

## Health Headlines

### Smoking Gets Uglier

For the first time in the U.S., the Food and Drug Administration is regulating tobacco products and requiring labels on cigarette packages with graphic pictures that remind smokers of tobacco's dangers. Public health officials hope the grisly images of mothers blowing smoke on their babies and pictures of toe tags will re-energize the nation's antismoking efforts. Every day, about 1,000 children and teenagers become regular smokers, and 4,000 try smoking for the first time. The warnings are intended to ward off younger smokers, who respond better to graphic warnings than text. (*NY Times*, 11/10/10) Read more about [smoking](#) and [smoking-related diseases](#).

### Grapefruit, Your New Breast Friend

A study revealed that eating grapefruit is related to reducing the risk of breast cancer. In a long-term study that began in 1976, researchers followed women ages 30-55 to analyze links between diet and breast cancer. Contrary to popular belief, they found that eating more grapefruit (1/4 grapefruit or more per day, on average) was related to a reduced risk of breast cancer in those women who had never been on hormone replacement therapy. Further, they also found that in women whose cancer was not estrogen or progesterone related, eating grapefruit could actually reduce the risk of breast cancer over time. (*Los Angeles Times*, 10/27/10) Read [more](#) about [breast cancer](#).

### A Pill a Day Keeps HIV Away

A new study states that healthy gay men taking Trueda, a combination of two antiretroviral drugs, are 44% less likely to get HIV than those taking the placebo, and 90% less likely if they take the pill faithfully every day. This breakthrough discovery, known as pre-exposure prophylaxis, is the first available for men, especially those who may not be able to use condoms because they sell sex or are in danger of prison rape. The drug will undergo more testing, but should not be an indicator for gay men to stop using condoms. (*NY Times*, 11/23/10) Read [more](#) about [HIV/AIDS](#).

**Hollywood, Health & Society** (HH&S) is a program of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center. HH&S is a free, on-demand resource for entertainment writers working on medical and health storylines. The program is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The California Endowment, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, HRSA's Division of Transplantation, the National Cancer Institute, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

## Funding Agency News

### The #1 Teen Killer

Car crashes are the #1 killer of teens, taking about 3,000 young lives every year. It's a fact that beginner drivers are more likely than experienced drivers to be in a deadly crash. Other factors that increase those odds include driving while distracted, driving drowsy, driving recklessly, and drinking alcohol. CDC's campaign, "Parents Are the Key," encourages parents to get involved in their teen's driving by providing as many supervised practice driving hours as possible, setting rules of the road, and enforcing those rules with a parent-teen driving agreement. Read more about the [campaign](#) and safe [teen driving](#).

### World Toilet Day

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recognizes World Toilet Day every November, an important reminder as Haiti faces a cholera outbreak. Cholera is a potentially fatal bacterial infection that causes severe diarrhea and dehydration, most often spread through contaminated food or drinking water. Half the population of the developing world – 2.6 billion people – has no toilet or unsafe toilets and poor sanitation practices, which contribute to the 1.6 million children who die each year from diarrheal diseases like cholera. The Gates Foundation is focusing efforts on these water, sanitation, and hygiene problems, and partnering with rural communities to discover innovative solutions and new technologies to prevent these unnecessary deaths. Read more about [cholera](#) and [water, sanitation, and hygiene](#).

### Youth-led Media Network

The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities program recently received funding for youth-led media campaigns to raise awareness of the connection between health and where you live. The funding comes from the Knight Foundation, a non-profit committed to projects that promote informed and engaged communities and lead to transformational change. Youth in each of the sponsored communities will be trained to develop multi-lingual and multi-media content about local health issues, and will create ads for TV, print, online, and mobile phones to reach local audiences. Read the [press release](#) and more about the [program](#).

### Take the Dry Road

A new survey by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration indicates among drivers 16 or older, 13.2% drove drunk and 4.3% drove drugged in the past year. Younger drivers (16-25 years) had higher rates of drunk and drugged driving than older drivers. This data shows the need for more research about the threats of driving under the influence of illicit drugs and community awareness through education, enhanced law enforcement, and public outreach efforts. Read the [press release](#) and more about [teen drinking](#) and [drugged driving](#).

## Real People, Real Lives

### 99 Minutes of Life

Baby Skyler was born with anencephaly, a neural tube defect that keeps the brain and skull from fully forming during pregnancy. Although doctors warned her mother, Shannon, about her daughter's condition five months earlier, Shannon refused an abortion and brought the baby to full term. When Skyler was born, she lived for 99 minutes before passing. Her parents discovered their daughter's liver could be donated to help save another life. Before Skyler, babies with anencephaly could not donate organs or tissues, but now their untimely deaths can help another family grow. Although Shannon is unsure about having another baby in the near future, she is now taking folic acid to prevent neural tube defects just in case. (*Charlotte Observer*, 11/17/10) Read more about [folic acid](#) and [liver transplantation](#).

### A Radical Face

Connie Culp, 47, received a face transplant after being shot in the face by her husband nearly two years ago. Today, 80% of her face has been replaced, including bones, muscles, nerves, skin, and blood vessels, transplanted from an anonymous donor. After her radical surgery, which is only the fourth face transplant performed in the world, Connie now has the freedom to eat solid foods, smell, taste, and breathe on her own. More than thirty operations later, she is able to smile easily and will become a strong advocate for organ donations. (*The Washington Post*, 9/17/10) Read more about becoming an [organ donor](#).

### New 'Super bug' Takes Over

David Carmody was recovering from a bladder infection in a hospital when he started feeling weaker and had uncontrollable diarrhea. A new super bug called C. diff had been making the rounds in Chicago hospitals. It sickens over 3 million people a year, particularly those who have been on antibiotics in hospitals or health-care facilities. C.diff now rivals the better-known MRSA, an infection resistant to various drugs. It has been cultured from bed rails, floors, toilets and windowsills, and can remain in hospital rooms for up to 40 days after infected patients are discharged. C.diff can grow out of control from the overuse of antibiotics, causing severe diarrhea and inflammation of the colon. (*The Washington Post*, 8/24/10) Read more about [C.diff](#) and [healthcare associated infections](#).

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