveyed reported receiving a suggestion to incorporate exercise from a doctor. And while 45 percent of women said that over the past two years they’ve tried to exercise routinely or at least three times a week, only 24 percent of women give themselves an A grade for their efforts to ensure preventive care.

This isn’t the only gap in preventive lifestyles for women. Only about one-third (32 percent) of women have taken the preventive measure of discussing medical history and risk factors with their doctor in the last two years. Other gaps in the preventive process were highlighted in A Call for Change: Over the past two years, only 23 percent of women have been screened for diabetes, only 39 percent have had mammograms, only 14 percent have had any type of cancer screening, and only 29 percent have had their cholesterol checked. Moreover, almost half of the women surveyed, 47 percent, admitted they are currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer.
currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer. And 53 percent of women said they take prescribed medication on a regular basis. These numbers need to change. With the Affordable Care Act, women need to understand that many preventive care services can be obtained at no cost for them or their families. Women spend so much time worrying about loved ones that sometimes they forget to take the necessary—and in this case free—steps to ensure a healthy future. Although 93 percent of women surveyed for *A Call for Change* agreed that taking a proper preventive care measure can save patients money and believe it’s less expensive to prevent a serious condition or disease than it is to treat it, 78 percent of women also agreed that out-of-pocket cost is the main reason they decide whether or not to seek preventive care. The decision to undergo preventive measures should not be based on cost or a lack of knowledge on what is covered or the benefits of preventing a chronic illness.

Some women focus on surface or outside appearances instead of what’s happening inside their bodies, missing the overall point of wellness from the inside out.
Men and Prevention: The BIG Problem

The U.S. has become known for its larger-than-life mentality — big houses, big televisions, big meal portions, and now big people — are commonplace in our country. According to the CDC, 35 percent of women in the U.S. are obese as of this year, and that percentage has remained the same since 1999. For men, obesity has risen from 27 percent to 35 percent over the same amount of time. The worry is that these numbers will continue to rise and that the health of American men will continue to deteriorate. The CDC also found that one in four men have some form of heart disease, which is currently the leading cause of death among men and one of the direct side effects of obesity. Other direct side effects of weight gain include diabetes and certain types of cancer, which all fall under the category of potentially preventable conditions.

Though A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans found that almost all men, 94 percent, feel that preventive care is important, only 24 percent give themselves an A grade for their efforts to ensure preventive care for themselves. And while 92 percent of men reported that they feel taking proper preventive measures saves patients money and think it is less expensive to prevent a serious condition or disease than it is to treat it, only about one-third (34 percent) of men have taken the preventive measure of discussing medical history and risk factors with their doctor in the last two years. Since preventive care is covered under the Affordable Care Act, it is going to become increasingly important for healthcare providers to take the steps necessary to build relationships with patients that provide them with information, support and encouragement in hopes of helping them truly grasp and understand the importance of preventive care.

Men did report that they understand the benefits and positives of preventive care, but that doesn’t mean they are adopting preventive behaviors. In fact, A Call for Change found that many men agree that out-of-pocket cost is the primary reason they decide whether or not to seek preventive care, yet 26 percent remain unknowledgeable about what their insurance policy plans...
offer. And although 60 percent of men said that exercise is a common preventive measure for their doctor to prescribe, only 52 percent of all men surveyed said that over the past two years they’ve tried to exercise routinely, or at least three times a week.

It also remains true that preventive measures are of low priority for many men. Only 23 percent have been screened for diabetes, only 37 percent have had their cholesterol checked, just 32 percent have had a prostate exam, and only 16 percent have had a cancer screening of any type. And this apathy toward a healthy lifestyle is catching up to most men. A Call for Change found that almost half of the men surveyed, 49 percent, said they are taking prescribed medication on a regular basis, and another 45 percent admitted they are currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer.

For men, obesity has risen from 27% to 35% since 1999.

Men who remain unknowledgeable about what their insurance policy plans offer, though many men agree that out-of-pocket cost is the primary reason they decide whether or not to seek preventive care.
As people age, the need for a greater focus on personal health increases, and priorities change. And though starting early and maintaining a healthy lifestyle from a young age is the easiest method to begin a preventive path, many are unaware of this approach. Some members of younger generations say “I’ll deal with it when it comes up,” or “That could never happen to me.” In the era of new media and the greatest technological advances history has seen, the younger generations are quickly becoming sucked into a sedentary lifestyle and attitude. Physical activity has slowed at an alarming rate, tripling child obesity rates among adolescents in the last 30 years, according to the CDC. For some teens and young adults, online chatting, shopping, gaming, and mobile usage is leading to ideologies of immobility and lower rates of physical activity and interaction. All of this combined can lead to an unhealthy road ahead.

While research suggests a lack of prevention awareness among teens and young adults, Generation Y (ages 25–34), Generation X (ages 35–44) and Baby Boomers (ages 45–54) are, by no means, taking necessary precautions for their own health. Almost 95 percent of all three age groups agree that preventive care is important, yet a very small percentage of each group gave themselves an A grade for their efforts to ensure a preventive lifestyle — only 15 percent of Gen Y, 18 percent of Gen X, and 32 percent of Baby Boomers. A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans did find that roughly 50 percent of each generation reported that in the past two years they’ve tried to exercise routinely, or at least three times a week, but it’s not enough. Many are failing to undergo screenings or discuss medical history with their doctors. According to A Call for Change, only 22 percent of Baby Boomers have had some type of cancer screening. Less than half of both Gen X and Baby Boomers have undergone a cholesterol screening, and less than 40 percent of all generations have discussed their medical history and risk factors with their doctors. A Call for Change also uncovered the shocking fact that in the past two years, only 33 percent of Baby Boomer women have received a mammogram and only 24 percent of Boomer men have received a prostate exam.
A major reason for the low screening numbers is the fact that many Americans still don’t know what is covered by their insurance plans. Only 35 percent of both Gen X and Gen Y, and 26 percent of Baby Boomers reported an understanding on what their policies cover. And roughly 80 percent of all age groups (Boomers at 70 percent) agreed that out-of-pocket-cost is the primary reason they decide whether or not to take preventive care measures. With the Affordable Care Act mandating coverage of many preventive care benefits at no cost to the insured, it is imperative that health plans and providers educate patients about these benefits. A lack of knowledge and general prevention education is leaving many adults at every age to battle sickness. Twenty-five percent of Gen Y, 44 percent of Gen X and 64 percent of Baby Boomers all admitted they are currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer. The sad thing is that many of these conditions can be prevented.

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The Northeast

The Northeast can be divided into three different sections: The tourist cities and attractions, the deep woods of the upper Northeast, and, of course, the hustle and bustle of the big cities. But in all of these areas of the region, there is a population that is struggling to control its weight and not taking the appropriate measures to fix it.

According to recent CDC data, 25 percent of the population in the Northeast is obese. That’s at least one in four people in the Northeast with a health issue that can lead to heart disease, diabetes and a number of other preventable conditions. A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans uncovered that less than half of those surveyed in the Northeast, 48 percent, had attempted to improve their eating habits in the last two years, and only 47 percent exercise routinely. A Call for Change found that while 95 percent of those living in the Northeast said they believe taking proper preventive care measures saves patients money and think it is less expensive to prevent a serious condition or disease than it is to treat it, 71 percent said that out-of-pocket cost is the main reason they don’t seek prevention. And 52 percent said that a doctor’s recommendation is the main reason they would attempt to change their lifestyle, but only 26 percent of those in the Northeast gave themselves an A grade for their efforts to ensure a preventive lifestyle.

According to A Call for Change, almost all of those living in the Northeast do feel preventive care is important for themselves (95 percent) and for their children (98 percent), yet only 33 percent have taken the preventive measure of discussing medical history and risk factors with their doctor. The statistics get worse from there. A Call for Change reported that only 22 percent of those in the Northeast have been screened for diabetes, only 17 percent have had cancer screenings (sadly, the highest percentage of all regions), only 33 percent have had a routine cholesterol check, and only 22 percent of women have had mammograms and 16 percent of men have had their prostates checked.

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A Call for Change found that in the Northeast, 83 percent of residents have visited a healthcare professional of some kind in the last two years, and the majority of
According to recent CDC data, 25% of the population in the Northeast is obese.
The Midwest

The heart of America has found itself declining rapidly in terms of preventive healthcare in the last few decades. According to the CDC, every state in the Midwest self-reported having between 25 and 30 percent of the population overweight.

This is not surprising, however, as according to *A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans*, the Midwest reported the least amount of people who said they’ve tried to exercise routinely, or at least three times a week (46 percent), while also reporting the least amount of people who have attempted to improve their eating habits or incorporate more nutritious foods into their meals (47 percent). And though *A Call for Change* found that 94 percent of those surveyed in the Midwest said they feel preventive care is important for themselves, and 96 percent said it’s important for their children, 48 percent (the highest out of all regions) admitted that they’re currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer. And 54 percent of the population in the Midwest, also the highest out of all regions, are currently taking regularly-prescribed medications.

According to recent CDC data, when it comes to obesity, the Midwest is second from the bottom, squeaking by with 29 percent of its population overweight, compared with the worst region, the South, at 29.5 percent. *A Call for Change* uncovered that only 29 percent of the population has been screened for diabetes and only 32 percent have been checked for high cholesterol — all direct conditions related to obesity. And though 50 percent of those in the Midwest feel a doctor’s recommendation is the number one reason to seek prevention, few have taken the preventive measure of discussing their medical history and risk factors with their doctors (33 percent). According to *A Call for Change*, the Midwest also reported just 12 percent of men were screened for prostate cancer, the lowest of all regions in the nation.

Prevention in the Midwest is in a weak state and must be strengthened to ensure a healthy future for everyone in this region. Part of the problem *A Call for Change* found is that, even though 92 percent of Midwesterners...
agreed that taking proper preventive care measures saves patients money and think it is less expensive to prevent a serious condition or disease than it is to treat it, 73 percent also said that out-of-pocket cost is the primary reason they decide whether or not to seek preventive care. The affordability, or lack thereof, is what is driving Midwesterners away from a healthier lifestyle. A Call for Change found that only 22 percent gave themselves an A grade in their efforts to maintain a preventive lifestyle. This percent, unsurprisingly, tied with the South as the lowest out of all regions.

According to the CDC, every state in the Midwest self-reported having between 25% and 30% of the population overweight.
The South

The South has been nicknamed “The Diabetes Belt”, thanks mostly to the comfort foods that are a staple in this area. Foods cooked in butter and meals loaded with meat and potatoes provide the backing behind the nickname. Sadly, however, the region is failing to do much to correct the current stereotype. According to the CDC, the South is still the region with the highest obesity rate at 29.5 percent. The CDC also found that seven out of the 12 U.S. states with the highest rate of obesity, 30 percent or higher, are in the South: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas — Mississippi standing with 35 percent of its population as obese, the worst in the nation. And though 51 percent of Southerners surveyed for A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans said that over the past two years they’ve tried to exercise routinely, or at least three times a week, and 55 percent have attempted to improve their eating habits or have incorporated more nutritious foods into meals, almost half of those in the South (46 percent) are currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer. In addition, 51 percent are on regularly-prescribed medications. That’s one out of every two people who are fighting a disease or chronic condition that could have possibly been prevented. According to A Call for Change, the South also reported the lowest amount of people (tied with the Midwest), 22 percent, who gave themselves an A grade for their efforts to ensure a preventive lifestyle. With diabetes so prevalent in the South because of the home style cooking and lack of physical activity, it’s astonishing that only 27 percent have been screened for diabetes in the last two years. Also surprisingly low is the number of people—only 33 percent—who have had their cholesterol checked. And though A Call for Change found that 55 percent of Southerners said a doctor’s recommendation is their primary reason for seeking prevention, only 34 percent have taken the preventive measure of discussing medical history and risk factors with their physician, and only 14 percent have been screened for cancer. With that being said, the South reported the highest number of people, 96 percent, who feel that prevention is important. With this, it would seem that there is a light at the end of the tunnel for those in the South, as A Call for Change
found 92 percent of Southerners did agree that taking proper preventive care measures will save patients money and believe it’s less expensive to prevent a serious condition or disease than it is to treat it. The next objective is bringing awareness to the region about what their insurance plan covers and how the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act can help. According to A Call for Change, 32 percent of those in the South said they still don’t know what their policy covers in terms of preventive services. The South also held the highest number of people (tied with the West) who feel that out-of-pocket costs are the primary deciding factor when choosing to seek a preventive lifestyle. Educating the region on the resources available and the coverage possibilities will be important in moving the South toward healthier, preventive lifestyles.

7 out of the 12 U.S. states with the highest obesity rate (30% or higher) are in the South.
The West

There is a consistent idea that those living in the Western region of the U.S. are among the most active and health-conscious of all U.S. citizens. Obviously this can hold true in some cases, but it also can become a harmful crutch, as some use the illusion of regional health as an excuse for not taking all the preventive health measures necessary. According to *A Call for Change: How Adopting a Preventive Lifestyle Can Ensure a Healthy Future for More Americans*, 51 percent of those living in the West are currently taking prescribed medication on a regular basis. This number is the second highest in the nation next to the South. Moreover, almost half of all Westerners surveyed, 44 percent, admitted that they are currently treating a disease or chronic illness, such as high blood pressure, a heart problem, diabetes or cancer.

Though *A Call for Change* found that most people living in the West do agree that prevention is important for themselves (94 percent) and for their children (98 percent), only 26 percent rated themselves with an A grade for their efforts to ensure a preventive lifestyle, such as screenings, healthy eating habits, exercise, dental care, and up-to-date medical history records. In fact, *A Call for Change* uncovered that only 32 percent of those in the West, the lowest percentage in the nation, have taken the preventive measure of discussing medical history and risk factors with their doctor. Other prevention gaps found showed just 26 percent have been screened for diabetes, only 14 percent have been screened for cancer, and only 34 percent have had a routine cholesterol check. The West was also tied with the South for the smallest number of women who have been screened for breast cancer — only 22 percent.

Though *A Call for Change* uncovered that 93 percent of those living in the West agreed that taking proper preventive care measures saves patients money and they believe it’s less expensive to prevent a serious condition or disease than it is to treat it, 77 percent of Westerners — the highest in the nation — agreed that out-of-pocket cost is the primary reason they decide whether or not to seek preventive care. And
with 82 percent of those in the West having visited a healthcare professional of some kind in the last two years, as *A Call for Change* found, there is a lapse in the education given about the benefits of prevention. *A Call for Change* also found that 25 percent of Westerners still aren’t knowledgeable about what their insurance policy offers in terms of preventive care.

Only 32% of those in the West, the lowest percentage in the nation, have taken the preventive measure of discussing medical history and risk factors with their doctor.
About Healthy World

A healthy world, while global by definition, actually happens one person at a time. It is driven by forward-thinking healthcare practitioners who understand their involvement is critical to ensuring a healthy population.

The Healthy World initiative, launched by TeleVox, aims at helping people — young and old — be healthy!

Three imperatives for creating a healthy world — one person at a time

1. Touch the hearts and minds of patients to drive positive behavior change.
2. Engage patients with information and encouragement between visits.
3. Activate patients to make positive behavior changes for a healthier life.

The driving force behind the goal of creating a healthy world are the healthcare professionals who take the time to engage patients with personalized, thoughtful, ongoing communications that encourage and inspire them to embrace and follow ongoing treatment plans.

They know every communication with a patient — including those that take place between office visits — is an opportunity to help that person understand the importance of good habits like nutrition, physical activity, taking their medications as prescribed and following new treatment recommendations. Engaging patients and their families between visits through proactive, relevant communications helps them to wake up and stay focused on positive behavior changes is the way to create a healthy world — one patient at a time.
About TeleVox

TeleVox is a high-tech Engagement Communications company, providing automated voice, email, text and web solutions that activate positive patient behaviors through the delivery of technology with a human touch.

Since 1992, TeleVox has been creating a comprehensive approach that breaks through and motivates people to live healthy lives. At TeleVox, we understand that touching the hearts and minds of patients by engaging with them between healthcare appointments will encourage and inspire them to follow and embrace treatment plans. We know personalized, ongoing patient engagement will activate positive lifestyle changes. TeleVox helps healthcare professionals touch, engage and activate every unique patient to lead healthy lives.

TeleVox. High-tech, human touch to create a healthy world — one patient at a time.
Our Healthy World Initiative utilizes ethnographic research to uncover, understand and interpret the patient point-of-view when it comes to managing their health. We focus on studying how people interact with healthcare providers and how they behave between doctor visits. As part of this program, TeleVox delivers research reports that provide healthcare professionals with timely insight for helping patients make healthy changes in their lives, follow treatment plans, and take accountability for improving their personal health.