



**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **News Release**

### **Report Describes Link Between Depression, Chronic Disease**

(Salt Lake City, UT) – A new report based on a Utah Department of Health telephone survey finds that Utah adults aren't as depressed as previous reports have indicated. In 2006, 34 states used the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) to collect depression data. Of those, Utah ranked 21<sup>st</sup>.

The data show a strong link between depression (defined as a persistent sad mood that interferes with a person's daily activities, behavior, and thoughts) and chronic health problems. For example, Utahns who had suffered a stroke were three times more likely to have major depression than adults who never had a stroke. Adults were also two times more likely to have depression if they had had a heart attack, asthma, hypertension, arthritis, or diabetes.

"It's important for us to understand and document the relationship between depression and these chronic diseases and health problems," said Mike Friedrichs, Epidemiology Manager for the UDOH Bureau of Health Promotion. "Finding those links could help lead to better treatments in the future," he added.

The report also showed:

- An estimated 1 in 24 adults (approximately 75,000 Utahns) have major depression.
- More women (5.1%) had major depression than men (3.1%).
- Persons with major depression were
  - 5.4 times more likely to report fair or poor health,
  - 2.3 times more likely to be current smokers,
  - 1.8 times more likely to report binge drinking, and
  - more than 1.5 times more likely to be obese than persons without major depression.

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"This report is exciting and incredibly useful," said Heather Borski, Director, UDOH Bureau of Health Promotion. "In our health care system, we tend to disconnect physical and mental health, but this report demonstrates the strong relationship between the two and the need to address depression when working to prevent and manage chronic health conditions."

To download a copy of the full report, visit

<http://health.utah.gov/oph/publications/brfss/Depression/Depression.html>.

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*